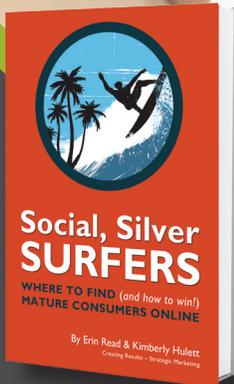


DIGITAL Do's and Don'ts FOR SENIOR LIVING MARKETING



Highlights from New
National Research into
Social, Silver Surfers

LOOK INSIDE
for insights and action steps to
help you boost your digital ROI.

Published by
Creating Results®
Strategic Marketing

Work Smarter by Knowing WHY, WHERE and HOW

Whether your organization has offered housing for seniors for 100+ years or is introducing a new service model to reach an underserved segment, the marketing and sales teams no doubt have a few things in common:

- Shrinking budgets
- Distracted prospects
- An always evolving, sometimes chaotic marketing landscape

To reach organizational goals, we must work smarter.

Smarter means challenging assumptions and investing in marketing channels that may feel scary to long-time, risk-averse board members.

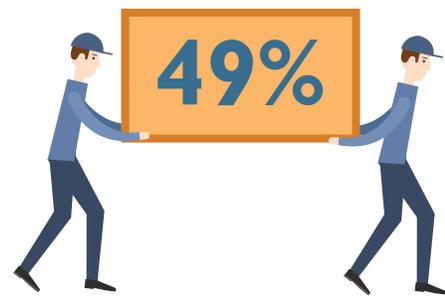
Smarter means arming sales and marketing teams with insights into the way older adults use the internet in homebuying and move decisions.

Creating Results has surveyed thousands of Mature Movers to uncover the WHY, WHERE and HOW of their digital journey.

Social, Silver Surfers is the only ongoing study of the digital marketing preferences of Americans over age 40, with emphasis on people who made a decision to move in the prior two years. The new edition digs deeper than ever into age-qualified housing, with data specific to Caregivers and Move Helpers.

Read on for highlights and action steps from the new **Social, Silver Surfers** to help your digital marketing program work smarter.

3 QUICK FACTS:



of all recent Movers

say the **internet** was the first place they turned to when beginning their home purchase/move journey



% of recent Movers
who cited **Required Sign-Up**
as a pet peeve

Move Helpers are **2x**
as likely **as Mature Movers**
themselves to research homes
using online directories

Popular Online Tools/Sources

Used for New Home/Community Research (Recent Movers vs. Move Helpers)



Search Engines
43% vs. 56%



Community Website
31% vs. 39%



Social Media
3% vs. 6%



Website with Directory
13% vs. 26%



GOV Info Site
8% vs. 26%

✓ **DO:** Recognize that Movers and Move Helpers use the internet differently when researching homes.

FINDINGS: 49% of all recent Movers who participated in the new *Social, Silver Surfers* say the internet was the first place they turned to when they began their move journey. Those who helped older adults with a move in the last two years also used the web, but in a different way.

The older the mover, the more likely a friend or family member will prompt them to use the internet to research home choices. However, most Move Helpers—especially those who are long-distance Caregivers—say they take charge of online research and then share what they learn with their loved one. These helpers also say they employ a wider variety of sources in their research than do the Movers themselves.

Many of the sites Move Helpers rely on are not direct sources such as a builder or Realtor® website; they're curated or even crowd-influenced sources such as directories and government information sites.

ACTION STEPS: Yes, be sure to invest in a well-optimized website that will rank high in organic search results.

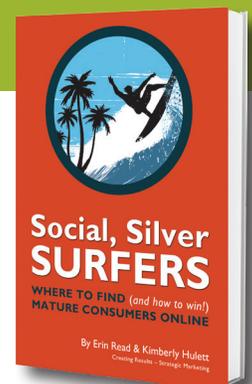
Search consistently has been the #1 online tool of *social, silver surfers* who recently moved. Invest in SEO so that your site will be presented to prospects by search engines at the critical point of inquiry.

Also be sure to invest money and time to ensure directory and government listings that reference your organization are accurate and effective at driving links to your site. Many now incorporate user feedback and reviews. These “virtual references” could get you crossed off a prospect’s list before they ever make it to your website.

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DO: Give the people what they want. *(Do you know what they want?)*

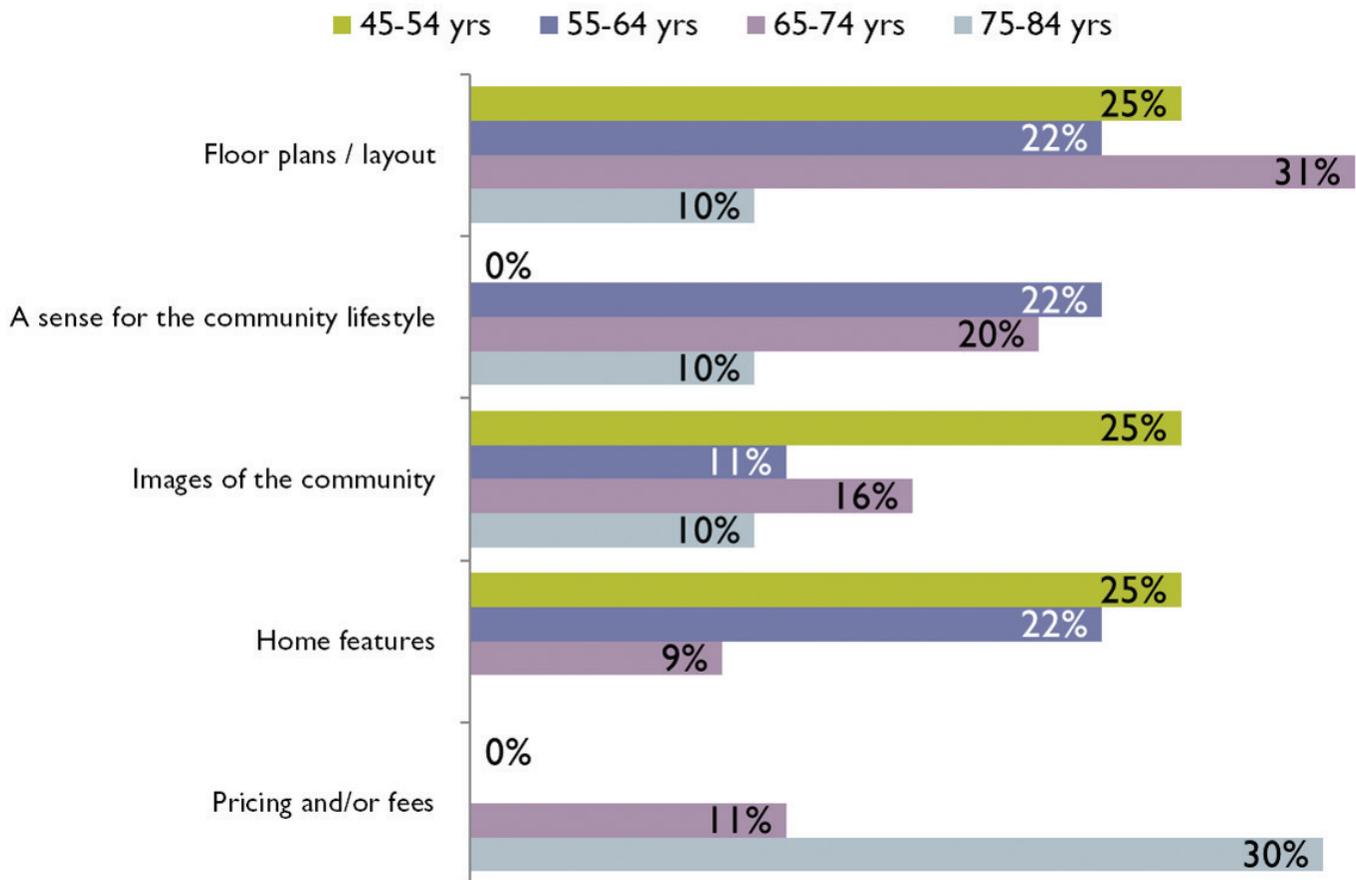
FINDINGS: 28% of all recent Movers surveyed report they first went to a housing-related website looking for floor plans. This was a plurality of respondents.

Younger Movers (aged 55–64) are particularly focused on product details: floor plans, home features, and community images. Older Movers are looking for different details: pricing.

ACTION STEPS: Websites for age-related services and housing will not be effective unless they first give visitors what they came for.

While lifestyle messaging is important, it should not take priority over product information. Floor plans and pricing should be clear and easy to find.

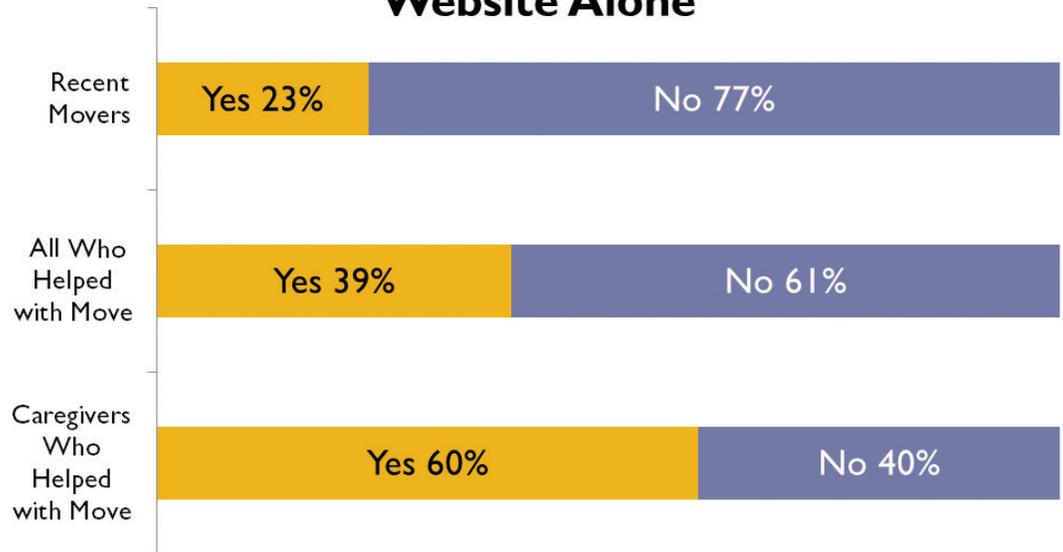
On First Visit to Community Website, Looking For ...



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SOURCE: Social, Silver Surfers, 3rd ed.

Rejected Community Based on Website Alone



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SOURCE: Social, Silver Surfers, 3rd ed.



DON'T: Underestimate the power of a Caregiver.

FINDINGS: The percentage of Mature Movers who rejected a community based solely on its website actually went down since the 2013 edition of the survey. But marketers cannot and should not breathe easy.

While Movers might be less likely to have rejected options based on web presentation, Move Helpers (who tend to take charge of research) are more likely to do so.

Caregivers can be a tough audience.

60% of Caregivers who helped with a move rejected communities based on the website alone. Contrast that with 23% of the Movers themselves and you get a sense for the power these gatekeepers have.

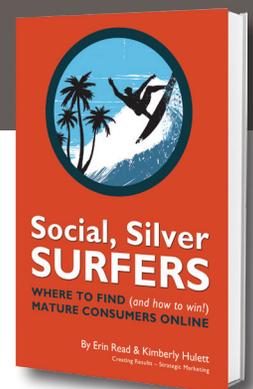
ACTION STEPS: Put on your dancing shoes for a delicate ballet of addressing the sometimes conflicting interests of prospects and their influencers. Website content should speak directly to the prospect, and at the same time, woo anyone who might be influencing their move decision.

Images, content, special calculators or features should all be chosen to (subliminally) convince the Caregiver that your community is worthy of consideration.

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DO: Remember that a move journey is more like a marathon than a sprint.

FINDINGS: Mature consumers do not make complicated housing and healthcare decisions lightly or quickly. They take their time, poring over brochures. They visit repeatedly, sampling the lifestyle and making incremental decisions.

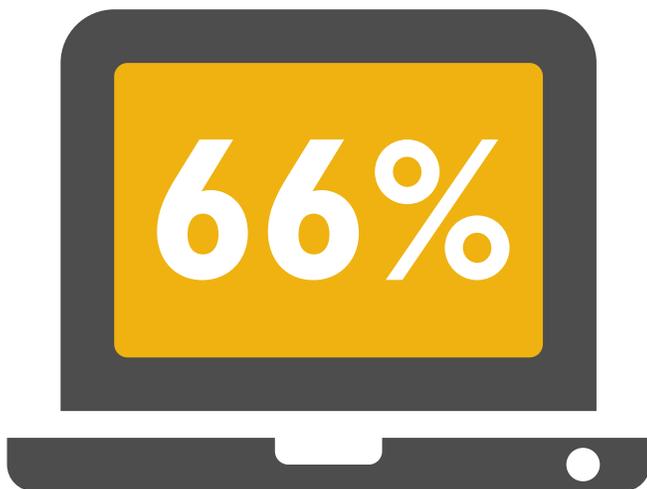
Their digital behavior is very similar.

Two-thirds of *social, silver surfers* report visiting the website of their chosen community more than four times before they moved in.

ACTION STEPS: Imagine a prospect returned to your campus again and again. Would you repeat the same conversation each time? Show them the same model home every time?

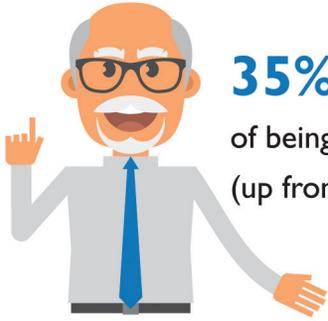
Instead, your sales team would tailor each visit to the visitor's needs and interests at that point in their journey. You'd keep interactions fresh and lively.

The same care must be taken with your website. Keep the information and photography up to date. Have content that makes them want to revisit and guides them along the marathon that is their decision-making journey.



**returned
to website
4 or More Times**

OF ALL RECENT, MATURE MOVERS...



35% complain
of being **Hounded by Sales**
(up from 22% in 2013)



75% concerned
about **Form Privacy/Security**

EXPIRED!

40% are frustrated
by **Outdated Info** (up from 29% in 2013)



DON'T: Push leads too hard, too fast.

FINDINGS: Your marketing team is, understandably, under pressure to capture leads as quickly as they can. Funnel them into the sales process to nurture.

That pressured feeling is increasingly shared by leads.

Since the *Social, Silver Surfers* research began in 2010, each edition has seen a rise in the number of recent Movers complaining about having to provide their contact information in order to get information.

ACTION STEPS: Allow people their anonymity for as long as you can to build trust in the early stages of your relationship.

Does that resource really need to be hidden behind a form? Could you offer a free excerpt, topline report or other sample? You'd prove the value of the resource and, by extension, your team.

As one respondent told *Creating Results*:

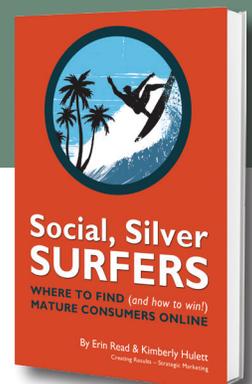
"I am frustrated by the way [required registration]—even though it's free—limits your access. I want that access right now. And I don't very much want you to have my email address, either. I'm very, very careful about giving that out ..."

I just want to get on there and—there's a term that they use—drill deeper. Drill into that website and navigate around it."

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Websites are **ONE** part of an integrated marketing program.

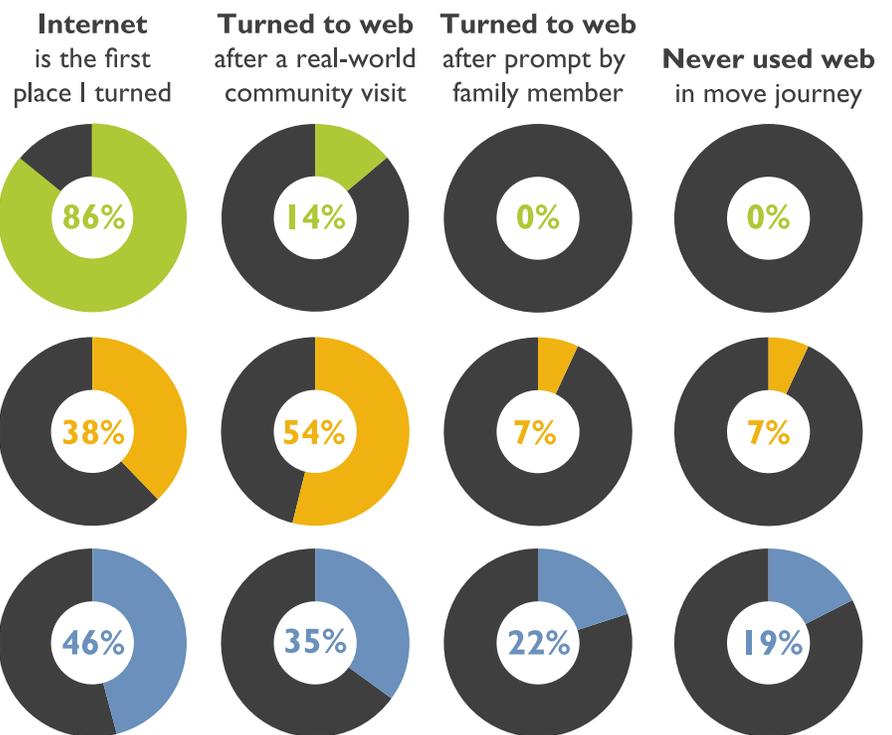
Avoiding pet peeves and giving web visitors what they want are important steps to improving website experience and your return on investment (ROI). Marketing teams should keep in mind that success will only come from a truly integrated program.

The older the user, the more influential the offline circle is. This means that offline marketing—advertising, direct mail and good-old-fashioned signage—are still critical for driving senior prospects to the web.

Once they do turn to the internet, providers need to have in place a strategic program that ...

- reflects their intent (**WHY**)
- motivates them to go from search results or a directory to your site (**WHERE**), and
- guides them in their homebuying decision (**HOW**).

At what point(s) in your move decision/journey did you use the web? ALL 40+ Recent Movers



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SOURCE: Social, Silver Surfers, 3rd ed.

Contact us to learn how **Social, Silver Surfers** insights can help boost your digital marketing ROI.

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