



Clubhouse at the Gatherings at Lynwood.
PHOTO: COURTESY BEAZER HOMES

From Statistics to Sales

How developers and builders are using research to improve their products, marketing, and sales in an increasingly competitive and diversified market.

THE PAST

“GERIATRIC HERESY. But for the growing army of active oldsters willing and able to cut out and start a new life, a dramatically successful solution has grown up during the past few years: the ‘retirement city,’ restricted to people of a certain age,” wrote *Time* magazine on August 3, 1962. The article refers to Delbert Webb’s 30,000-acre gamble in Phoenix, Ariz., better known as Sun City.

Sun City was the first successful retirement solution for Americans who were living longer and more vital lives after World War II. There was a need to provide a more active lifestyle to fulfill these newfound years of life. The 100,000 prospects visiting on the community’s opening weekend foreshadowed the far-reaching success of this new “active oldsters” community model.

THE PRESENT

Today, there remain thousands of communities built upon Webb’s foundation of providing aging Americans with the activities and amenities they require to enjoy their golden years. But just as Del Webb experienced 50 years ago, the active adult paradigm is shifting once again. The model that has worked so well, for so long, is quickly being outpaced by a plethora of new offerings. The rise of 78 million baby boomers, who control nearly 70% of the nation’s wealth, is pressuring the industry to change. This new generation of active adults has a whole new set of preferences and desires for life after 55.

THE SOLUTION

To be successful in this changing industry, builders and developers are using a number of tried and innovative approaches to gather information on their targeted consumers. They have implemented a combination of secondary market research, internal analysis, and primary research. Each category brings specific advantages toward understanding the ever-changing dynamic of the active adult marketplace.

The 55+ developers and home builders of today have a renewed commitment to research and analysis, seeking to improve their understanding of the change that is happening around them. Nine leading 55+