SENTRICS®

THE PACE OF CHANGE

COMMUNITIES SHARE THEIR TECHNOLOGY SPENDING PLANS

COMMUNITIES INCREASE TECHNOLOGY SPEND

Communities are turning to technology to help solve challenges in everything from managing isolation to reducing falls. In September of 2020, *Senior Housing News* published an article about how COVID-19 was accelerating technology spend for senior living communities. In an independent study of more than 250 readers, it noted that *nearly 80% of senior living providers increased technology investment to address the pandemic, and 87% expected to increase their technology spend going forward.*

On August 10, 2021, Forbes built on that report and discussed the value of using "smart" technology to support and address basic needs of seniors. This included maximizing their quality of life through security and safety, communication and socialization, learning, and health and wellness.

This got us thinking: What technology are communities purchasing or are planning to purchase, and how will they use it? In 2021, we asked participants of local and national conferences exactly what their technology purchase plans were. Their answers may surprise you.
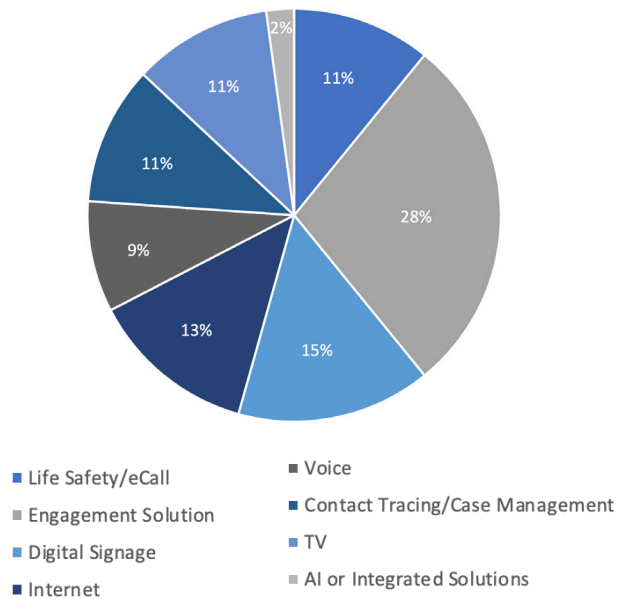
TECHNOLOGY CHANGES COME IN MANY DIFFERENT COLORS

Technology Change Plans

Legend:
- Life Safety/eCall
- Engagement Solution
- Digital Signage
- Internet
- Voice
- Contact Tracing/Case Management
- TV
- AI or Integrated Solutions

Pie chart values: 2%, 11%, 11%, 28%, 11%, 11%, 9%, 13%, 15%

Communities are making technology changes across the board. What was once a tech-adverse group is now embracing technology to address basic resident needs. Top of mind are plans to change or upgrade **Engagement** technologies at 28%. Not surprising, technology is viewed by many as a way to combat the effects of isolation. Communities that traditionally filled calendars to keep residents busy, had to find new ways to help residents connect with each other and the community.

Digital Signage, a common staple in communities, is getting a face lift with 15% of survey respondents reporting purchase plans. Static or scrolling images in community rooms will make way for interactive tools residents can access in their apartments.

Internet upgrades came in third with 13% of respondents looking to make upgrades from common-area or community Wifi systems. Like TV, residents expect to have a reliable Internet connection today to do everything from video conference calls to streaming favorite movie channels. **One community reported that 65% of its residents now use the Internet with a growth of 15% over the last two years.**

Worth mentioning is a tie of 11% for technology upgrades in **Life Safety**, **Voice** technology and automated **Contact Tracing and Disease Management** solutions.

ENGAGEMENT WILL BECOME MORE TECH DRIVEN

During the height of the pandemic, articles about resident loneliness, isolation and depression were easy to find. Communities became acutely aware of their reliance on calendared events designed to bring residents together. With the status quo challenged, communities looked to technology to engage residents in new and different ways.

Engagement solutions originally designed to replace operational efficiencies—easy-access dining menus, electronic calendars and weather apps—made way for engagement platforms that created a personalized experience for residents.
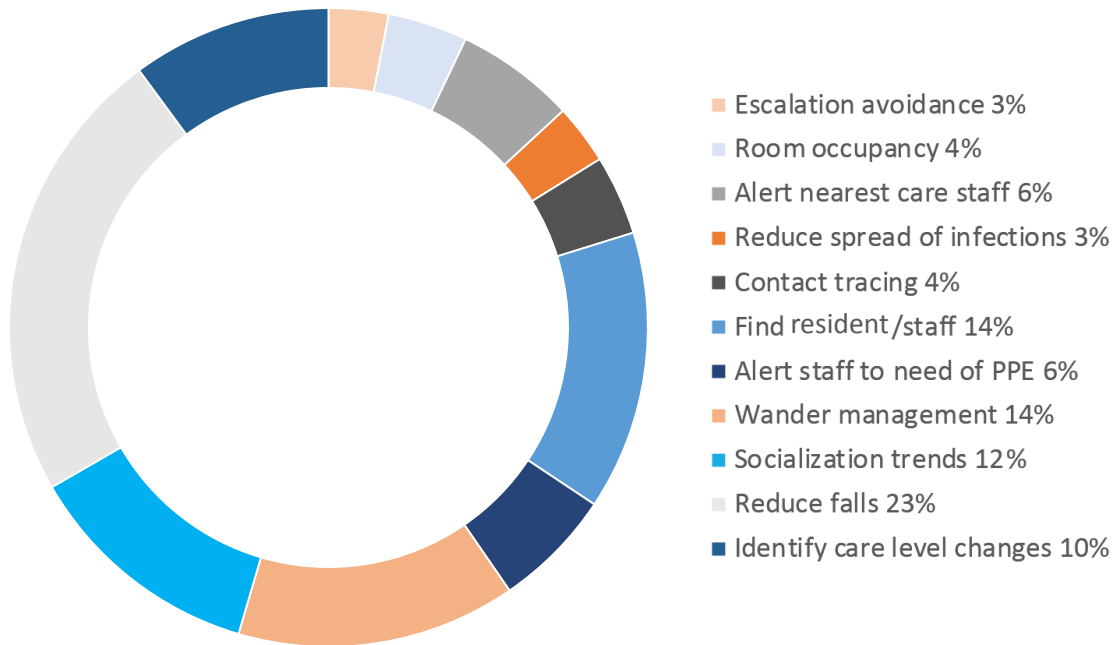
The concept of Resident Journey—the idea that a community can create a personalized resident experience from the moment a resident first moves in until they leave—was born. So too was the concept that resident experience needed to do more than measure resident attendance at events; resident experience now must impact resident health and wellbeing.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES CHANGE FOR THE BETTER
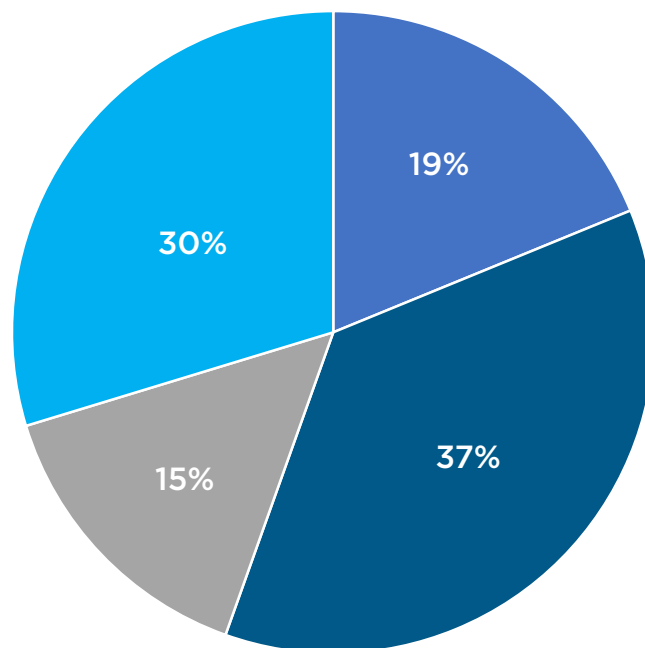
- Provide more ways for small groups to get involved with common interests
- Provide more individualized opportunities to engage
- Provide additional large group activities to give residents more choice
- Provide more ways for small groups to get involved with common interests

RISK FACTORS RTLS HELP MANAGE

- Escalation avoidance 3%
- Room occupancy 4%
- Alert nearest care staff 6%
- Reduce spread of infections 3%
- Contact tracing 4%
- Find resident/staff 14%
- Alert staff to need of PPE 6%
- Wander management 14%
- Socialization trends 12%
- Reduce falls 23%
- Identify care level changes 10%

RTLS GAINS CREDIBILITY IN SENIOR LIVING

What was once a nice-to-have technology has gained credibility with the introduction of software apps made specifically for senior living. Real Time Location Systems, or RTLS, has come of age in senior living with the most recognized value in the ability to reduce falls. One way RTLS-based life safety solutions can reduce falls is by alerting caregivers when a resident has ambulated without a needed assistive walking device like a cane or walker.

Wander management/detection and finding residents and staff when you need them are tied for the number two value of RTLS-based life safety systems. Imagine how quickly your staff could find a memory care resident who passed through a door sensor, or locate a resident for needed medication.

The ability to track socialization trends was the number three reason our audience valued RTLS solutions. A community can no longer rely on staff to keep track of resident activities. RTLS solutions can do it automatically because it knows the location of each resident.

As the popularity of RTLS grows, communities will discover the value of completing contact tracing automatically when the flu breaks out, the ability to alert the nearest care staff when a resident needs help, and even the ability to identify and demonstrate to family when a resident's level of care needs change because you can show how much care a resident is actually receiving at all times.

COMMUNITIES USE OUTSIDE RESOURCES TO HELP RESIDENTS ADOPT TECHNOLOGY

Most communities want technology adoption assistance

7%

93%

■ Yes ■ No
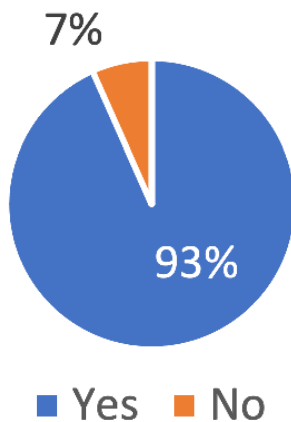
While communities are embracing technology fully as a way to manage residents and their consumer-based expectations for modern technology conveniences, **97% of survey respondents recognized that they can't do it alone.** They need help driving technology adoption among residents and staff.

Many communities are turning to a Tech Concierge service to host a full- or part-time technical expert on premise to help residents do everything from hang TVs to connect personal devices, like a tablet, phone or printer to the Internet. These same resources can also help staff members embrace, rather than run from technology to help them be more efficient and effective.

SMART TECHNOLOGY IS HERE TO STAY

While communities may have resisted technology originally, it has become a foundation of their go-forward strategy. Operators who previously succumbed to the fears of technology have recognized that the challenges of being left behind technologically are far greater than the small bumps of technology adoption.

And the long-term value, and the ability to mitigate risk in a new world can only be accomplished with smart technology that puts the needs of residents first.

What technology are you implementing next? And how can Sentrics help?

About Sentrics

Sentrics helps communities and hospitals nationwide transform into more sophisticated, clinically oriented, risk-management businesses that put the consumer at the center of care. The Sentrics360℠ suite is a powerful set of solutions that help you keep your residents physically safe, medically well, socially engaged, expertly entertained, and mentally challenged. It creates a 360-degree view of the wellbeing of each senior living resident to help operators anticipate needs and prevent adverse events.

The result? Improved outcomes. Reduced risk. Better experience.

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