



The 3 Things You Must Do to Get the Most Out of Your Referrals

By Michelle Seitzer

The [most powerful word in advertising](#) is just three letters long: Y-O-U.

Because when it comes to buying anything, do you really care what others think about the product? Sure, good reviews and testimonials may be influential in your decision-making, but ultimately if you like the product, the price, or the people selling it, you'll go for it.

But let's say you worked with a sales exec who didn't get to know you and find out what you really wanted — like the realtor I had when I bought my first house. After showing me a property that was across the street from a dive bar and whose garage opened to a cemetery (the interior was in desperate need of TLC as well), he blamed my lack of interest as “not being able to see the potential.” If he only knew!

Truly effective advertising gets personal. It cares about what you think. It knows your values. It takes time to find out what you want most by asking questions, by engaging you, and by listening to what you have to say. So when you're looking to optimize referral partnerships from lead generation services like Caring.com (a Senior Housing Forum partner), a three-way relationship — between you, the referral agency, and your potential clients — is key.

Pamala McGlinchey, Caring.com's VP of Client Services, has seen this three-way consistently deliver the best business outcomes: “The customers who get the greatest return from their relationship with us are the ones who meet us at the table and truly partner with us to serve the needs of seniors and their families.” And to do this well, you have to value the relationship with Caring.com by “thinking of and interacting with us as more than a vendor,” says McGlinchey.

The Top 3 Tactics for the Best Success

How can you practically invest in a productive relationship? Caring.com's top account managers share the secrets of their most successful partnerships.

1. **Move it -- meaningfully!** Denise Graab, Caring.com's Director of Industry Marketing, reports that 100% of account managers she surveyed cited the priority of “speed to lead” (i.e. rapid response to leads received) and lead nurturing (i.e. high-quality, value-added, personalized, and persistent follow-up on those leads) as the reasons certain senior living organizations achieve the [most ROI](#). Want to improve your speed to lead? Check out this [partner resource from Caring.com](#). Another benefit of prioritizing a prompt reply to a lead? You avoid [paying duplicate referral fees](#).

2. **Do your due diligence on data.** Also known as “[supporting financial qualification](#),” providing the most accurate rates to Caring.com and updating them when rates change at your community makes a difference in how well they refer financially matched prospective residents to you.
3. **Schedule and deliver great tours.** Returned a prospect’s call in an hour? Great! But don’t get too comfortable with that rapid response unless you also move them quickly to a tour, and do an excellent job taking them through the community — connecting the service offering to the prospective resident’s needs and preferences, helping him/her envision living there . . . and loving it.

A perk of partnering with Caring.com? Caring’s referral partners achieving the most success from their partnership also take advantage of Caring’s tour-setting option — having a Caring Family Advisor speak to the family caregiver or seniors to schedule the day/time of the tour, and then sending multiple tour reminders thereafter. Caring offers this tour-setting service to streamline the process, and they’ve seen the speed at which move-ins happen increases on account of a positive tour ([read more about it here](#)). Own and operate skilled nursing facilities (SNFs)? Tours matter there too: find out the three things you must communicate to [families taking a SNF tour](#).

For optimal results, you should still follow up with the prospective resident before the tour, but by letting Caring.com take the lead on the time-consuming process of scheduling your leads (getting a prospective resident/family member to commit to a day/time, sending reminders, etc.), you’ll have [more time to invest](#) in the relationship.

What They Don’t Know Can Hurt You

Whether you partner with Caring.com or another lead referral agency, you have to work together for the results you really want.

Yes, you’ve hired them to handle referrals. But to show your community in the very best light, they need you to give them the latest and greatest information about all that’s happening within your four walls.

Did you just add a beautifully modernized, full-service cafe for family members, visitors, and residents? Update your file; this may be a big selling point to your future prospects. (To make this process easier, Caring.com offers the [Partner Portal](#).)

Show and Tell Time

So you’ve prioritized speed to lead. You’ve updated your community listings. You’ve scheduled tours. What else can you do to grease the ROI wheels?

Here are a few more tips from the Caring.com team:

1. **Photogenic communities win.** A robust listing that gets great traction has top-notch photos, detailed community descriptions, and [FAQs](#) on their business profile.
2. **Reviews boost interest.** Want more tours and move-ins? Make sure you have 6 reviews or more on your listing. Here are some [tips to get more](#).
3. **Submit a report card.** By regularly [reporting move-ins](#) and providing lead feedback (use the Partner Portal to make this easier), Caring.com’s family advisors and Client Services team can get a better sense of your community’s “sweet spot,” which ultimately drives more of the same or similar referrals.
4. **Mind the staff gap.** Updating your community listing is one thing, but with [staff turnover so high](#) in this industry, make sure you report any turnover in Sales & Marketing so your referral partners know who to reach when a great lead comes through.

Bottom line? When working with any referral organization (be it Caring.com or someone else), staying in touch and maintaining the relationship is where you’ll see your ROI rise.



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

