



Hallmark Sold More With This, Can You?

By Susan Saldibar

Does anyone out there remember those old Hallmark commercials? They always involved an emotional vignette, more often than not, a grandmother waiting for the mail man to deliver a birthday card from a granddaughter. She gets the card and we see her smile. Then comes the iconic Hallmark tagline “When you care enough to send the very best.” Corny? Yes. Effective? Hugely. Because Hallmark knew how to pull our emotional heartstrings just enough to keep us shelling out that extra 25 cents to buy “the very best”.

Hallmark a great example of effective “emotionally evocative” messaging. And it still works, never more so than in today’s senior living space. But the times are changing. And so must the way we approach messaging.

Emotionally Evocative Messaging

[Sage Age Strategies](#) (a Senior Housing Forum partner) has nicely captured the essentials of “emotionally evocative messaging” in a recent article. They explain, not only why it works so well for senior living communities but why it is absolutely critical to the success of the community to get it right.

According to Sage Age’s research and cited experts, there are five basic emotional priorities for today’s seniors: hope, comfort, warmth, engagement and vibrancy. But that doesn’t mean you can just toss in a “warm” or “comforting” word here and there. Kim DiGangi, Senior Writer for Sage Age, talks about the need to connect emotional dots with seniors. And to do that, some truisms need to be acknowledged. As a boomer, I think they’re pretty spot on. Here are the first 3. You’ll want to read the entire article to get all of them:

1. **Seniors are different** – Seniors are more concerned than the average consumer about security, independence, lifestyle and family relationships. You will find more response if you can tailor your marketing message so they can see how your senior living community will provide or increase security, enhance their independence, contribute toward a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle, or benefit their family relationships.
2. **Change can be a positive** – Change needs to be viewed as something positive, not something to fear. Some seniors thrive on being trendsetters among their peers. Try to tap into this positive energy. Empower them with knowledge and confidence as you show them how your senior living community can lighten their load and provide benefits that can lead to an enhanced, more meaningful lifestyle.
3. **Trust is vital** – Everything about your senior living community’s brand has to be trust-driven, familiar and recognizable: your logo, your marketing, and your “voice.” Becoming a trusted company means being trustworthy to the core. However, you cannot make “trust” just a “PR” objective. Establishing and maintaining a consumer’s trust needs to be the result of a genuine culture that is backed by delivery of your promise.

No More Flat Taglines and Over-Used Phrases

Sage Age has some great real-life examples of actual clients who are effectively using emotionally evocative messaging. Looking at them it isn’t hard to see where senior living communities need to go with their messaging. I still see plenty of websites with static, flat taglines and over-used phrases. So there’s still a lot of work to do.

One more thought about those old Hallmark ads. They worked in the 1970s and 80s. But grandma isn’t sitting at home waiting for birthday cards in the mail anymore. Sage Age knows that. That’s why they are leading the charge for evocative messaging that is authentic as well as emotionally engaging.

You can read the full article on emotionally evocative messaging [here](#).



This article has been brought to you by [Sage Age Strategies](#) in partnership with [Senior Housing Forum](#).

