



Flexibility is Key to Success to Withstand Market Instabilities



Case Study:

Milestone Marketing
Multiple CR Clients

Industry:

55+ & Senior Living

The Situation

There comes a time when things don't go according to plan, particularly when there are market instabilities — like a pandemic, times of political unrest, housing crashes, you name it. During COVID-19, Creating Results' clients were forced to shut down, go into a lock down mode and therefore rethink their marketing and sales approach.

Rather than going dark completely, particularly for communities that were census challenged or looking to build a new community in the future, there needed to be a plan to continue to move forward. While unexpected expenses caused 55+ and senior living communities to shift marketing dollars, there was also a need to maintain brand reputation and therefore continue marketing and sales efforts in some capacity.

Strategy

Creating Results worked quickly with each of our clients to determine a strategy that suited their needs and what made sense for their community based on their unique situation during market instabilities. We revisited marketing goals set at the end of 2019 to focus on the new normal with our clients by developing realistic measurements that supported the client's needs.

Through milestone-based marketing, Creating Results determined which stage each community was in - "stay-at-home", "soft reopening", or "business as usual" and implemented specific tactics and approaches based on where each sat.

If a community was situated in a stay-at-home order, this meant we were more focused on protecting the brand reputation and awareness marketing. Whereas, if they were (or are) in business as usual, this meant a return to the original marketing plan or establishing a new plan based on the new goals that need to be achieved coming out on the other side.

Even outside of a pandemic, when faced with market instabilities, a community can be flexible and shift through various phases.

PHASE ONE STAY AT HOME ORDER

PRIMARY GOALS

- Protect & enhance brand reputation
- Focus on Awareness marketing initiatives
- Nurture existing leads, build relationships on a personal level
- Virtual tours only

PHASE TWO: SOFT REOPENING

PRIMARY GOALS

- Continue to focus on brand reputation
- Shift from full awareness to awareness and lead generation tactics
- Virtual & in-person tours; making sure resident families are a priority.

PHASE THREE: BUSINESS AS USUAL

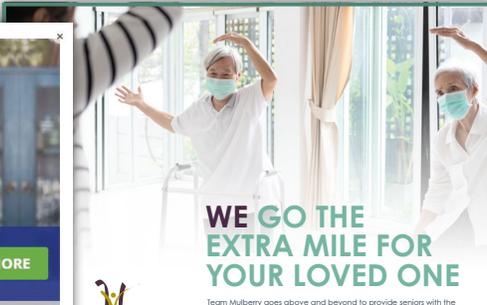
PRIMARY GOALS

- Return to original marketing plan
- Assess business goals to determine mix between awareness & lead gen
- Full in-Person tours with option for virtual due to comfort level of prospects.



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SOLUTIONS

Milestone-based marketing was implemented in a variety of ways across the Creating Results portfolio. Through the marketing plans and tactics that remained, many communities promoted what they were doing operationally to support residents, homeowners and families. Additionally, offering new ways to connect, shifting away from in-person tours and events to holding these events virtually. This meant adapting to new technologies and solutions to provide a seamless experience for our client's prospects.



EMPATHETIC MESSAGING:

Rather than focusing on the hard sell and risking sounding tone deaf, many of Creating Results' clients shifted their messaging to focus more on the front-line workers and operations and what they were doing to keep their residents and homeowners safe. It was not about the features, benefits and lifestyle of the community (much of which was shut down anyway), but the safety and security that residential living brings.



TECHNOLOGY BOOM:

Prior to COVID-19, terms like Zoom, Video Email Messaging, and Virtual Tours were not something we had in our everyday lives in the industries we serve. Now one year later, these are more commonplace, and prospects have been adopting technology at a faster rate than ever before. Many of Creating Results' clients have seen tremendous success and had the ability not only to serve their current residents and homeowners, but also to pursue future residents and homeowners through the use of digital tools.



WEBINARS & VIRTUAL EVENTS:

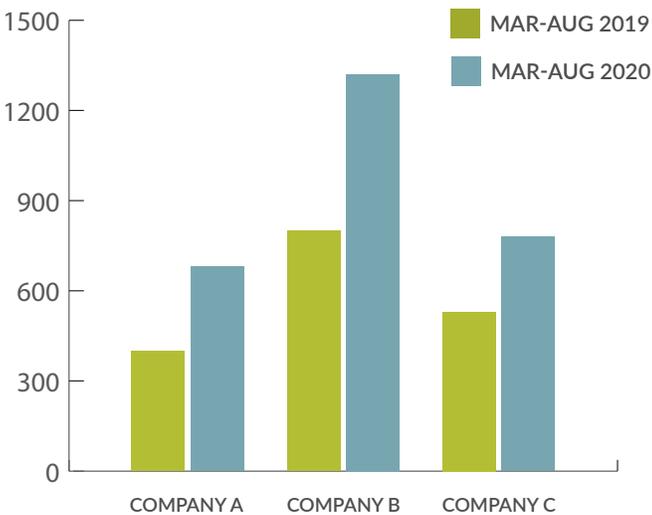
Another area that saw great growth in 2020, and tactics we see continuing in the future, are webinars and virtual events. Both for lifestyle events as well as lead nurturing or sales focused events, this is a way to continue to connect with prospects. Prior to COVID-19 many communities relied on in-person events to drive leads and nurture them through the funnel and the communities that adjusted and turned these into virtual opportunities saw the most success.

Results

Through quick reaction, and flexibility and collaboration with our clients, we were able to impact and sustain marketing and sales in a variety of ways. Whether it was continuing to generate leads, retain depositors or nurture an existing database, the results were dependent on what stage of the milestone-based planning they were in and/or helping a community thrive.

Even during a time when the industry as a whole had taken a hit, many of our clients were still able to meet and exceed their inquiry and lead goals. For those that did not, it was an intentional shift to focus more inwardly. Rather than generate more leads, the focus became more on nurturing existing leads and community outreach to maintain census and brand reputation and mitigate negative impact of market instabilities.

Impact of market instability on inquiry generation across all CR clients *(hint: there wasn't one...)*



Results from CR clients:

173% increase
in organic social traffic
compared to 2019

40% increase
in email engagement & website traffic
compared to 2019

76% increase
in paid social traffic
compared to 2020

Average click through rate via paid advertising increased by **22%**
(.71% vs .56% - industry benchmark is .46%)

Average sales and occupancy in 2020 against the national averages in 55+ and Senior Living

85%
CR Client Average Occupancy
(National Average 80.7%)

3.325
CR Client Average Sales Per Month
(National Average 3.2)



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Creating Results is a generational marketing agency with more than 25 years of experience in senior living and 55+ housing. Exclusively focused on 50+ audiences, we design solutions for each client's competitive landscape, assets and goals.

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