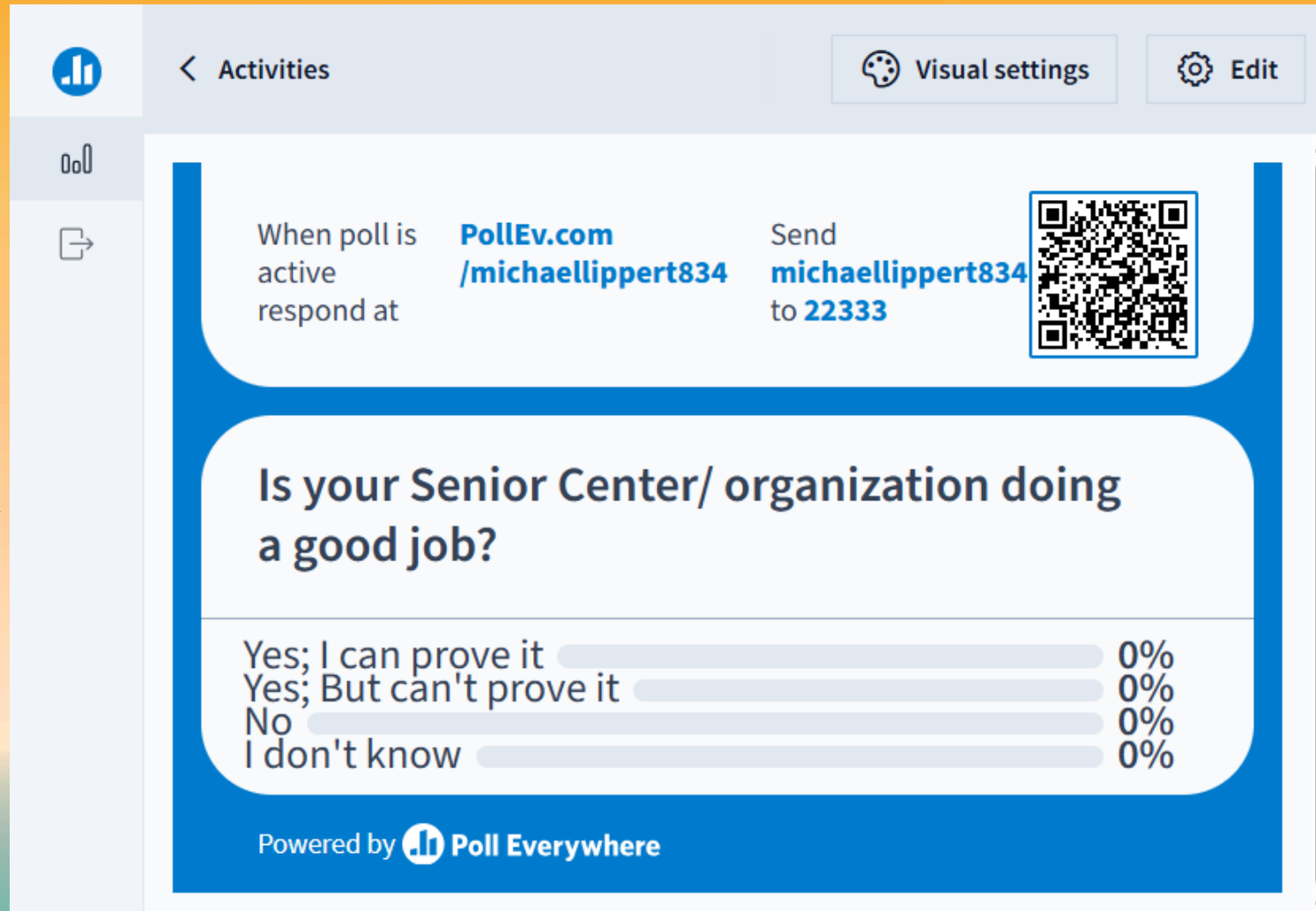


Thriving or Just Surviving?

Building the Senior Center of the Future with Smart Leadership & Data Driven Strategy



Show Me Summit 2025
Aging in a New Era
Michael Lippert

Agenda



Introduction: Observations across the country, trends



Setting the Stage: Define Thriving and Surviving



Building the Foundation: Practice Smart Leadership, Know Your Data,
Funding the Future



Building the Senior Center of the Future

Introduction: Observations and Trends

The Power of Food

- Centers have expanded food distribution to curbside and a food bank
 - 28% of centers provide emergency services through food bank
 - 9% do curbside pickup
- 19% have active HDM functions in the center



- Computers
- **Tax Prep**
- Bible Study
- Lunch and Learn
- Book Club



- Yoga
- Line Dancing
- Tai Chi
- Pickleball
- **Circuits**



- Bingo
- Cards
- **Billiards**
- Beginner PB
- Mahjong



- Bridge
- Crossword



- Concerts
- **Ceramics**
- Jam Session
- Cartooning
- Chorus



- Calligraphy
- Broadway Dance



Setting the Stage

Define: Thrive vs. Survive

<u>Category</u>	<u><i>Surviving Senior Center</i></u>	<u><i>Thriving Senior Center</i></u>
Philosophy	We need more to survive	We need create value and deliver impact
Leadership	Reactive, avoids change	Visionary, data-informed, embraces innovation
Funding	Unstable, limited sources	Diverse & sustainable streams
Governance	Board, Council or Committees	Empowered leaders
Process to Change	Layers of approval	Staff-led initiatives
Motto	"Change is a risk, rather than opportunity"	"Change is a responsibility, driven by a mission to serve"
Programs	1 size fits all, Stagnant, low participation	Tailored, Engaging, evolving, needs-based
Technology	Paper-heavy, error-prone	Data tools, low admin time
Community Engagement	Minimal community presence	Strong partnerships & presence
Facilities	Dated, poorly maintained	Welcoming, accessible, modern
Staff & Volunteers	Overworked, high burnout	Motivated, low turnover
Member Experience	Unheard, bored, disengaged	Heard, valued, enthusiastic
Reputation	<i>There is a Senior Center?</i> Perceived as irrelevant	Respected community hub

Setting the Stage The Future belongs to those who evolve...

Blockbuster Video: They ignored the shift to digital streaming and passed on the chance to buy Netflix for \$50 million.

Kodak: Invented the digital camera in 1975—but shelved it to protect its film business.

BlackBerry: Dominated business smartphones but dismissed touchscreens and app ecosystems.

Circuit City: Struggled with outdated customer service, store layouts, and pricing strategy.

Toys “R” Us: Didn’t build a strong online presence and relied too heavily on in-store experiences.

RadioShack: Didn’t adapt its product mix or digital strategy as technology and consumer habits evolved.

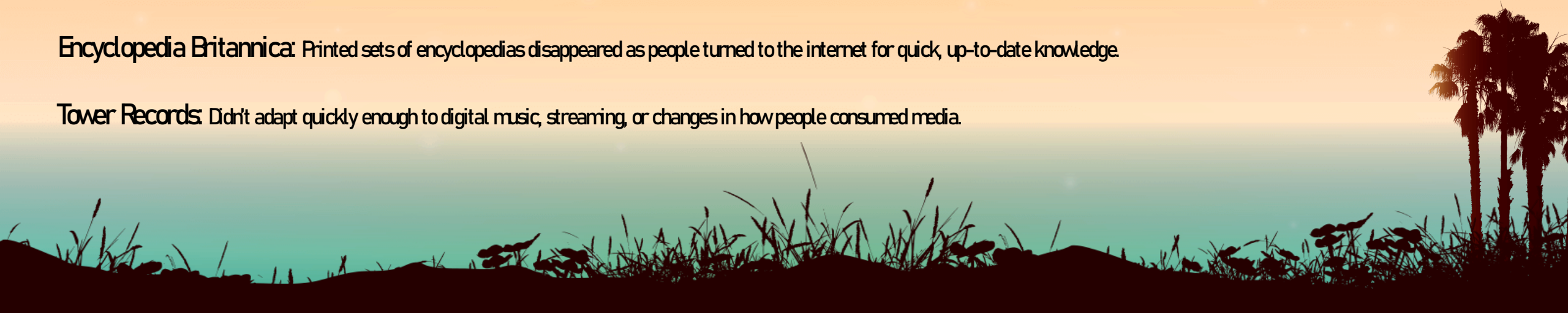
Polaroid: Once iconic for instant photography but failed to adapt to digital and smartphone cameras.

Zenith Electronics: Once a leader in US-made TVs and radios, it couldn’t keep up with global competition or new tech.

Encyclopedia Britannica: Printed sets of encyclopedias disappeared as people turned to the internet for quick, up-to-date knowledge.

Tower Records: Didn’t adapt quickly enough to digital music, streaming, or changes in how people consumed media.

If these major brands with deep resources couldn’t survive without evolving—what makes us think we can?





< Activities



Visual settings



Edit



When poll is
active respond
at

PollEv.com
/michaellippert834

Send **michaellippert834** and
your message to **22333**



**What are the biggest challenges to move from
Surviving to Thriving**

Nobody has responded yet.

Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

Powered by  **Poll Everywhere**

Setting the Stage

What makes this change difficult?

Limited Funding and Resources	Obviously
Staffing Challenges	See above, always short staffed
Risk Aversion and Comfort	We have always done it this way
Technology	The generational gap is real
Isolated Operations	Peer knowledge, conference attendance
Lack of Strategy	Don't have time
Lack of Competition	Where else will they go?

Building the Foundation

Practice Smart Leadership

Most Effective Senior Center Leaders:

- **Visionary Thinking:** See beyond daily operations to long-term goals.
- **Adaptability:** Pivot quickly in response to funding shifts, tech changes, or senior needs.
- **Data Literacy:** Understand, trust, and use data to drive decisions.

Surviving Leadership

Makes excuses

Reactive

Waits for trends

Uses resources provided

Traditional Funding

Milk and Cookies

Offers Classes

Senior Center perception

Unheard, bored, disengaged

They do their job

Iced Tea License

Drowning in paperwork

Doesn't know Market Reach

Thriving Leadership

Finds solutions

Proactive

Anticipates trends

Finds resources to accomplish goals

Modern Funding

Wine Tastings

Offers certifications

Active Living perception

Heard, valued, enthusiastic

Respected community hub

Liquor License

Quickly runs reports

Can quickly share Market Reach



Building the Foundation

Emphasize: Leadership & Strategy

🌟 Top 10 Traits of THE BEST Senior Center Directors	SELF RATING	ACTION PLAN
🧠 Visionary Thinker - Sees the big picture and sets a clear direction for the center's future — 1-, 5- and 10-year plan!		Set a 1-5-10yr strategic plan/ Follow thought leaders in aging services/ Look to share your secret sauce
📊 Data-Informed Decision Maker - Uses metrics and insights to shape programs, track progress, and prove impact to funders and stakeholders.		Attend a data literacy workshop/ Track key metrics monthly/ Become involved in SC conferences
💛 Community Connector - Builds strong relationships with city officials, funders, nonprofits, volunteers, and local businesses to expand support and collaboration.		Join local coalitions or senior networks/ Host partnership meetings/ Collaborate on joint grant proposals
💡 Adaptable & Open to Change - Embraces innovation — whether it's new tech, shifting demographics, or updated best practices in aging services.		Pilot a small tech tool or new service/ Ask your team about changes/ Read one book a month on innovation
🧠 Strategic Fundraiser - Knows where to look for money and how to make the case — from grants to sponsorships to community drives.		Identify 3 new funding sources/ Learn grant writing basics or hire a coach/ Build relationships with donors
❤️ Compassionate Leader - Leads with empathy, deeply understands the lives and needs of older adults, and creates a culture of dignity and respect.		Host monthly "open door" chats with staff/ Send 1 thank-you note weekly/ Volunteer with your own programs
👥 Team Builder & Mentor - Develops a strong, motivated staff and empowers them to grow, contribute, and lead with confidence.		Establish peer mentoring/ Conduct quarterly 1:1 development talks/ Celebrate wins—big or small!
📢 Effective Communicator - Shares the center's mission and value clearly to everyone; media, city or concerned family member.		Create a weekly update for staff & board/ Practice storytelling with data/ Take a communication or leadership class
🔧 Operational Expert - Keeps the day-to-day running smoothly—balancing logistics, budgets, staffing, and safety with calm confidence.		Map workflows for efficiency/ Implement a task management tool/ Cross-train staff to reduce gaps
🌱 Lifelong Learner - Stays curious and updated on aging trends, technology, and leadership practices. Always evolving.		Set annual personal goals/ Subscribe to aging-related publications/ Attend one new training each quarter

🧠 Scoring System Overview

- 1 = Needs Development 🌱
- 2 = Occasional Strength 🌟
- 3 = Consistent Performer 📦
- 4 = Strong Skill 🚀
- 5 = Exceptional Leader 🏰





< Activities



Visual settings



Edit



When poll is
active respond
at

PollEv.com
/michaellippert834

Send
michaellippert834
to **22333**



My Rating as a Director/ Leader

0 - 14 Points:	Just Getti...	<div></div>	0%
15 - 24 Points:	Room to	<div></div>	0%
25 - 34 Points:	Solid	<div></div>	0%
35 - 44 Points:	Strong &	<div></div>	0%
45 - 50 Points:	Visionar..	<div></div>	0%

Powered by Poll Everywhere

The Ratings

Total	Rating	Feedback & Suggestions
45-50	Visionary Leader	You're excelling across the board! Keep mentoring others and innovating for long-term success.
35-44	Strong & Strategic	You're a confident, reliable leader. Consider investing in growth areas to reach the next level.
25-34	Solid Foundation	You've built a strong base. Focus on skill-building in key areas for broader impact.
15-24	Room to Grow	You're developing important leadership traits. Prioritize training, mentorship, and self-reflection.
0-14	Just Getting Started	Everyone starts somewhere! Embrace this as an opportunity for transformational leadership growth.

- $\hat{n} \hat{\Gamma} \hat{\alpha} \hat{\Gamma} \hat{\Gamma}$, $\hat{\Gamma} \hat{\Gamma} \hat{\Gamma}$ $\hat{\Gamma} \hat{\Gamma} \hat{\Gamma} \hat{\Gamma} \hat{\Gamma} \hat{\Gamma} \hat{\Gamma} \hat{\Gamma} \hat{\Gamma}$

Know your Data

What comes first... the data or the funding?

Why is data important?

- Better Decisions
- Better Productivity
- Cost Savings
- More Accuracy
- Happier Staff
- More Compliance
- Find Solutions
- PROOF

How do you collect data?

- Surveys
- Reports
- Internet
- Technology tools
- Observation
- Chat
- Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)



- ñÎœÐ, ÆË‘ Æ ñÐœΠË¹ Ð

Know your Data

What is Market Reach?

Market Reach = Market Share?

THE % OF AVAILABLE SENIORS IN YOUR AREA THAT ATTEND YOUR CENTER

How do you calculate?

seniors in the town or towns you serve (using census data)

Divided by

of seniors who have visited your center

How can you improve your Market Reach?

Does location of the senior center matter?

What is the perception of your center?

What is your most popular program?

What will be different about your senior center in 10 years?

Why should you get more funding?

How many seniors live alone in your community?



Traditional vs. Modern Funding Strategies

Traditional Funding

- ✓ Wait and see...
- ✓ Based on history
- ✓ Government Grants
- ✓ Area Agency Support
- ✓ Various Donations
- ✓ Fixed Program Fees
- ✓ Operating Budget

Modern Funding

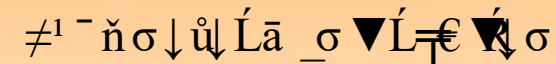
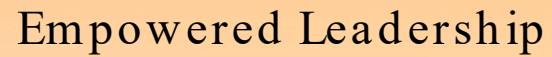
- ✓ Go find what you need...
- ✓ Data driven proof for future
- ✓ National Corporate Sponsorships
- ✓ Corporate Social Funds
- ✓ Corporate Grants
- ✓ Targeted Foundations for Seniors
- ✓ Crowdfunding or Campaigns
- ✓ Major Donors
- ✓ Tiered Membership Fees
- ✓ Social Enterprise (Profit based)
- ✓ Churches
- ✓ University Partnerships
- ✓ Events and Fundraisers

Other important considerations

- Prepare for the future generation
- Technology is the future
- Your data is proof
- Donation = tell savings story

Building the Senior Center of the Future

 Data Driven Decision Making	 Diverse & Inclusive Programming
 Sustainable & Flexible Programs	 Wellness Focused Environment
 <ul style="list-style-type: none">•        	 Accessible Modern Facilities
 Empowered Leadership	     






Thank YOU!

Michael Lippert

Michael@myseniorcenter.com


859.492.6267



< Activities

Visual settings Edit


When poll is active respond at [PollEv.com /michaellippert834](#) Send [michaellippert834](#) and your message to [22333](#)



Tell me your 2 biggest takeaways from todays session...

Nobody has responded yet.

Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

Powered by  Poll Everywhere

