



8 Fantastic Ways to Turn Holiday Leads into Move-Ins

By Michelle Seitzer

3 million visitors a month. That's how many people visit [Caring.com](https://www.caring.com), a Senior Housing Forum partner, to browse senior care options for loved ones. But after the holidays, when family members have discovered older parents or relatives are not doing as well as they thought, these numbers really spike (you can [track the trends here](#))—and more visitors will move from “search” to “active pursuit.”

Wake up and smell the opportunities for your community!

To that end, Denise Graab, Caring's Director of Industry Marketing, recently partnered with Ryan Schilling, Caring's VP of Sales & Customer Care to present an informative webinar—as part of their [Digital Marketing Academy](#) — on a timely topic: [Get Ready for the Rush: Best Practices for Converting Internet Leads](#).

Check out these tips and highlights to ensure your community listing gets prime viewing and traction so you can clinch conversion:

1. **Seniors and caregivers are more active online than ever.** Print and direct mail campaigns are just not effective anymore, and among those Americans age 65+ with an annual income of more than \$75K, 87% are using the Internet on a daily basis. So why would you even waste the paper? Of these active, engaged, and financially stable users, 81% own smartphones, 65% use tablets, and 57% use social networks like Facebook and Twitter. (Source: [Pew Research Center](#))
2. **What they don't know can hurt you . . .** so make sure you know where the knowledge gaps are, because therein lies your opportunity to both inform and inspire a next step in the decision process. Although more seniors and caregivers are active online, there's still a pretty big education gap in terms of what they know about their local senior living resources—and it's why many of them are going online to do the research.
3. **There's something about Mary.** To help you better understand who's looking at your listings, the Caring.com marketing team created a persona based on one of the most popular names for boomer women: Mary. Getting to know Mary will help you reach her with the information she's looking for, or the information she doesn't know she needs.

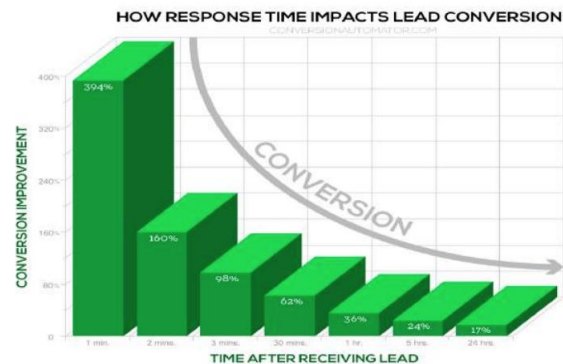
Some quick stats on Mary:

- *She's an adult daughter in her 50s, likely not the only decision maker—but a critical influencer nonetheless.*
- *After a parent's health or medical event has forced the family to make some decisions, she's doing some digging in her downtime (because she probably works FT/PT).*

As you craft your messaging, think carefully about when and how to reach Mary—probably by email or an off-hours phone call—and what to say based on the preferences indicated in any contact lead forms she's completed.

4. **Deck your digital halls.** Sprucing up your online community listing will be well-worth your effort this time of year. If they don't find what they're looking for, or if they're not inspired to stay and browse, they're probably not going to take that next step and schedule a tour. Mention awards you've received. Talk about the unique programming that sets you apart from your competitors. Make your community listing look good using real pictures—not run-of-the-mill stock photos—wherever possible. Choose the best photos you have, and if you don't have good ones, start snapping. Leave some mystery too, because you still want them to visit in person.

5. **Get on the phone STAT.** While your online presence is significant, be ready to make that call once you've got that lead. Your response time, aka "Speed to Lead" is everything here: it takes minutes to lose the lead to a competitor, or gain a prospective customer (check out Caring's [tips on improving your Speed to Lead time](#)). Don't believe me? Check out the graph at right.



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6. **It's personal.** Remember, choosing senior care is a highly emotional decision: Mary is considering your community to care for her beloved family member. That means she's looking beyond "bricks and sticks" (a great phrase coined by Ryan Schilling during the webinar!) and wants to know more about how you'll care for said family member than what you serve for Sunday brunch. When you get Mary on the phone, engage her in conversation. Show empathy for the stressful situation she's in (this story from Caring offers great [pointers for pitching with compassion](#)). Use her lead form to guide your conversation, speaking to the specifics she's already inquired about.
7. **She said what?!** If you don't have online reviews from your happy customers and their family members, you need to address that gap right away. Mary is very compelled to submit inquiries, take tours, and persuade her mom or mother-in-law to move in when she hears or reads great feedback from others just like her. With online senior care searchers, this type of feedback is critical to driving interest. In [one case study](#), the online reviews increased inquiries by 5x, increased tours by 7x, and increased move-ins by 8x! If you don't have reviews, or you haven't addressed negative reviews, you're seriously hindering your community's ability to attract and convert these online searchers.
8. **Get them through the door.** Consumers who request a tour have a higher level of motivation, and Caring.com's experts recommend that families and seniors visit the actual community as opposed to taking a virtual tour (virtual tours and apps are great for your website but cannot replace the value of the live visit).

For more great tips on optimizing search results for your community listing(s), tailoring your communications to convert the lead, and more, watch/listen to [the Caring.com Digital Marketing Academy webinar recording here](#).



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