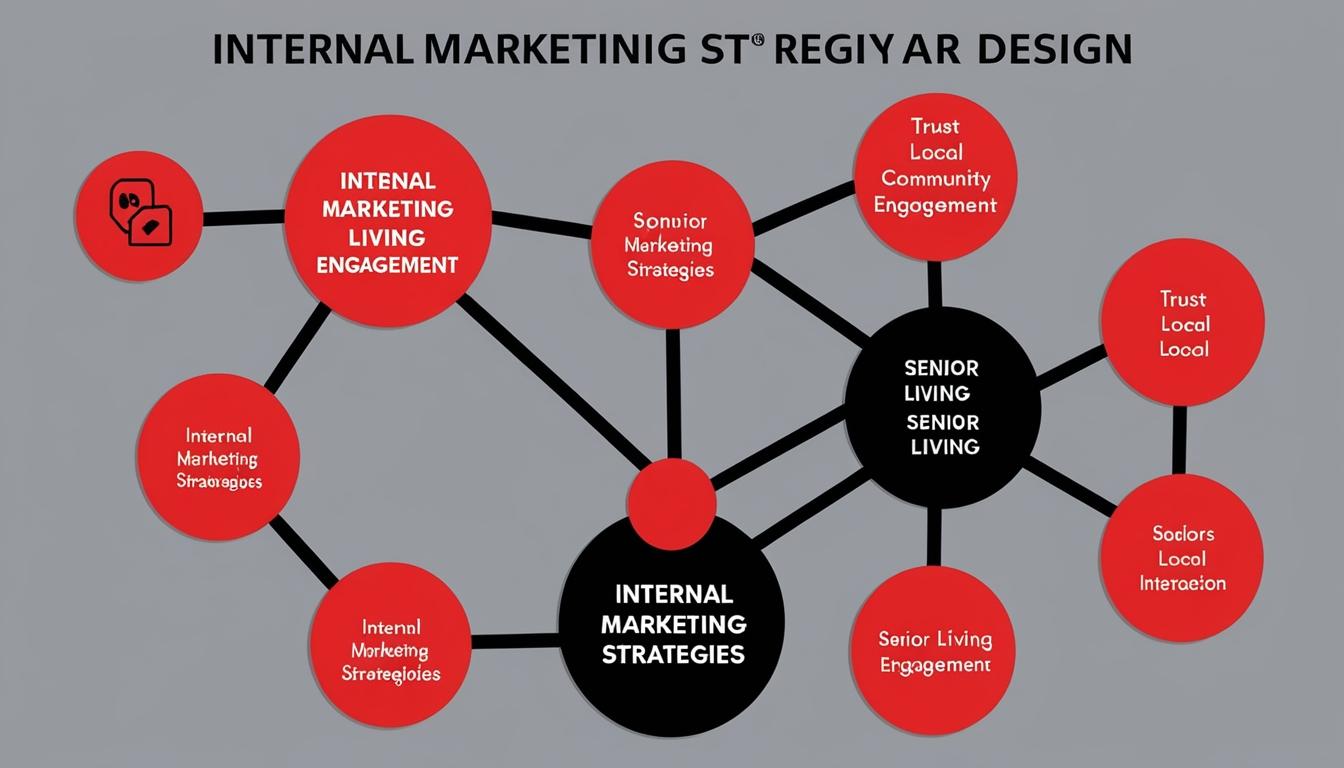
# Senior living operators shift towards internal marketing strategies



Senior living operators are currently adapting their internal marketing strategies to increase organic leads while reassessing their reliance on third-party aggregators. This shift has been particularly noted among several key players in the industry, each pursuing unique pathways to enhance occupancy rates and improve their outreach efforts.

Sonida Senior Living, headquartered in Dallas, Texas, is ramping up its internal marketing focus. CEO Brandon Ribar disclosed that in 2024, the company aims to strengthen its internal marketing strategies, building upon a significant uptick in leads generated from their website and local referrals. By 2023, these channels contributed to 56% of their leads, compared to just 41% in 2022. Ribar emphasised the company's commitment to becoming a trusted "information provider" for prospective residents. “You just want to be trusted. You want to be a place that people can feel like they’re getting information that is based on experience [and] outcomes,” he remarked while speaking to Senior Housing News.

Ribar's team has recognised challenges associated with large third-party referral partners due to a competitive lead environment, prompting a reconfiguration of their partnerships. With smaller boutique referral firms on the rise, Ribar indicated that operators often receive duplicative leads from multiple sources, which can negatively affect conversion rates.

Beztak, another key player based in Farmington Hills, Michigan, is taking a more drastic approach. The company has severed all contracts with the referral service A Place for Mom as part of their strategy to increase occupancy through direct efforts. As Jason Kohler, executive vice president of senior living at Beztak, described, the focus is now on local paid referral partners with in-depth knowledge of the communities. Beztak has launched a dedicated social media marketing initiative and plans to augment these efforts further in 2025, aiming for significant growth in occupancy rates.

Priority Life Care, headquartered in Fort Wayne, Indiana, is also pivoting towards internal marketing methods. The company has observed an increase in lead generation through enhancements made to its website and SEO strategies. Vice President of Sales and Marketing Jill Record noted that the shift is aimed at engaging the "more tech-savvy" adult children of prospective residents. With nearly half (45%) of their referrals now originating from their website, Priority Life Care reported a notable 63% increase in move-ins for 2024 compared to 2023.

As the trend continues, the senior living industry is seeing a pronounced movement towards building internal marketing capabilities and nurturing local relationships. Sonida, for instance, plans to increase its tech spending by as much as 30% in 2025 to refine its organic search rankings and offer detailed resources on its website. Furthermore, the incorporation of artificial intelligence to analyse calls with prospects represents a forward-thinking approach to training sales teams and addressing potential residents' concerns effectively.

While the strategic pivot towards internal marketing is pivotal, Ribar clarified that Sonida will maintain a selective relationship with third-party aggregators, stressing that these partnerships must prove their value in an evolving market landscape. “Given the long demand runway ahead, third-party aggregators have to deliver great value for operators,” Ribar stated.

As companies in the senior living sector refine their marketing avenues and redirect efforts toward internal channels, their ability to adapt to these changing dynamics will shape the future of business practices within the industry.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

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