



How to Get 5-8 Times Greater Return on Your Marketing Spend

By Susan Saldibar

When I sat down and leafed through G5's comprehensive report on The State of Digital Marketing, I have to say that a lot of it struck a chord with me. Currently, this is a monumental period for marketers. We talk about "digital marketing," yet the fact is that most marketing is now digital. What really hit home was the realization that the most critical component of marketing is the journey a customer takes online prior to making a decision. It makes me wonder how many senior living community marketers are really tracking that journey.

The report is divided into three trends and I've pulled out some of the points I think are important beneath each. Next month [G5](#) will be partnering with Senior Housing Forum to host a webinar on "The State of Senior Living Digital Marketing." To really get the full impact on the trends below, I heartily recommend you [sign up for the webinar](#).

The Year of the Customer

Your prospects are more connected than ever:

- A new type of consumer has emerged; one who is connected on average to 3.64 devices with access to the internet.
- The internet goes with the consumer. They are no longer fixed to a desktop computer.

Personalization of the internet experience has become a critical path to increasing an organization's conversion rates:

- 35% of Amazon purchases result from personal product recommendations (those "you may also like" suggestions).
- 75% of titles watched on Netflix come from personalized algorithms.
- 70% of consumers now expect a personalized experience when they interact with an organization.
- Personalizing content will deliver 5 to 8 times the return on investment on marketing spend, and increase sales by 10% or more.

There is an ever-increasing focus on turning customers into advocates:

- 92% of consumers say they trust reviews and recommendations of other consumers above all other forms of advertising.
- More organizations are tapping into their existing client base to retain and attract new customers.
- A 2% increase in customer retention has the same effect as decreasing costs by 10%.

I) Attribution is King

First of all, a quick definition of “attribution.” Attribution is the act of identifying and assigning a value or “worth” to each digital action (or touchpoint) a prospect takes from start to finish that leads to your desired outcome, such as a move-in. **These touchpoints are part of the “journey” each prospect takes to get to your front door. In the real estate world, there is an average of 20 digital touchpoints prior to making a purchasing decision.**

Traditionally, marketers have focused on either the first or last touchpoint only (referred to as “single click” attribution), thereby assigning all the credit to the channel that either introduced the resident to the community or immediately followed a move-in. The problem with this model is that marketers don’t know what led to the end goal and if they’re effectively spending their budget on the right marketing channels. This is what attribution is trying to solve. **However, according to the report, things are changing. While 65% of marketers currently use the “single-click” attribution model, 57% are planning to change their model by the end of this year to analyze all touchpoints in each prospect-to-resident journey.**

Why is attribution so important? According to the report, digital marketers need to follow the consumer journey to track and measure each step taken as it relates to the step before, the step after, and the buying decision. In other words, technology is now (almost) able to keep up with evolving consumer behavior.

II) Value over volume

All the data collected, thanks to the attribution model, has enabled organizations to move away from the old-school (and wasteful) approach of “**spend on everything to see what works**” style investment.

Marketers are using their insights to consolidate their efforts towards channels that have already proven to have the greatest impact. This has allowed marketers to reduce the volume of digital programs they use and increase the value of the channels they select.

So, a much richer set of data is making marketers smarter.

But people still rule.

It may take some time, however, before technology is able to outsmart the human brain. The report is careful to keep marketers focused on the sobering fact that, behind all the attribution data, personalization algorithms and channel tracking, there are people.

The current state of digital marketing requires a shift from the standard “mass marketing” to “me marketing,” where marketers must evolve from sending the same direct mail piece to everyone in their database, to using targeted messaging that speaks to the prospective resident where they are in their journey. This highlights the need to track the entirety of the customer’s online journey to gain insightful data and market smarter.

Finally, as the report notes, “Devices don’t buy shoes or select travel destinations. Sessions or bounce rates don’t connect to your brand. People do these things. And people are more complex than the metrics that represent them.”

I don’t know about you, but I hope that never changes.

To learn more about how G5 can help you simplify the complexity of digital marketing, [schedule a demo](#) with one of their digital marketing experts or [sign up for the webinar](#).



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