



CASE STUDY: SUN VALLEY LODGE ACQUIRES NEW RESIDENTS WITH MAPS AND SEARCH ADS

ONLINE VISIBILITY RISES FOR THE RETIREMENT HOME'S WEBSITE, WHICH GETS MORE THAN 17,000 MONTHLY HITS

Sun Valley Lodge, a nonprofit retirement home in Arizona, wanted to build its business, but was up against corporate owned retirement communities — that came with massive corporate budgets. Although it had a great, longstanding reputation, it was losing business to these companies who could spend the money on larger marketing initiatives. With a new marketing director, Sun Valley Lodge was looking for a way to level the marketing playing field at a low cost, which is why it turned to digital to maximize its efforts and stay within budget.

CHALLENGE

Arizona has a much-deserved reputation as a state with a lot of retirees. Responding to seniors' desire to relocate to warmer climates in their later years, the state now has a wealth of retirement communities. It's great for those looking for a variety of options, but it also breeds a competitive market for businesses.


As a nonprofit retirement home, Sun Valley Lodge, located in Sun City, Arizona, doesn't have the same major budget as privatized retirement communities, which typically operate on a much larger scale and, therefore, much larger marketing spend.

"Fifty years ago, there weren't any options, but now the area has become a mecca for retired people," says Mike Kloberdanz, the marketing and resource development director at Sun Valley Lodge. "We might be well-established, but we can't just sit back and hope our reputation brings in the residents."

With that in mind, Kloberdanz looked for a marketing solution that would give Sun Valley Lodge similar reach and exposure as the corporate-owned retirement communities, but at a fraction of the cost.

KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

IN A 30-DAY PERIOD

17,806
Website impressions 

2.23%
Click-through rate 

48
Actual leads 

90% of website traffic from paid search ads is from new visitors.
– Google, 2013

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STRATEGY

When Kloberdanz joined the team at Sun Valley Lodge, he inherited a relatively unsophisticated marketing plan. Kloberdanz overhauled the retirement community's website and sought a strategy to increase traffic — enter: G/O Digital. After researching solutions and providers, Kloberdanz narrowed his search to just a few providers, but ultimately G/O Digital came out on top.

"The solution was explained to me in ways I could understand," he says. "And I felt like there was more of a commitment to the process of developing and improving the services over time as opposed to just signing me up so the sales guy could hit his quota."

Sun Valley Lodge's solution included Local Search Advertising and Maps & Reputation Monitoring, which were implemented in July and August 2013, respectively. Since the company's primary goals were being found in relevant searches, driving more traffic to the website and being competitive with privately owned retirement communities, the G/O Digital solution helped people find and click through to the website.

"Many of the places around here are corporate owned, and they might have bigger budgets," Kloberdanz says. "Digital advertising helps me level the playing field and get more bang for my buck."

Continued optimization and testing of its local search campaign to stay relevant for specific keywords and search terms remained important to Sun Valley Lodge. Campaign enhancements included everything from testing against negative keywords to developing new ad copy that resonated more with the intended audience. "I've enjoyed working with G/O Digital because they're always willing to work with me to help me learn and improve my campaign," he says.

RESULTS

The solution has been running smoothly, generating qualified leads on a monthly basis since summer 2013. Through 2014, the website saw as many as **17,806 impressions** driven by the Local Search Advertising, which led to a **2.23 percent click-through rate**. Once those searchers got to the Sun Valley Lodge site, **48 became actual leads**, in the form of potential new tenants for the retirement community.

"Website traffic directly correlates to people gathering information about us and eventually becoming residents," Kloberdanz says. "That's helping us keep a full house, which is our lifeblood. I always ask 'Where did you hear about us?' Most of the people who come to us have found our website."

Not only has G/O Digital's solution been instrumental in directing traffic to the Sun Valley Lodge website, it has also helped center and direct the internal

KEY DIGITAL MARKETING DELIVERABLES



Maps & Reputation Monitoring —
Ensures that your business is visible, listed and monitored all over the Internet and across devices.



Local Search Advertising —
Using technology, successful keyword banks and experienced specialists, local search advertising gets your business found and clicked on through Google, Yahoo and Bing searches.

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marketing department around a unified strategy. “[The solution] has really helped me understand what the public is looking for and what their needs or perceived needs are,” he says. “That, in turn, is helping me to more effectively market to them.”

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— Mike Kloberdanz,
Sun Valley Lodge

LOCAL SEARCH ADVERTISING + MAPS BUILD A WINNING COMBO



CONCLUSION

With the help of G/O Digital, Sun Valley Lodge successfully leveraged its new website for additional exposure to local and national retirees looking to settle down in Arizona. The retirement community also shows that just building a website is never enough — it also needs a promotional strategy to function as a successful marketing tool; otherwise, it’s just a pretty website lost in the ether of the Internet.

“Marketing is a subject that not everyone knows a lot about,” Kloberdanz says. “Through the years I’ve been working with G/O Digital, I really have valued that education, the willingness to adapt, and the effort put into trying new things to make my marketing better.”

And having the right digital marketing strategies has positioned Sun Valley Lodge to compete with the larger, corporate retirement communities in the area — which is not unlike many small businesses looking for solutions to keep up with big-box retailers in their local markets. The right solutions on the right platforms can level the playing field for any small business, even with a small budget.

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