



AGE-FRIENDLY CHICAGO BUSINESS INITIATIVE

HAVE YOU MADE YOUR BUSINESS AGE-FRIENDLY?



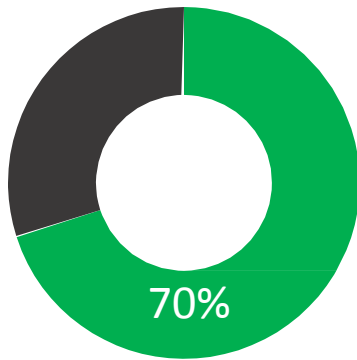
CITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY
AND SUPPORT SERVICES

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

2013 – 424,077

2020 – 498,308

There are **more than 400,000** adults age 60 and older in Chicago and the number is growing.



This number is expected to increase by **18%** from its current level to close to 500,000 by 2020.

70% of consumer spending in the USA is currently controlled by Boomers.



In 2010, older shoppers outspent younger shoppers by **\$1 trillion**.

WHAT OLDER ADULTS SAY...





In July 2012, Mayor Rahm Emanuel secured a place for Chicago in the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities. As a part of the WHO network, Chicago joins a growing number of cities and communities worldwide who are striving to better meet the needs of residents of all ages by creating inclusive and accessible urban environments.

An age-friendly city like Chicago aspires to be an 'inclusive and accessible urban environment that promotes active aging.' The World Health Organization (WHO) model is built on the premise that an age-friendly city sustains 'opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.' Cities who join the network commit to a five-year cycle of planning, implementation and evaluation.

CHICAGO

AGE-FRIENDLY BUSINESS INITIATIVE

The **Age-friendly Business Initiative** educates and trains Chicago businesses to better engage older adults through changes in marketing, store design and customer service.



WHAT IS AN **AGE-FRIENDLY BUSINESS**?



An **Age-friendly Business** welcomes older adult consumers and works towards meeting the needs of this **diverse, fast-growing and economically powerful** consumer base.

MARKETING

Older adults are **sophisticated customers** who research products and services in which they are interested. When marketing to older adults remember that they less influenced by trends and fads than their younger counterparts. As with any other group, older adults are a **diverse consumer base** with varied tastes, interests and preferences in products and services.



**Feature Older Adults in
Commercials & Ads**



**Clearly Indicate Older Adult
Discounts**



**Show How Product Can Help
Older Adults**

ASK YOURSELF...

Are you promoting your products, services & business features in a way that will attract **customers of all ages – including older customers?**

NO? Consider these simple changes.

- Promote products, services and business features of interest to older adults **explicitly** in printed & web ads when applicable.
- Create inclusive marketing material. Consider whether older adults are visible in your ads.
- If you provide a discount for older shoppers, promote it in places where they'll be seen.
- If you offer delivery, provide menus/brochures both online & in print since many shoppers may not have regular access to a computer.

ASK YOURSELF...

Is the text on your print & online materials **simple to read** and can consumers find your **key information quickly & easily**?

NO? Consider these simple changes.

- Use Sans-Serif Style fonts: Arial, Geneva, Verdana etc. in 12 point or larger.
- Create materials with high-contrast color combinations (white on black, orange on blue).
- Design materials that can be understood by as many people as possible. Think about who is in your neighborhood.
- Design easily navigable websites with simple to find key information. Keep older computers in mind, limit audio/video/flash elements.

AMBIANCE

Proper **lighting and sound** are important parts of a positive shopping experience. As we get older, many of us experience a **reduction in our hearing and/or changes in our vision**. Often older adults need three times as much light to see as when they were younger!

Keep this in mind when designing the ambiance for your store and you can improve the experience for **all of your customers**.



Range of Music Appeals to All Customers



Small Spot Lights Under Shelves



Sound Absorption or Decoration?

ASK YOURSELF...

Is there **loud music** or a lot of **background noise** in your business?

YES? Consider these simple changes.

- Have music free/reduced volume hours during times older customers most likely to shop.
- Reserve quiet areas of your business (quiet tables in a restaurant or a private area at a bank).
- If you have a naturally noisy business (machines, production activities, construction) limit noise by keeping doors closed, and/or installing noise-absorption measures.

ASK YOURSELF...

Is the business **adequately lit** for safety and is **signage easy to see and read**?

NO? Consider these simple changes.

- Cut down on glare by installing shades on lights or providing indirect and/or filtered lighting.
- Provide adequate lighting throughout your business but especially in between rooms of different lighting levels like entrances/exits and hallways.
- Include small direct “task” lights over areas where customers must read or engage in other visually demanding tasks.

DESIGN

The **layout** and **design** of your store should accommodate as many customers as possible. No one likes to struggle through tight aisles or stand on shelves to reach products. Design with a range of customers in mind: older adults, families with small children/strollers, differently abled individuals etc.

Remember **Age-friendly design** is **customer-friendly design**!



Bright Paint Makes Stairs Easy to See



Portable Ramps = Accessibility on Demand



Benches Bring Customers & Encourage Seconds

ASK YOURSELF....

Is your business designed to maximize safety and accessibility for all customers, including older adults?

NO? Consider these simple changes.

- Clearly mark stairs, drops, inclines or other changes in floor elevation with brightly colored paint or reflective tape.
- Remove throw rugs that can catch feet and cause trips or secure edges with glue or tape.
- If possible, install light-weight or automatic doors or have staff on hand to open.
- If your entrance isn't level with the street consider a portable ramp.
- Keep sidewalks clear of snow and ice.

ASK YOURSELF...

Is your store convenient for a wide-range of customers?

NO? Consider these simple changes.

- Place products within easy reach on tables and shelves, especially if they are basic everyday/household items or items frequently bought by older adults.
- Provide permanent or on-demand seating inside your business for someone to rest.
- Install a bench outside of your business. Partner with your local **Chamber of Commerce** to install them along your block.
- Make washrooms available.
- Be pet and service animal friendly.

EXPERIENCE

Customer service and **how staff communicate** with customers can make or break a shopping experience. A good experience translates into better engagement with products and services, increased spending and customer loyalty. A bad experience can lose a customer forever.



**Personalized Service
Makes Everyone's Day**



**Young and Old Appreciate
Learning about Technology**



**People of All Ages Enjoy a Great
Dining Experience**

ASK YOURSELF....

Are your staff trained to provide the right kind of customer service to all patrons?

NO? Consider these simple changes.

- Encourage staff to be respectful and patient with all customers - especially older adults, families with children, disabled shoppers etc.
- Empower staff and managers to choose how to serve customers in ways most comfortable for the customer.
- Train staff to recognize signs that someone needs physical/medical help or is being physically/financially abused.
- Provide training on how to handle falls and accidents while preserving customer dignity.

ASK YOURSELF....

Are your staff trained to communicate correctly with older shoppers?

NO? Consider these simple changes.

- Train staff to speak clearly/slowly but not with exaggerated tones.
- Do NOT train staff to raise their voice above normal levels when speaking to older shoppers.
- Train staff to get an older shopper's attention by saying "excuse me ma'am/sir" or by tapping them on the shoulder.
- Train staff to lower pitch of their voice when speaking to someone with a hearing difficulty

Chicago Age-Friendly Businesses...



SO ASK YOURSELF...

HAVE YOU **MADE** YOUR BUSINESS AGE-FRIENDLY?



THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

For more information, please check our website and social media listed below.

www.cityofchicago.org/agefriendlychicago



Adapted from a presentation created by Age-Friendly NYC