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Senior living operators build community, and community is increasingly defined by its technology — the tech used by residents, staff and family. In fact, research from the AARP found that since the start of the pandemic, 44% of older adults have an improved view of technology as a means for staying connected.*

These integrated systems are a community's lifeblood, enhancing key aspects of the day-to-day experience for both residents and staff. They:

1. Help staff communicate.
2. Empower residents.
3. Ease concerns for family members.

In short, senior living's ever-evolving integrated technology makes life easier.

From resident surveys to document management to activity calendars and more, technology helps senior living operators keep their communities in sync. Technology creates community. This white paper reveals how.

*AARP Tech Trends Report, April 2021

TODAY'S COMMUNICATION LANDSCAPE IN SENIOR LIVING

While the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions changed communication in every industry, the pandemic's risks to seniors made communication in senior living even more important, and more challenging. Today, operators need ways to connect families with their loved ones in communities, and ways to help staff deliver quality care no matter the circumstance.

That's why it's crucial for operators to implement technology tools that streamline communication and keep their community in sync.

"Some operators are using tech solutions to solve these problems, but they're relying on siloed systems," says Yardi Vice President of Senior Living Ray Elliott. "And with these disparate systems, gaps still exist. Residents and families may not receive up-to-date health information. A resident's paper-filed maintenance request may get lost in the shuffle. But a single connected solution like RentCafe Senior Living can bridge the gaps by centralizing every piece of information."

"**A single connected solution like RentCafe Senior Living can bridge (communication) gaps by centralizing every piece of information."**

Ray Elliott
Vice President of Senior Living
Yardi

Operators are using technology solutions such as RentCafe Senior Living to help staff members communicate with each other, with residents and with resident family members. This integrated solution also helps users make online payments, review health and wellness information, sign forms electronically and submit maintenance requests.

According to Elliott, the top problem stemming from a lack of technology is declining resident satisfaction, a domino effect that could result in residents and their families looking for a new community. To stop the dominoes, Florida-based Validus Senior Living utilizes Yardi's RentCafe Senior Living to improve communication, streamline billing and even enhance medical care.

> "Technology will play a huge factor in our new norm to include the way we communicate and even provide care through the trends of telehealth visits and virtual tours of our communities."

Lindsey Hacker
CFO
Validus

RentCafe Senior Living is especially helpful to residents and families when it comes to their monthly payments. "We've seen an adoption rate of about 70%," Validus CFO Lindsey Hacker said in 2021, adding that residents and families enjoy the flexibility and efficiency of the portal to make online payments, view statements and ask billing questions. "Our overhead costs for billing were also significantly reduced after moving to paperless billing."

Today's senior living residents and their families are increasingly expecting operators to offer a family engagement portal to help everyone stay connected, and to drive accountability for care results.

"Technology will play a huge factor in our new norm to include the way we communicate and even provide care through the trends of telehealth visits and virtual tours of our communities," Hacker said. "Digital marketing is and will continue to be imperative to drive inquiries and traffic to the communities. Differentiating yourself as compared to competitors in this arena will be important to help grow the census faster than the average."

OPERATOR SPOTLIGHT: 4 key ways that Maplewood Senior Living uses technology to enrich resident quality of life

Maplewood Senior Living is known for its innovation, whether in its use of a multi-brand portfolio strategy or its development strategies in downtown city centers. The Westport, Connecticut-based company is also focused on technology, and determining the most creative and effective ways to use it to the benefit of residents.

"Back in 2017, recognizing that the expectations of our residents and their families regarding access to technology were beginning to shift, we launched the Maplewood Center for Aging Innovation & Technology," says Brian Geyser, Chief Clinical Officer for Maplewood's Inspir brand, and the company's Vice President of Clinical Innovation and Population Health.

"The goal of the center is to transform the aging experience for our residents by sourcing, testing and deploying people-centric solutions that enable greater independence, promote social engagement and connectedness, enhance health and wellbeing, improve safety & security, and foster optimal quality of life."

Their use of RentCafe Senior Living is part of that work. Through research, Geyser and Maplewood have identified four key ways that technology can enrich a senior's quality of life: socialization, entertainment, safety, exercise and health tracking.

SOCIALIZATION — Tech has the power to connect residents and families, or residents with residents, when in-person communication isn't possible. Online portals that allow residents to post and exchange news, schedule social activities and more can decrease feelings of isolation and prompt a sense of community.

ENTERTAINMENT — Tech can provide various entertainment options for seniors. From online bulletin boards to calendars that detail upcoming events, tools that encourage residents to participate in community entertainment are more important than ever.

SAFETY — Family members may worry about the safety of their loved ones as they age, and rightfully so. Tech solutions that keep resident health data updated and easily accessible can reduce risks and provide peace of mind.

EXERCISE AND HEALTH TRACKING — Prioritizing mental and physical health is key for all ages, seniors included. With the right tools, seniors and loved ones can easily track important health information like activity levels or medication schedules.

11 MORE WAYS SENIOR LIVING CAN USE TECHNOLOGY

With its focus on bringing technology to the everyday experiences of senior living residents, Maplewood Senior Living is a natural fit for Yardi. Along with its work with RentCafe Senior Living, here are 11 more interesting areas that Maplewood is using cutting-edge tech for residents and staff:

Auditory Enhancement:
Maplewood residents with hearing impairments can use wireless noise-canceling headsets for an enhanced listening experience in group activities, one one one interactions, family visits and fitness programs.

Virtual Reality Experiences:
Featuring 360-degree visual immersion, Maplewood's VR experiences provide residents opportunities for virtual travel and reminiscence therapy, transporting them to new and familiar places all over the world.

Digital Signs & Mobile App:
With digital signs throughout the building and access to the operator's mobile app, residents and families can view relevant and timely information, such as activity calendars, menus and community news.

Digital Interactive Programming:
Residents have access to hundreds of education, faith-based, entertainment and therapeutic programs, as well as fun and challenging games and puzzles designed for all levels of cognition.

Resident Safety Systems:
Maplewood's comprehensive safety systems include nurse call, fall detection, real-time location capabilities and access control to help keep residents safe at all times.

Smart Apartments:
Through their smart apartment's voice capabilities, residents can ask for daily menu offerings or current weather forecasts, or request help in turning on the lights, playing a playlist, turning down the temperature or calling the concierge.

LiveStream Learning:
Residents can enjoy live, interactive educational and entertainment programs streamed from all over the country, with access to museums, national parks, botanical gardens, science centers and more.

AI-Powered Robots:
Maplewood robots can initiate hands-free video visits with doctors and family members, engage residents in activities and provide entertainment during family visits.

Electronic Health Record + eMAR:
Real-time visibility into a resident's health status enables data-driven clinical decisions and proactive care planning. The system is integrated with Maplewood's pharmacy partner for seamless exchange of medication information and health care provider orders.

Caption-enabled Telephones:
With specialized captioned telephones, residents with hearing impairments can view nearly instant captions of what callers are saying on large, easy-to-read display screens on the phones.

Music Therapy Platform:
With lyric-prompting tracks for failure-free singing, as well as music therapist-designed protocols and online training, this technology brings musical joy to residents with cognitive impairment or dementia.

TOP BENEFITS OF IMPROVED COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS FOR RESIDENTS, FAMILY AND STAFF

New technologies have improved senior living for residents, giving them enhanced experiences in their finances, health, socialization and more. Leading communication tools have also improved the experiences of staff and family.

With RentCafe Senior Living, three of the industry's major stakeholders — residents, staff, families — share a communication tool that is easy-to-use and wide-ranging in impact.

Areas of impact include:

Resident surveys

By offering residents a way to provide confidential feedback, RentCafe Senior Living helps operators access crucial information at the click of a button. This creates the ability to measure resident satisfaction, prevent move-outs, manage their community's reputation and acknowledge staff members who are doing a great job. In essence, RentCafe Senior Living helps providers turn feedback into actions — and improve operations across the board. Residents and families gain comfort knowing feedback never gets lost, as they can track staff responses and confirm when action is taken.

Easy community communication

Staff members can post announcements directly in RentCafe Senior Living, and residents and staff alike can post comments on the community bulletin board. Residents, staff and family members can also use Yardi EHR to exchange secure, confidential messages from the portal.

Paperless payments

Residents and family members no longer write checks and carry them into the office — they make paperless payments and receive paperless statements. RentCafe Senior Living makes it easy to review balances, submit one-time payments or set up auto-pay, all online. Users can also view current and past financial statements, with the option to print directly from the portal.

Activities and wellness calendars

Through the Wellness module, RentCafe Senior Living works to keep residents active and engaged. Staff can easily schedule activities and notify residents via online calendars, with the option to set up recurring invites. Residents and guests can sign up directly in the calendar, then site managers can track RSVPs and assign staff accordingly. Family members can simply check the portal to see if their loved one has attended.

Health updates for families

Activity calendars aren't the only communication tool for family members. Operators can use new technology to keep them informed with health data, such as medications and vitals, available in real time from Yardi EHR. For added security and privacy, individual family members can be set up to only view certain items based on their medical authorization.

Electronic signatures and document management

When it comes to signing important documents, residents and families can easily complete electronic signatures in RentCafe Senior Living. Specifically, operators can digitize any document — leases, pet contracts, care assessments, and so on — and mark them for electronic signatures directly in the portal. Residents and families get notified in real time, so they always know when action is needed. All electronically signed documents are automatically tied to the resident record in Yardi Voyager Senior Housing, making everything easy to find and update.

As the pandemic has largely affected senior living communities, it's imperative for operators to implement technology that enables communication anytime, from anywhere. With a secure online portal — one that helps residents and families communicate with care staff, sign documents, schedule activities and more — operators have the chance to enhance communication through the pandemic and beyond.

To request more information about RentCafe Senior Living, visit:

www.yardi.com/about-us/request-information

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