

Case Study: Using Virtual Reality to Drive Engagement



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Categories:

- ◆ Reduced Social Isolation
- ◆ Increased Resident Engagement and Satisfaction
- ◆ Increased Staff Confidence and Efficiencies

About the Organization

Organization Name:

Oakmont Senior Living

Main Contributors:

Kristin Barnes, Director of Activities, Oakmont Senior Living; David Stoller, Director of Community Engagement, Rendever.

Organization Type(s):

Luxury Assisted Living & Memory Care

Organization Description:

Oakmont Senior Living is a recognized leader in retirement living known for providing an impressive array of five-star amenities, an award-winning culinary program, and professionally trained, compassionate team members in purpose-built communities. While every community is built to extremely high standards, we take great pride in providing a custom experience in each city that we serve.

Project Description

Oakmont Senior Living sought a platform to provide residents with a technology-driven solution to build social connections, counter the impact of loneliness and isolation arising from COVID-19, establish differentiation in the marketplace, and reduce depression in new and existing residents. Rendever's virtual reality platform was selected to support these goals.

Socialization Modality

Audio chat, photo sharing, life stories, games, facilitated communications and conversations, virtual reality

System Embodiment

Tablet, virtual reality headset

Business Model

Oakmont Senior Living offers the finest in retirement living and senior communities, from the attention to detail in service delivery to the standard for excellence in care. Our goal is to turn the retirement lifestyle people have always wanted, and the community they've always imagined, into a reality.

Our organization was seeking to implement a new technology solution that would contribute to the brand reputation that Oakmont has built for itself (the finest in retirement living and senior communities), while offering residents a new and compelling engagement activity and supporting our staff members with additional resources. Our goal was to deliver meaningful experiences that build social connections within our individual communities and amongst our network of locations.

The resident experience is the most important aspect of our model, and therefore finding a partner to elevate that experience was critical. Selecting [Rendever](https://www.rendever.com) as a partner was a decision that has led to remarkable results. Its community engagement team has taken a bespoke approach to the needs of our East Sacramento community, supporting the adoption of Rendever through a seamless approach to onboarding, and they have also become a reliable extension of our activity staff — supporting any of our needs, no matter the day or time that we reach out.

Since the successful deployment of the first system at our East Sacramento location, we have decided to fast-track and expand Rendeвер to five more communities within our network. This decision was based largely on the tremendous support we have received from Rendeвер's team of experts, and the overwhelming positive responses we have received from our residents and teams.

Implementation Approach

The implementation and rollout of Rendeвер at our East Sacramento community was a frictionless process that was incredibly supported through the initial deployment over the first 90 days and continues to receive consistent attention from Rendeвер's community engagement team.

First, it was important that we select staff members who would champion the deployment at the point of care; this was deemed critical to success. Thus, a strong leadership group at the point of delivery would be required. Once we identified our team at the community, Rendeвер's onboarding process took over.

To start, Rendeвер hosted a "success call" to understand the unique needs of the East Sacramento community. This discussion highlighted interests of the residents, how the experiences were going to be delivered, the metrics for success, and a complete review of the onboarding and deployment plan – all by Rendeвер's team.

Upon completion of the success call, Rendeвер shipped our system and scheduled a 90-minute virtual training session to ensure that our team was fully trained on how to deploy the system at the point of care, and what pitfalls to watch out for while introducing the virtual reality devices. Following completion of this training, our staff members were ready to deliver experiences to our residents.

Upon deployment, our goals were very clear and achievable:

- ◆ Deliver a minimum of three Rendeвер experiences each week per resident.
- ◆ Attend a minimum of two RendeверLive™ sessions each week per resident.
- ◆ Improve resident engagement with the system, through repeat participation from our residents.
- ◆ Engage family members in the virtual reality experience by having them submit content (videos and photos) to Rendeвер's system, allowing residents to connect with family in a more immersive way.

Throughout the early months of the deployment, with an eye on the goals mentioned above, we remained aware that a successful deployment at our East Sacramento location could generate interest for other communities, help us further differentiate Oakmont in the senior living industry, and deliver experiences at our communities that are not available at a number of our competitor locations.

Early on in the deployment, it became clear that interest from our residents was growing fast, and we were pleased to see residents returning to enjoy Rendeвер sessions week after week.

Through the leadership delivered at the point of care by our team at East Sacramento, and the support we received from Rendeвер's community engagement team, we were pleased to see rapid adoption of the system and outcomes that proved this to be very worthwhile investment for our organization.

Outcomes

Reduced social isolation

Rendeвер's system is built on the mission to reduce social isolation through the power of shared social experiences, and we saw this outcome clearly take shape in our community. We were pleased to see resident engagement increase, moods improve, and residents increase their socialization through and following each of their experiences with Rendeвер.

Increased resident engagement and satisfaction

The conversations and discussions that take place after the delivery of a Rendeвер experience are what we see as a key benefit from this system. Once an experience has been delivered, conversations about what was seen and heard in the headset take over, and we see residents engaging with each other and staff members in a way that would otherwise not occur. Moreover, our residents seem quite happy with the opportunity to attend Rendeвер sessions, as can be seen through the repeat attendees and regular participation in the live sessions that Rendeвер offers. Finally, through the recent roll out of Rendeвер's family portal at our community, we've seen resident satisfaction increase as residents are now enjoying an exceptional way to get closer to their family.

Increased staff confidence and efficiencies

This solution has helped our team with confidence and efficiencies, as it has allowed them to have a “go-to” solution for compelling and engaging activities. Rendevers’ versatility is one of the aspects we have been pleasantly surprised with; in fact, video-based experiences are only a fraction of what their platform offers. The search feature allows our staff members to simply type in an address or town, and transport residents to the familiar scenes of home. Experiences like this stimulate both an emotional connection and meaningful conversation, which is beneficial for all involved. As well, Rendevers applications allow our team to engage residents in cognitive exercises presented in the form of simple games (iSpy, Balloon Popper), or provide a respite from anxiety through meditation and breathing applications. Of course, videos and activity guides are an important part of the delivery, but the versatility of Rendevers provides a reliable option for our team to engage with residents in a number of different yet meaningful ways.

Challenges and Pitfalls to Avoid

- ◆ Don’t let Rendevers, or any other piece of technology you invest in, sit on the shelf and collect dust. As with all technology, usage leads to adoption. Rendevers offers a comprehensive approach to onboarding that takes place during the first 90 days of deployment, and it’s designed perfectly to lead to adoption for your team. Take full advantage of this process to avoid this pitfall.
- ◆ Avoid the temptation to fall into a routine of delivering only videos. This system offers several powerful options to engage with residents, and limiting those experiences to videos alone would yield only a small portion of the value available with Rendevers, which exists in the relationships and authentic conversations that develop through their well-crafted approach to programming.
- ◆ Select the right team to lead this deployment as they will set the tone for how to maximize the ROI on this system. Rendevers acts as an extension of our team and working together is essential to a successful roll-out. You will get the support you need from Rendevers, so make sure the team selected to drive this at the community level has an incentive to succeed. It also helps to have a team that does not see technology as intimidating, but rather an exciting new addition to the activity program.

Lessons Learned/Advice to Share with Others

- ◆ The leaders at the point of care are critical to success; ensure they are comfortable with technology and motivated to see this deployment succeed.
- ◆ Leverage Rendevers’ community engagement team. This team is highly motivated to see each and every deployment succeed, and they are going to provide every opportunity for your team to succeed. Encourage your team to take full advantage of all the resources Rendevers provides.
- ◆ Rendevers can be used as a valuable sales tool when hosting tours or open houses. The power of Rendevers is best understood in a group with the headset on, so take full advantage of the impact a quick VR experience can have on potential residents and their families.