



**Commercial  
Communications  
Council**

## **Comms Council Beacon Awards 2018**

### **Case Study**

**Agency Name:** Carat  
**Advertiser Name:** MetlifeCare  
**Gold Beacon Award Category:** Best Use of Insight

#### *Life Begins at MetlifeCare*

*Although MetlifeCare offered wonderful quality of life in its retirement villages, it was going largely unnoticed by its target audience. Using insight to break the category formula around what residents want from retirement, Carat helped MetlifeCare improve its awareness and grow leads, and won Gold in the Best Use of Insight category in the Beacon Awards.*

#### **Background**

Metlifecare is New Zealand's third largest retirement village provider and is focused on enabling residents to live their own lives. But despite new apartments, a wide range of activities for residents, and even a restaurant menu designed by chef Simon Gault, Metlifecare was largely going unnoticed by its audience (people over 75) with unprompted awareness of 37%.

It was also battling perception issues around retirement villages being places full of elderly people at the end of their lives, and functional messaging around security and comfort.

#### **Campaign Objective**

MetlifeCare wanted Carat to help it achieve two goals:

- Increase unprompted awareness by 30% amongst the target audience (All People 75+).
- Generate 2,200 leads (+20% YOY).

This would mean overcoming barriers around spend (the media budget was 45% lower than its top two competitors) and low unprompted awareness (at 37%).

The brand image was also defined by competitive set and used a consistent media mix of newspaper, outdoor, radio and some TV to promote functional messages of security and comfort with the same stock imagery of 'happy' old people. The perception of moving into a

retirement village would also need addressing, with research revealing those aged 75+ think of it as 'the end' or admitting defeat.

## Campaign Overview

The Carat team spent a day at a MetlifeCare village, where they found life is genuinely different from other retirement brands. Seeing residents at yoga, learning new skills in activity sessions, tenpin bowling or working together in the communal vegetable garden showed they were leading their own lives.

To communicate this message, Carat identified two key insights:

1. Metlifecare residents were growing as individuals, with the village setting enabling rather than restricting this.
2. Non-Metlifecare residents (people over 75) were also seeking growth, as backed up by proprietary quantitative research (sample 2,500 people) into non-residents aged 75 +.

To change the current perception of Metlifecare from a place of deterioration to growth, Carat broke the category formula with a media-led strategy that invited non-residents into the world of Metlifecare, by leveraging their desire to learn and grow.

## Media Strategy

Carat's media strategy was a major shift from the client's current approach, with the budget divided equally between content creation (telling the stories of residents learning and growing through their passions) and open days, where non-residents could experience a local village for themselves.

In a content partnership with NZME (owner of brands particularly trusted by the target audience), Carat created the content-series '*Makers' Movement*', fronted by popular tv personality Sam Wallace, which told the stories of residents learning new skills and sharing new-found passions with others.

*Makers' Movement* ran as 90" video on NZHerald.co.nz and Metlifecare.co.nz, with a shortened version as pre-rolls, and advertorials in Canvas and *NZ Herald*.

Residents' activities provided additional content, with video content on NZHerald.co.nz and Metlifecare.co.nz, full page advertorials in *Canvas* and *NZ Herald* and via paid Facebook. More than 2500 cookies baked by residents as part of a campaign activity were distributed to the wider community as branded merchandise, and to drive interest in the villages.

MetlifeCare then opened its doors for "open days", to which potential residents could bring their family and meet residents and staff. Carat used community newspapers, unaddressed direct mail and press inserts to target homes within an 8km radius of a village, where 80% of residents come from. This was supported by 30" regional radio campaigns on ZB and Coast.

## Results

The media-led strategy paid off as Carat helped to generate 2,429 leads from Jan-June, exceeding its target by 10%, with 143 of those converting into apartment sales.

There was a 40% lift in unprompted awareness, 25% over target and surpassing the top brand in the category (Ryman) for unprompted awareness. Although not part of the objectives, brand consideration also increased from 18% to 21%.

For every \$1 spent on advertising, Carat generated \$126 in revenue.

There was no other campaign activity in market, and all other business and marketing variables remained the same.