



## Stop Throwing iPads at 85-Year Old Residents!

*By Susan Saldibar*

Technology should offer a solution to a problem, not create new problems. Especially in senior living communities!

It's easy to beat up senior living operators who balk at installing layers and layers of expensive infrastructure with user portals that require certification to operate. We label them stubborn, behind the times, or sometimes luddites! But maybe the problem is that they were never shown the right solution in the first place.

### **Why not put technology behind something we use every day? What would that be?**

Steve Moran caught up with Kian Saneii, Founder and CEO of [Independa](#) (a Senior Housing Forum partner) for a Conversations video. Independa has built a sophisticated, yet simple, way to implement and use remote engagement and care platform around something most of us (especially seniors) use every day: the TV.

While that seems to be “the” solution in and of itself, Steve asked Kian to describe the broader scope of problems Independa solves in senior living communities.

## Three Groups of People

According to Kian, there are three groups of people they create solutions for:

1. **Community operators and employees:** That would be basically everyone from the operator executive management team to the staff. Independa solves the key problem of how to best engage with residents when they're in their rooms. And, it solves a delivery challenge: Menus, surveys, broadcast messages, and community calendars are now accessible with the click of a remote control.

"We know there is so much time and energy spent by activity directors running around calling people, knocking on doors, just to remind them to show up for events they've signed up for," says Kian. "Solving that problem, alone, creates a lot of efficiencies, and drives up resident and employee satisfaction," he adds. So, Independa makes employees' lives easier. And anything that helps operators with employees and retention is a good thing.

2. **Residents' social engagement:** Independa solves the problem of how to easily connect and engage with loved ones remotely. So, sending pictures, videos, messages, or even having a video chat keeps them connected. Kian mentioned to Steve how well received this is with new residents and their families, after all the other amenities are listed out. As an operator might tell their prospects and residents, "You may be alone when you get back in after enjoying a great day of activities and a wonderful dining experience, but you're never going to be lonely."
3. **Family and friends of residents:** Independa solves the problem of chronic anxiety, guilt and concern when family members are away from their loved ones. What's happening? Is he or she okay? This has got to be an advantage for those who live remotely. Kian also points out that using this method of interaction allows family members to connect directly to loved ones, avoiding unnecessary layers of people and staff interruptions, in between. A person-to-person direct engagement is achieved, with great simplicity.

There's much more to the Independa solution, including ease of installation and use, but these are some of the stand out features, addressing the ongoing problem of resident isolation from their families and, even within a community. As for staff, anything that increases operational efficiency is going to save them time and reduce low value tasks. Wouldn't that have a positive impact on retention? How about the bottom line?

So, why are we throwing iPads at 85-year old residents who are sitting in front of their TVs?



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