



3 Secrets to Digital Marketing Success in 2018

By Michelle Seitzer

If your resolutions of eating less cake have already fallen by the wayside, not to worry: you can still have your digital marketing cake—and eat it too—in 2018.

What does digital marketing have to do with cake or senior living sales? Consider this thought-provoking quote from a [webinar](#) hosted by Senior Housing Forum partner Caring.com:

“If you bake a cake for a party and want to figure out if your recipe was good, it’s only vaguely helpful to know that guests took 20 out of 24 slices. You still don’t know how many people ate the cake or how much they enjoyed it.” - Amanda Walgrove, Contently.com

It’s not enough to count form fills or count leads. It’s not enough to count email open rates. How did they find your community? What made them take the next step to schedule a tour, place a deposit, move a parent or relative in? Did they like the way your staff greeted them, or did they just like the carpet and wallpaper? To truly assess how effective your senior living community’s digital marketing efforts are in terms of bringing more people through your brick-and-mortar doors, meaningful measurement matters.

Follow this recipe for digital marketing success from the senior care marketing experts at Caring.com:

1. **Look back** -- Analyze 2017’s online marketing successes/failures by answering these questions:

- How many prospective resident inquiries, tours, or move-ins did you achieve through digital lead sources?
- Have you [measured the actual ROI](#) of your digital marketing from last year—and do you know how to? Are you using real data vs. your gut? This webinar on [measuring internet leads](#) offers valuable insights.
- Do your local competitors have more and better online reviews than your community?
- How many reviews did your community receive, generate, and respond to—and how did you leverage that feedback in your conversion efforts?
- Does the competition rank better in searches than you?
- Are you losing a share of move-ins to local competitors because their digital marketing efforts are superior?

2. **Set resolutions** -- Based on the prior year's successes and opportunities for improvement, make a digital marketing plan for 2018. For example: If you had great ROI on referral partnerships in 2017, amplify that investment this year.

If you didn't achieve enough move-ins from referral partnerships last year, explore how to optimize those opportunities to boost ROI in 2018. And if necessary: expand your understanding of digital marketing opportunities for senior living—like which tactics are driving the most sales success for senior living communities.

- For communities partnering with Caring.com, take advantage of Caring’s monthly webinar that covers numerous ways to boost inquiries and optimize accounts to support conversions. The next webinar happens on February 20th; [register here](#).
- Are you paying duplicate referral fees to multiple referral partners? If you want to boost ROI—and your bottom line—avoiding these duplicate fees is the way to go. This article from Caring.com offers a [helpful “how to,” including a video](#).

3. **Take action** -- It’s not enough to plan for success, you have to seize it. Start with something easy like auditing your online profiles, i.e. freshening up your virtual house.

Ask yourself:

- What do your online profiles say about your community?
- Do they accurately represent your business/brand in 2018?
- Are your listing photos optimized to attract new residents and their family members searching online? Caring.com Partners can check out this [webinar from the Partner Portal](#) for expert guidance, or check out this fantastic article from Steve Moran on how and why you should only [share the best photos of your community](#).
- Do you have great reviews from existing and former customers showcased to attract & persuade prospects? (If not, get on the bandwagon: Reviews are worth a cool \$54,254 in incremental revenue, per [this article](#) by Caring.com’s Denise Graab.)
- Do your referral partners have the most up-to-date rates for your community? Have you told them about your move-in specials for January or February?
- Have a plan for keeping them up-to-date throughout the year? Caring.com partners can [follow these guidelines](#). Not a partner yet? No problem: the self-serve Claim Your Listing tool will ensure your community name, description, rates, and photos are up to date. Start by visiting your listing in the Caring.com housing directory, then click the link, “Claim Caring.com Listing” near the top of the page.

More Marketing Tools for Success

Ready to try this recipe for digital marketing success? Caring.com offers a host of measurement tools to help you reach—and even surpass—your goals for this year and the next:

Reporting: As a Caring.com referral partner, you get access to the Partner Portal, which allows you to see reporting and data on inquiries, tours, and move-ins (plus the competitive share of move-ins). To learn more about what the Partner Portal offers, [register here](#) for The Power of Partner Portal: Valuable Sales Insights & Marketing Tools for Senior Living Communities, a webinar coming up in February.

Education: Each month, hundreds of participants attend Caring.com’s Digital Marketing Academy webinars. These practical, resource-full educational forums earned a “[Best of the Best](#)” award from Argentum in 2015 and have covered such topics as measuring ROI to the effectiveness of your sales team in converting prospects. Suggest a future topic or sign up for an upcoming event at the [Partners Events page](#).

Reviews: Caring.com has assembled some of their best practices on the value of [senior care ratings and reviews](#) here.

Profiles: Caring.com partners can boost their online profiles with [this new FAQ module](#), which allows communities to answer commonly asked questions from prospects via the Partner Portal.



This article has been brought to you by [Caring.com](#) in partnership with [Senior Housing Forum](#).

