



State of Industry

State of Senior Living Industry Report 2019 -- What do you think?

By Susan Saldibar

So, this silver tsunami we're waiting for is taking its sweet time. According to G5's State of the Industry Report, it's still about 10 years away. And, the unfortunate fact remains that average occupancy remains at around 88%, its lowest levels in seven years.

How's that for a depressing way to kick off an article, let alone a new year? But, as with anything, numbers are only part of a bigger picture. I spoke with Celena Canode, Marketing Campaign Manager for [G5](#) (G5 is a Senior Housing Forum partner) about the report, which not only paints the "big picture" but gets into the real estate and marketing weeds on the things that are key to those who want to succeed in this industry. They've pulled data from several sources, including Marcus and Millichap Seniors Housing Research, NIC Map Market Fundamentals and Mercer U.S. Health, to mention a few.

The report is large (23 pages), so you will want to download it, which you can do [here](#). With Celena's help, I put together some excerpts to give you a taste of what's covered in the report.

Market Trends:

1. Baby boomer demand is still about ten years out (the average age of an assisted living resident is 83 years and the oldest baby boomer is 72 years old)
2. Occupancy rate is 88%, the lowest rate in seven years.
3. The shortage of skilled workers continues to grow. Between 2019 and 2026 healthcare jobs will account for about 2.3 million new jobs; 1.6 of which will be personal care and home health aides and nurses.

These challenges come as no surprise. The report digs beneath these numbers, however, and provides some insight into these trends and ways they may impact the senior housing market.

Real Estate Marketing Insights:

1. In Q3 2018 searches for senior living continued to increase.
2. Q3 2018 search inquiries grew 11% over Q3 2017.
3. Advertising “clicks” have increased by 13% year over year.
4. 55% of all clicks come from mobile devices, 27% from desktops and 19% from tablets.

These numbers make me wonder if this could be the calm before the storm. And I mean that in a good way! I know that, as a boomer, I've looked at a few independent living communities over this past year. My guess is that the 55% of clicks from cell phones will continue to grow. I know several people who basically had nothing to do with the internet until they got their iPhones. (Hint: Might want to check out how your website looks on an iPhone or Android. G5 can help, by the way.)

Digital Marketing Landscape:

1. The customer “journey” is changing, as marketers adapt strategies to engage at each touchpoint along the way.
2. Local search is becoming more important as local SEO heats up to compete with large numbers of new communities coming online in 2019.
3. AI will be fueling more digital advertising to deliver personalized experiences to prospects. It will also be used to maintain high page ranking.

Unless you're living in a cave, you've probably already been on the receiving end of this new wave of marketing. I think Steve Moran once called it “scary cool” or something like that. I tend to agree. But the bottom line, according to Celena and G5, is that senior living communities need to get really good at understanding the unique personas and journeys of your prospects.

To say that these numbers and trends are just the “tip of the iceberg” is an understatement. There is so much more in the way of information and useful insight in this report. I've just skimmed the surface. You can access the full G5 State of the Industry report [here](#).

