

A beautiful (property marketing) mind

Your guide to creating a balanced &
successful property marketing strategy

FEATURING DESIGN STRATEGIES, SEARCH
MARKETING DATA & EXPERT INSIGHTS



LEFT BRAIN

- ✓ Logical
- ✓ Detail-oriented
- ✓ Analytical

RIGHT BRAIN

- ✓ Imaginative
- ✓ Intuitive
- ✓ Innovative

First, are you left-brained or right-brained?

It's been said that right-brain thinkers are more creative and left-brain thinkers are more analytical.

Although recent research shows that the brain isn't truly dichotomous, many marketers identify more strongly with one set of traits or the other. Which side do you relate to more? Does your job require more of one than the other? Or a mix of both?

JUST FOR FUN

Take this [right brain vs. left brain test!](#)

Let's get started



Together, we'll explore right- and left-brain marketing perspectives on website design, search marketing and more.

With this guide, you'll learn how to

balance creative and analytical strategies to create the most effective marketing for your communities.

What you'll learn



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LEFT BRAIN


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RIGHT BRAIN

R I G H T B R A I N

Color trends

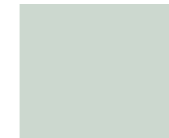
Soft, calm colors are trending

Right-brain marketers are drawn to the arts, including color and design. If this describes you, you probably play close attention to color trends.

Is it any surprise that calming colors are in demand after a few chaotic years? Take a look at the top colors of 2022 according to some of the biggest names in interior design.

C O L O R O F T H E Y E A R 2 0 2 2

Behr



Breezeway

Benjamin Moore



October mist

Better Homes & Gardens



Laurel leaf

Minwax



Gentle olive

R I G H T B R A I N

Color trends

Also trending is a design style called Japandi. A fusion of Japanese and Scandinavian styles, it uses soft, calm colors to create a modern, minimalistic and functional vibe. Searches for the term "Japandi" are up 1217%.

T R Y T H I S

Whether you're launching a new property or revitalizing an existing one, see if soft and calm colors and designs are a fit for your brand.

B U T R E M E M B E R T H I S

Pay attention to the contrast!

73.5% of renters prefer calm and soothing colors

2022 RentCafe.com renter survey, 12,474 participants



L E F T - B R A I N P O I N T O F V I E W

Soft colors are great, but you need to be aware of the level of contrast between content and the background. To meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines standards, text and interactive elements should have a color contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1.

Does your website platform offer a contrast checker? If not, use the WCAG color contrast checker to see whether your color combinations pass the test.

R I G H T B R A I N

Website design



Dark mode, neumorphism,
illustration and more

Meet the design trends inspiring some of today's most popular websites. Can you imagine any of these styles on your current corporate or property sites?

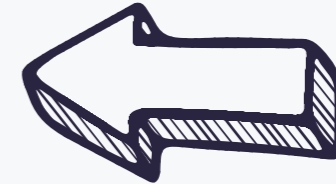


D A R K M O D E

Dark mode describes a low-light user interface that uses a dark color as the primary background color, reversing the default light-on-dark design that websites have used for decades.

H A N D - D R A W N I L L U S T R A T I O N S

In a world of fast-paced browsing, illustrations capture and engage your audience. They remind your visitor of that human touch and set you apart from the competition.



N E U M O R P H I S M

Neumorphism focuses on minimalist but realistic design of user interfaces. Neumorphic elements extrude from the background images. The look is reminiscent of paper embossing or debossing.

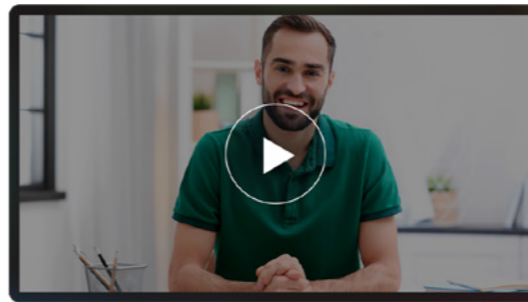
R I G H T B R A I N

Website design



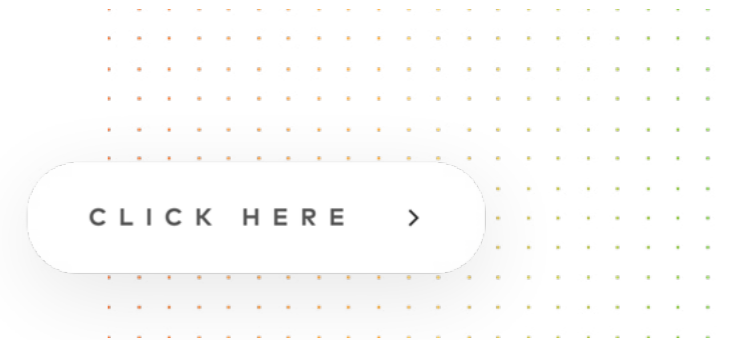
MINIMALISM

Minimalist design helps cut the clutter in favor of emphasizing the key elements of your website. The goal is to help users find relevant information as quickly as possible without distractions.



VIDEO FEATURES

Social media's favorite content type is a natural for websites. Video backgrounds create a modern, cutting-edge feel. Explanatory videos help people understand your company better.

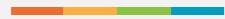


SUBTLE TEXTURES

Subtle elements like dots, wood grain and geometric shapes add visual interest to clean design without distracting from the content.

Designing websites for the next generation of customers is exciting.

These renters have never known life without the internet, so they expect modern visuals and a great user experience.



NEHA MARATHE
CREATIVE LEAD
REACH BY RENTCAFE



R I G H T B R A I N

Website design

TRY THIS

Share these trends with your team and ask if any align with current website projects. Be sure to capture the before and after with both screenshots and data.

BUT REMEMBER THIS

A pretty website is fun, but a great nav makes it functional.



LEFT-BRAIN POINT OF VIEW

In addition to design, pay attention to the words you use in your navigation bar or menu anytime you make updates. They help customers (and Google) understand your website. The easier the navigation, the more likely you are to increase pages per session.

Learn how to evaluate other critical elements affecting site performance using free, Google-backed tools with this guide: [How does your website stack up?](#)

R I G H T B R A I N

Brand voice

Authenticity for the win

Trends are never one-size-fits-all. The savvy right-brained marketer knows when to try something new and when to pass. Before adopting the latest design or website trend, ask yourself two questions:

Is this authentic to our brand?

Is this authentic to our audience?

If you're not sure, it's probably a good time to reacquaint yourself with your target customers. Your brand voice has to speak to them at all times for your marketing to be successful. Get distracted or off-brand, and they'll move on.

88% of consumers say "trust" is critical when deciding which brands to buy or use (it's even more important than customer service)

2021 EDELMAN TRUST
BAROMETER

R I G H T B R A I N

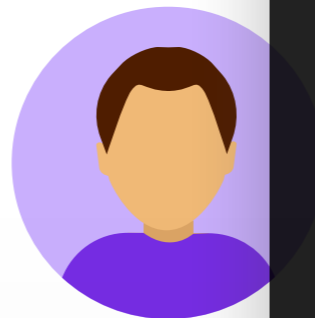
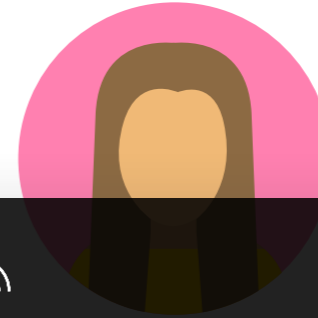
Brand voice

TRY THIS

Focus your brand voice by developing multiple renter personas for each community. Give them names, ages, jobs, rental budgets, pets, cars, hobbies, communication preferences, shopping and dining habits ... anything that will help you answer: Who lives here? Why do they live here? And how do we connect with them?

BUT REMEMBER THIS

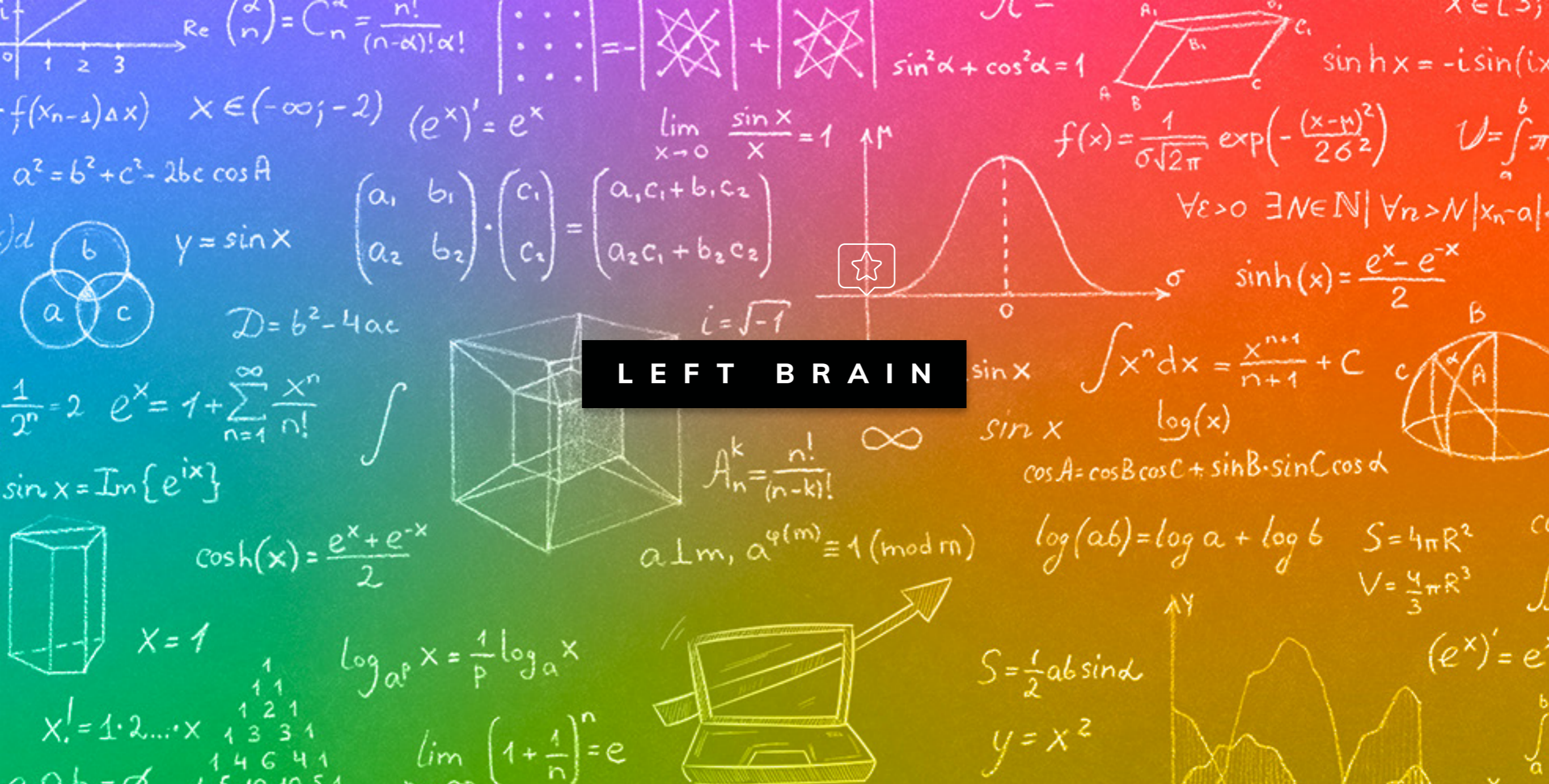
Your voice extends beyond your team to your digital assistants.



LEFT-BRAIN POINT OF VIEW

Imagine this: A renter sees one of your ads, likes it, then clicks through to your website where the content speaks to them. It's relatable, and they're ready to take the next step, so they click the little chat icon. But it's a button-bot. It can't actually chat. The brand colors don't match. And it can't answer real questions or understand misspellings.

Don't ruin a great user experience with a bot that's off-brand. Pick an AI-powered chatbot that learns from the content on your website and can be trained to answer any renter question, in a voice that authentically matches your brand.



LEFT BRAIN

LEFT BRAIN

Direct-to-renter marketing

Skip the third-parties to own your space

For years, multifamily marketing has focused heavily on internet listing sites. ILS marketing is important. It does a good job of generating awareness for renters beginning their journey. But be careful to check the return on investment and balance your marketing spend accordingly.

Left-brained marketers are data driven, and they know that the numbers favor direct-to-renter strategies instead. Also referred to as direct-to-consumer marketing

in other industries, these are methods that put your brand directly in front of consumers. They include SEO, PPC, reputation management and social media.

SEO and PPC, in particular, are shown to have a much lower cost per lease than ILS marketing. And both help you stand out from competitors in local search results, instead of blending in.

Additionally, good SEO is a long-term strategy that can drive low-cost traffic to your website for years.

Search marketing helps us reduce our ILS spend. Our average search marketing cost per lease is only \$82, compared to our average ILS cost-per-lease of \$1,100.



SARAH WIEMAN
SENIOR MANAGER
BRANDING & MARKETING
PRG REAL ESTATE



LEFT BRAIN

Direct-to-renter marketing

TRY THIS

Use data to evaluate and restructure your marketing budget. Start by determining cost per lease and return on ad spend (ROAS) by source over the last 90 days. Which sources are providing the best value?

BUT REMEMBER THIS

As a direct-to-renter marketing channel, social media is as much of an art as a science.



RIGHT-BRAIN POINT OF VIEW

When it comes to direct-to-renter marketing and local brand visibility, don't forget about social media. A local brand visibility (LBV) score is a cross-industry metric that measures your social presence by your activity and your popularity.

So while post count and consistency is important, popularity and engagement are critical too. To get those numbers where you want them, you need to make sure your authentic brand voice extends to your social channels. Think about what your audience likes and what they respond to instead of just following a generic content calendar found online.

LEFT BRAIN

Reputation management

Use reviews to raise boost visibility

Left-brainers know that reviews can do so much more than tell you what's great at your communities and what needs improvement. Reviews help influence prospective renters, and they also affect your visibility in search results.

In fact, when it comes to reviews, it's the quantity, quality, recency and responses that send signals that can improve your search ranking.

QUALITY

Good reviews are better than poor reviews

QUANTITY

More reviews are better than fewer reviews

RECENCY

Recent reviews are better than older reviews

RESPONSES

Reviews with responses are better than reviews without

LEFT BRAIN

Reputation management

We often see reputation management as something that stands alone, but it should be considered in conjunction with your SEO program. Google advises local businesses to manage and respond to reviews to increase local visibility.



Reviews account for about **17%** of the ranking factor to get in the Google 3-Pack of local listings, per BrightLocal

LEFT BRAIN

Reputation management

TRY THIS

Proactively request reviews from your renters to stay relevant. With the right software, you can even automate requests after key events, like the resolution of a maintenance request.

BUT REMEMBER THIS

Your reputation is only as good as your customer service.



RIGHT-BRAIN POINT OF VIEW

You can't get positive reviews if you're not providing top-notch service. When launching a new reputation management initiative, make sure your site teams are aware and invested in the results. How can you incentivize their involvement?

LEFT BRAIN

Marketing analytics

Measure results to drive success

You can't improve what you don't understand. Marketing analytics tell you what's working and what isn't. There are a lot of data points you can look at. Here are two of the most critical.

ROAS (RETURN ON AD SPEND)

ROAS is a ratio metric that measures the amount of revenue earned for every dollar spent on advertising. A 1:5 ratio means that for every \$1 spent you generate \$5.

It's calculated by dividing the total campaign revenue generated by a marketing source by the cost of that source. For multifamily, campaign revenue equals the net rental income for the defined lease period for all leases generated through the source.

DAYS TO LEASE

Knowing how many days it takes the average customer to lease helps you plan ahead and ensure the right marketing is in place with enough advance notice of actual availability.

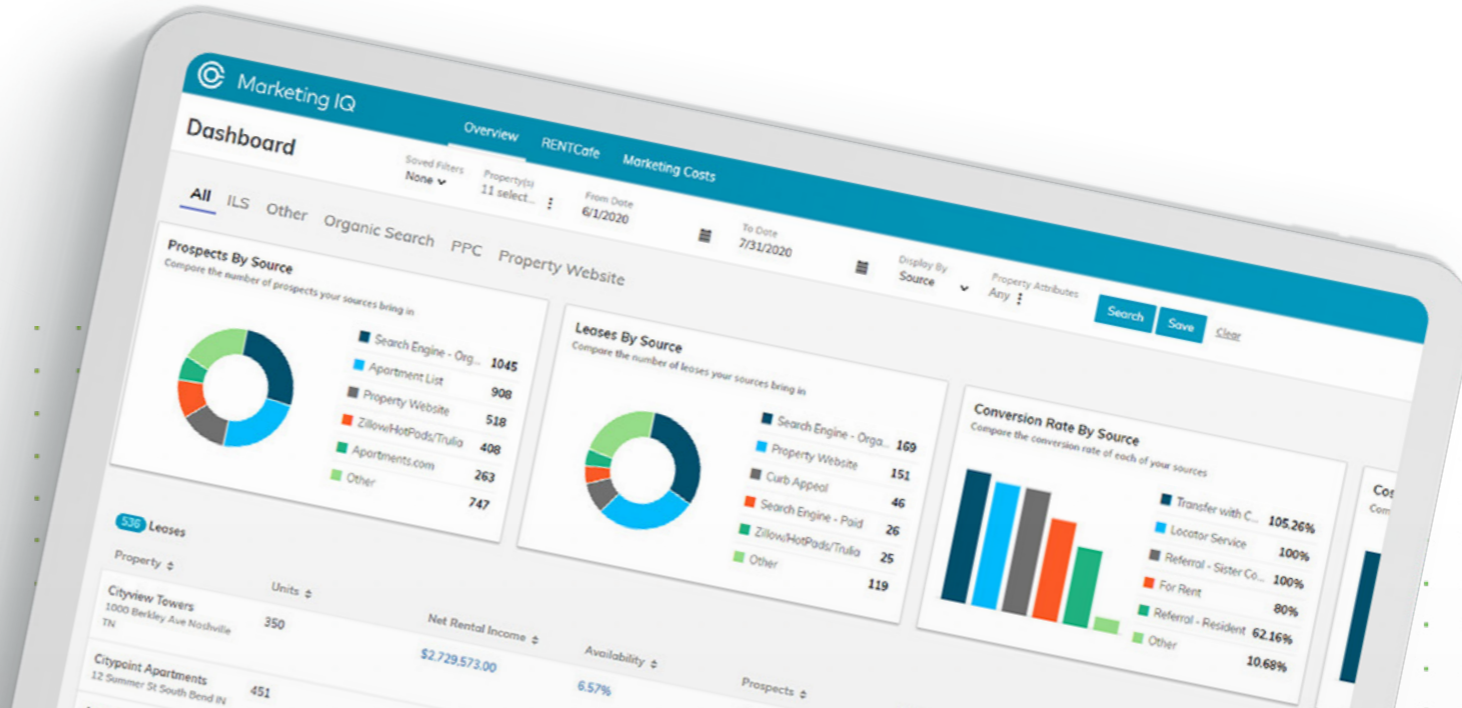
Knowing how many days to lease by source takes it a step further. Do PPC ad leads turn around faster than ILS leads? Wouldn't that be good to know?

Marketing analytics



Manually calculating these numbers is time consuming and leaves room for human error. Marketing analytics software can help by automating the process to put the data at your fingertips.

For example, **Marketing IQ** is a solution unique to multifamily that provides the specific analytics property marketers need, including the two we explained above as well as cost per lease, total exposure and more.





Marketing analytics give you the information you need to positively impact your company's bottom line. Most property marketers look at cost per lease, often attributing the lease to the source that drove the first customer contact, but there is so much more data now that you need to take into consideration.



E S T H E R B O N A R D I
V I C E P R E S I D E N T
R E A C H B Y R E N T C A F E

LEFT BRAIN

Marketing analytics

TRY THIS

Make a list of metrics you plan to track quarterly and be consistent for the best results.

BUT REMEMBER THIS

Your advertising will only get good results if it connects with your audience.



RIGHT-BRAIN POINT OF VIEW

If you notice that your ads are getting clicks but not conversions, take a closer look at what happens after a prospective renter clicks it. Are they taken where they need to go or to a generic homepage?

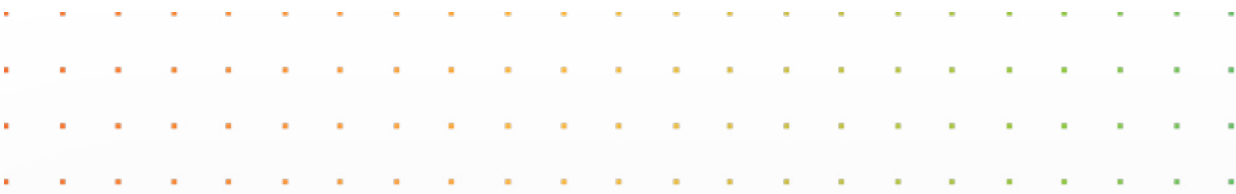
Give renters what they're looking for by creating specific landing pages for different ad sets. For example, if you're running an ad specific to one-bedroom homes, create a custom page within your site and take them directly to the one-bedroom info page.

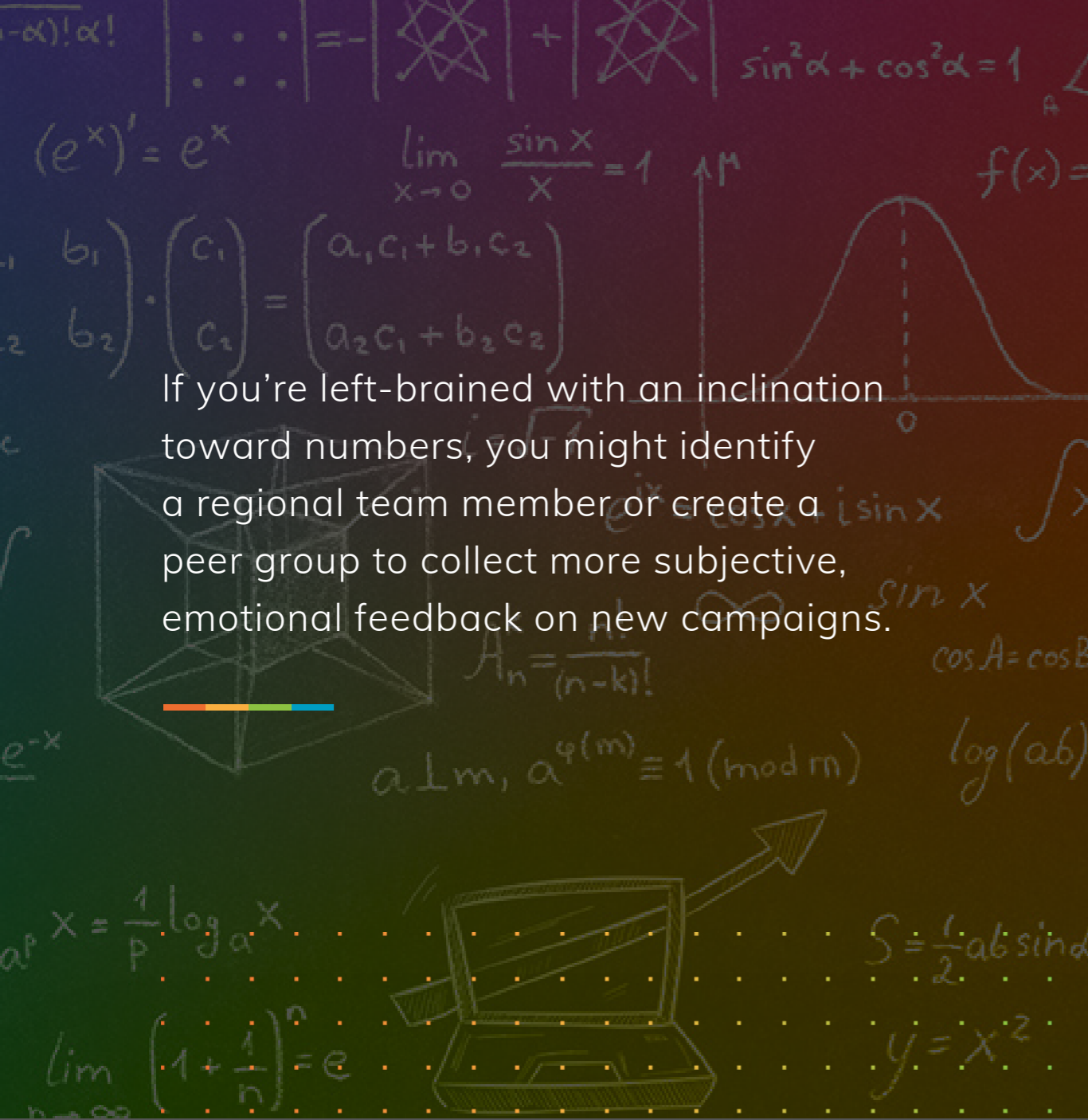
Whew! Thanks for sticking with us.
That was a lot to take in, right?



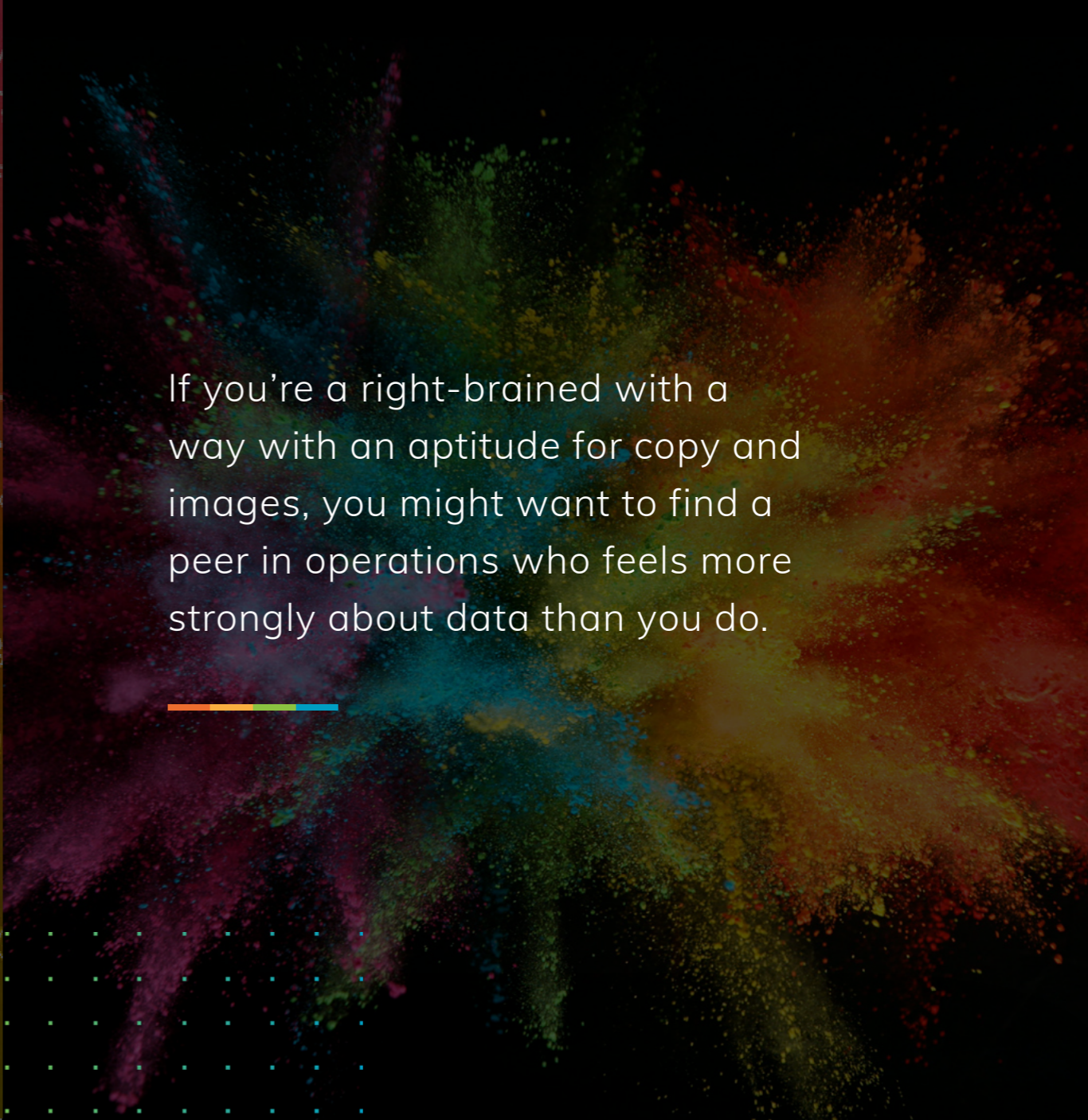
One of the most important things to remember is that no one person can excel at everything. Whether you tend to be more right or left brained, it's critical to find a partner who can balance and complement your talents.

Many multifamily marketing teams are small, but that doesn't mean you can't find the right collaborator.





If you're left-brained with an inclination toward numbers, you might identify a regional team member or create a peer group to collect more subjective, emotional feedback on new campaigns.

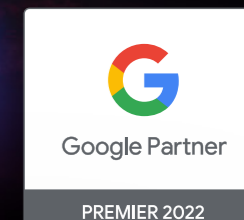


If you're a right-brained with a way with an aptitude for copy and images, you might want to find a peer in operations who feels more strongly about data than you do.

And if you're both, well lucky you! But you're still going to want some help.

You could create an internal team of subject matter experts. Or (in any case) you could choose to hire an external digital marketing agency like **REACH by RentCafe**, using their expertise and talents to drive results without such a large time investment on your part.

Whatever you do, the important thing is to maintain a balance. Use the checklist on the next page to guide your upcoming marketing efforts.



A BEAUTIFUL PROPERTY MARKETING CHECKLIST

LEFT

✓ Make sure your color contrast ratio is at least 4.5:1 to meet WCAG guidelines.

LEFT

✓ Update your site navigation to be user-friendly and easy-to-read for renters and search engines.

LEFT

✓ Ensure all digital messaging, including chatbots, aligns with your brand voice to build a consistent user experience.

RIGHT

✓ Experiment with in-demand soft, calm colors to see if they're a fit for your brand.

RIGHT

✓ Leverage new website design trends to capture the attention of the modern renter.

RIGHT

✓ Create renter personas for each community so you can develop an authentic brand voice that speaks to your audience.



LEFT

Use data to evaluate and restructure your marketing budget regularly.



LEFT

Proactively request reviews to boost your visibility in search results.



LEFT

Calculate ROAS to get stakeholder buy-in and make the most informed decisions.



RIGHT

Remember that marketing is both an art and a science. Don't lose sight of your message when trying to meet data goals.



RIGHT

Don't forget that great reviews start with great customer service! Get your site teams on board with your review goals.



RIGHT

Get the most value out of your digital ads by creating custom landing pages for each one.

Thanks for reading!



We hope this guide inspires you to try something new

If you ever want to chat about marketing, our **REACH by RentCafe** digital marketing experts are here for you. Reserve a free consultation today to learn tips and tricks you can apply in just 15 minutes.

[FREE CONSULTATION >](#)

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