

SHOWING YOU CARE:

How to bring brand to later living



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It's safe to say 2020 will be remembered as the year things changed. From our individual preferences on everything from workspace to wellness, to our perception of what truly matters in life—it's been a year of seismic shifts in our wants, needs and desires, no matter the age.

2020
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These adapting sentiments, of course, are equally prevalent for those in their later years. With an ever-ageing national population and our new-found emphasis on the home, the pandemic has accelerated necessary, more nuanced conversations on the topic of later living: where it's less about isolated institutional settings, and more about inviting and inspiring environments.



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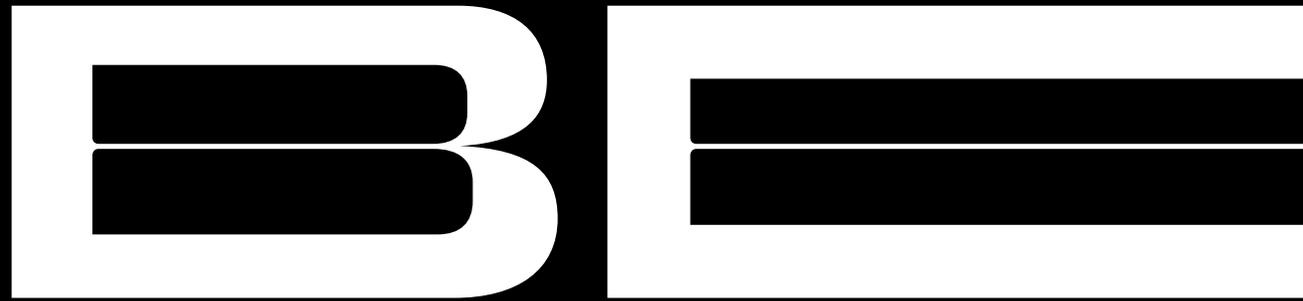


Looking ahead, in the wake of ongoing social shielding for the elderly and increasing loneliness concerns, the market is anticipating a wave goodbye to the secluded care homes of the past and hello to a new decade of retirement 'communities'—that is, village developments providing shared social spaces, on-site support, and a range of leisure amenities.

We've seen AXA-backed Retirement Villages Group announce plans to build 30 new villages across the UK in the next 10 years, while US private equity firm Lone Star made a bid to acquire McCarthy & Stone to expand their portfolio of communities. The competition is heating up, and buyers are beginning to take notice.

So, how can owners and investors across the sector best capitalise on the opportunity and distinguish their offering for sunset-living superiority?

Here's three tips to best utilise brand to meet buyer desire:



01
ASPIRATIONAL

02
INNOVATIVE

03
HUMAN

1. Be aspirational

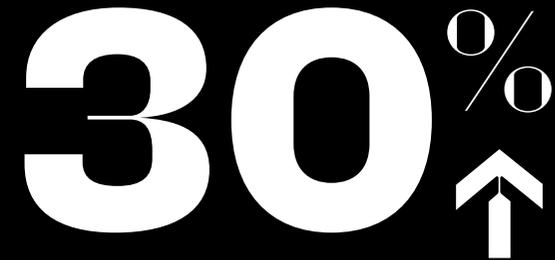
With private retirement units set to increase 30% by 2022 and the number of over-65's on the hunt for property only multiplying, greater demonstrations of difference and dedication to improved lifestyle will be needed. To do it, developments need to take a service-led, lifestyle-focused approach—where it's value add, premium applied.



By rooting your brand story in the desires of your audience, you'll place your development in the realm of aspiration—rather than the zone of fear or frustration.



To resonate with prospects, retirement properties need to listen to the needs of their people. Get to know your seniors and their children, find out what their concerns and hopes are, and be sure to cascade it across your messaging. By rooting your brand story in the desires of your audience, you'll place your development in the realm of aspiration—rather than the zone of fear or frustration.



30%

According to Knight Frank, private retirement units are set to increase 30% by 2022.

2. Be innovative

Though you're positioning a product for an elderly audience, it's also important to remember that this is a fast-moving, rapidly innovating sector. Over half of seniors today are internet users, and nearly two-thirds recognise that technology can improve their lives. As digitally-savvy generations head towards retirement, developers will need to consider the different types of interactions residents will come to expect.



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But remember, brand-led innovation doesn't just mean a nicely designed website or app. It's about assessing the customer journey and understanding what experiences or touchpoints may enhance your services. From keeping families connected through virtual software to ensuring resident safety through interactive tablets, the presence of telecare is only set to grow—and become ever more crucial for your offering.

3. Be human

In a sector so focused on management and statistics, retirement homes need to cement down on the lifeblood of their business: their people. The physical and mental impact of social interaction is understood and appreciated now more than ever before, and operators of retirement properties should ensure their communications showcase resident engagement—building a sense of connection and belonging that echoes the successes of communal retirement villages.

As we look ahead, those in the retirement sector will need to use brand as a connector: the platform from which all moments, activations and conversations are inspired to bring people together. From internal event series to a wide range of must-have amenities, establishing community requires planning and perseverance. It's about crafting values and experience principles from day one of development—ensuring those internally will feel part of something meaningful, and those external desire to get involved.

The dawn is coming for a new era of later living. Something more inviting, encouraging and actively engaging. As the market intensifies and the number of developments surge, brand will be pivotal for operators and investors to enhance their experience and amplify what's unique or differentiating.

Now, it's time to focus on something worth caring about.

Rowdy Studio is a full-service agency specialising in brand strategy, design and activation. Take a look at our extensive work in the real estate sector here.



Will Bosanko is Head of Strategy at Rowdy Studio

Having led brand engagements across Europe, Asia, North America and the Middle East, Will understands the universal need for simplicity—always ensuring that our strategies and experiences feel clear, bold and authentic.

At Rowdy Studio, our approach is all about blending sound strategy with loud ideas. The big thinking with the practical outputs. Generating the noise that helps you stand out, with the order that makes it tangible.

All in all, building brands that drive business objectives and make meaningful connections with audiences.

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