



The Checklist Every Community Needs

By Susan Saldibar

I read a book, years ago, called [“Crossing the Chasm”](#). Maybe you’ve heard of it. Parts are pretty painful to read in that they take you through some tough exercises, forcing you to drill down (beneath all the feature hype and fluff) to identify what your brand is really all about. I suspect few get through it without one or two “Maybe we’re not that special after all” ah-ha moments.

The people at [G5](#) (a Senior Housing Forum partner) know what I’m talking about. They are experts at helping communities create, communicate and protect their brands. They recently put together a pretty cool “Branding Checklist” which Celena Canode, Marketing Campaign Manager for G5, tells me has been very useful for senior living communities. I believe it. I wish I’d had something like this back in my early marketing days.

Brand is worth your time and energy to cultivate. Without it, you’re just like everybody else.

I’ve pulled out a couple of the main checkpoints taken from the G5 checklist, with a few comments, but you’ll want to download the [full checklist](#):

- **What Makes Your Community Unique?** Sounds so simple, doesn't it? Celena tells me that it's one of the hardest determinations any organization has to make. General statements, such as "we provide excellent service", "our caregivers are the best" are not sufficient. You have to drill deeper to questions such as "What, exactly, makes our service excellent?" or "Why are our caregivers the best?". G5 recommends that communities ask residents and their families what they like the most about life at the community. It's important to encourage residents to provide details as to what it is that truly make your community stand apart from the competition.
- **Are You Creating Content with the Right Tone?** After you have clearly identified your "secret sauce" it is important to make sure it comes through in your content. Otherwise you just have a tag line or mission statement that sits alone, unsupported by your text. Your website, blogs, articles and listings should all carry words and phrases that keep the reader connected to your unique brand. The tone you strike should reflect the way you want your audience to engage with your brand.

Checklists help keep all brand touchpoints coordinated.

Celena tells me they created the Branding Checklist because it helps communities to stay focused on the various elements that support and feed brand. "By using a checklist, you can revisit all the individual elements of branding on a regular basis," she tells me. "We created it with sub-sets, so you can literally go to the people responsible for each area and make sure they haven't gotten off track. Whether it's with your content tone, your logo, your colors or any other aspects that define your brand, you establish accountability for each area," she says. That makes a lot of sense. A checklist takes the burden of brand protection off one person and makes everyone aware of their roles in keeping the brand clean and connected to everything you do.

You can download the full Branding Checklist [here](#).



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