



For Immediate Release

On Ageism Awareness Day, 3rd3rd Marketing Urges Organizations to Rethink How They See Age

Seattle, WA, October 9, 2025 – On Ageism Awareness Day, 3rd3rd Marketing, known as the “Un-Senior Living Agency,” is calling attention to one of the most overlooked forms of bias in modern culture: ageism. Too often, people are defined not by who they are or what they value, but by their age. This leads to limiting stereotypes, exclusionary practices, and missed opportunities for brands to truly connect, according to Cynthia Thurlow, principal of the agency.

The Problem: Ageism in Everyday Life

According to the World Health Organization, ageism manifests in stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel), and discrimination (how we act), with internalized ageism having notable effects on our health. These biases can show up in our interactions at work, with healthcare providers, in our communities, and exposure to advertising messaging. For example, casting older adults only in frailty roles, assuming younger workers are inexperienced, or marketing products exclusively by age group, rather than by shared values and lifestyles.

The impact is real: Yale research led by gerontologist Becca Levy found that older adults with positive self-perceptions of aging live 7.5 years longer than those with negative ones. Ageist messages don’t just affect self-esteem; they affect health, vitality, and longevity.

“Ageism creeps into marketing when we assume people’s identity is defined by their birth year,” said Thurlow. “In our work, which focuses on helping elevate senior living communities, we’ve found people consistently see themselves as 20 years younger than their chronological age. They don’t want to be reduced to a number; they want to be seen for their purpose, passions, and possibilities.”

3rd3rd Marketing works with organizations to dismantle ageist narratives and build communications that affirm identity, vitality, and inclusivity. Instead of targeting by age brackets, the agency helps clients focus on psychodemographics, interests, values, and aspirations that transcend chronological age.

At Hillcrest, a progressive senior living community in Los Angeles County, 3rd3rd shifted messaging toward more nuanced stories of culture, creativity, and deeper community that appeal to anyone, regardless of age. Updated imagery and aspirational storytelling helped occupancy rise from 90% to 97% in just seven months, proving that non-ageist messaging drives both engagement and results.

A noted expert in the industry, Thurlow embraces this internally at 3rd3rd as well. When the agency decided to post a photo with the ages of some of its team members on their website a few years back, *The New York Times* took notice. This November (November 2-5, 2025), 3rd3rd experts and senior living clients will take the stage at LeadingAge, the national association of nonprofit aging services providers, to share how creative marketing and messaging can break down ageism and promote practices that help older adults live and thrive.

The problem of ageism isn't confined to senior living; Thurlow sees it embedded across industries, from hiring to consumer branding. By rethinking age-based assumptions, organizations can:

- Attract more diverse talent
- Build stronger client relationships
- Create communities where people of all ages thrive

"We value wisdom and experience that comes with age, it's to be celebrated. The third-third of our lives holds promise and meaning that we often don't appreciate in our younger years," said Thurlow. "We are inspired by the stories we share and the work we do to change the dynamic around aging, from using updated imagery to asking prospective residents what is important to them."

To mark Ageism Awareness Day, 3rd3rd is releasing its educational booklet *Internalized Ageism*. The resource explores the psychology of aging and offers practical strategies for creating positive, empowering communications across sectors.

"Ageism is often called 'a prejudice against our feared future self,'" added Thurlow. "At 3rd3rd, we know we are cultural editors based on the advertising and messaging we distribute on behalf of our clients, and we take this seriously. On this day, and every day, we invite organizations to challenge assumptions, elevate human stories, and embrace communications that empower people at every stage of life."

About 3rd3rd Marketing

3rd3rd Marketing is the "Un-Senior Living Agency," partnering with senior living communities and mission-driven aging services organizations globally. By dismantling stereotypes and replacing them with aspirational narratives, 3rd3rd helps organizations to build authentic connections, increase engagement, and achieve lasting impact. For more information visit: 3r3rd.com.

Media Contact:

Shonne Fegan-Ehrhardt
3rd3rd Marketing
shonne@3rd3rd.com
847/962-9879



Photo Caption:

3rd3rd Marketing is the “Un-Senior Living Agency” and addresses ageism in marketing today on Ageism Awareness Day, and every day.