

Successful Selling in the Assisted Living Communities Vertical



Understand their needs

Pain points and challenges

- Legacy technology: Communities that have POTS lines are seeing skyrocketing costs and may even be paying for other services that are unnecessary. Those with on-premises systems, particularly ones that are end-of-life, are constrained by limited features, lack of mobility with their handsets, and existing contracts that have high maintenance costs.
- Complex, patchwork of solutions: This lacks centralized management and is difficult to support.

Key requirements

- Wireless devices that enable staff to communicate from anywhere in the facility—while walking around or attending to residents
- Overhead paging/intercom capabilities
- Centralized, single-phone solution for multiple locations

According to the National Institute...

Assisted living communities are for people who need help with daily care, though not as much as a nursing care community provides. Residents will typically live in their own rooms or apartments and share common areas. On-site staff provide 24-hour supervision as well as a range of services, including help with medications and personal care, social and recreational activities, and more. According to the National Institute on Aging, assisted living communities in the U.S. tend to range in size from 25 residents to 120 or more.

Navigate key decision-makers

The decision-makers are usually the Executive Director (ED) of the community and the Regional Director of Operations (RDO). Typically, the RDO will approve the purchase and then the ED will sign the quote.

It's important to understand that assisted living communities are normally run by a centralized management company with its own IT team. Even if you engage at an individual site, you could run into roadblocks from the management firm's IT team, particularly if they have a preferred vendor list.

Communicate relevant value

- Discuss the limitations of their current premises-based PBX phone system and management compared to the value of a cloud-based solution. This includes mobility, customization, centralization, and elimination of high maintenance costs—as well as how the solution will help network everything together to centralize it.
- Describe how your support team operates in contrast to the level of support they're getting today.
- Pitch how the solution will centralize and simplify their phone system.

Here are some specific capabilities to highlight:

- Ease of use for staff and residents
- Private numbers for residents
- Intercom capability from the admin phones to the residents
- Conference bridge and video capabilities so patients can connect with family members
- Call-forwarding to a mobile device for business continuity, for example in the event of a storm
- Mobile phone app for personnel
- Wi-Fi cordless, for example for communities that have security after hours or for nurse carts



Tip: Provide tangible proof of value. Get copies of their phone and Internet bills, then provide them with an executive summary of savings for the next 5 years.

Create compelling packaging and pricing

Most communities charge a certain amount to the resident each month for phone services, so individual room billing is typically not required. However you decide to package and price the offering, keep it simple. Here are two examples:

1. Create two bundles, (limited/unlimited, small/large, etc.) with additional charges for phones and hardware; or
2. Create a set rate for all communities under the management company's purview with a unique bundle for each site for billing purposes.

When it comes to discounting, here are different approaches that our partners have found successful:

- Discount NRC, keeping MRR full price
- Provide free phones when they buy multiple lines of business—Our Device as a Service (DaaS) program, which provides hardware as a per-device rental expense rather than an up-front capital purchase allows you to include low phone rental costs in custom seat bundles to support this offering
- Offer per-room discounts for a billed location based on quantity

Consider creating features that address needs specific to assisted living communities to help differentiate your solution. For example:

- Create a “menu line”—a number that residents can call to get the menu of the day, which staff can easily change daily.
- Enable 911 calls to be presented to the front desk so they can listen in and help coordinate.

With these tips, you will be able to have a relevant and differentiated conversation with prospects in the Assisted Living Communities vertical. Good luck!