



Why Didn't I Think of That?

By Pam McDonald

What if your 88-year-old technology-phobic Mom could suddenly have all the benefits of emails, text messages, Facebook updates, alerts, and much more – without having to learn a computer or mobile device?

Answering this question eventually led to the formation of [LifeShare Technologies](#), a Senior Housing Forum partner and communications firm bringing the benefits of Internet connectivity and digital infrastructure to seniors and others confounded by technology.

Seniors Gain the Benefits of Internet Capabilities with LifeShare Technologies

According to Co-Founder and CEO Steve Rusche, the firm developed software and hardware that allows users – for less than the price of a cup of coffee – to quickly and easily communicate with family and others involved in their day-to-day lives. They can:

- Send and receive emails and/or text messages
- Share and readily comment on pictures and video
- Play games
- View current and upcoming events or activities
- Receive appointment reminders and
- Appreciate news, therapeutic music, and faith programming

Steve said, “Research has shown that most of us, even the tech savvy, use only about 10% of any technology. We find what we like most, what is most meaningful to us, and stick with that.”



Television: A Communications Tool for Seniors

“My colleagues and I wanted a platform for our communications system that already was universally known and used. We determined that the television would be the perfect interface. Seniors aren't afraid of it, and it already exists in almost every home, so no one need spend money on a new device.”

The tech-ecosystem of LifeShare Technologies is comprised of a set-top box, which connects to the Internet via a wired or wireless connection. A simplified universal remote control and ordinary TV accompany it. LifeShare's user interface easily accommodates customers who find other types of technology inconvenient or frustrating.

An Overall Pleasurable Experience

"Seniors, in their own homes or communities, can turn on their TV using LifeShare's modified remote, check out what's going on, read email or relevant content and, with the click of one button, switch to broadcast television to watch their favorite shows. Whenever they want, they can switch back and forth between TV and LifeShare," Steve noted.

The fonts, colors, graphics, and functioning of LifeShare were developed with the expertise of the University of Indianapolis Center on Aging and Community to ensure ease of use and an overall pleasant experience for older consumers. Messages, whether sent as text or email, arrive in a consistent format that quickly becomes familiar to users.

Enhancing Communications for Residents, Families, Communities

From its inception in 2011, the Indiana-based firm identified senior living communities as a target audience for LifeShare Technologies. Currently 10,000 individuals and 200 communities use the system.

LifeShare is designed to enhance communications primarily between three groups:

1. **Family members with individual residents:** "LifeShare Technologies can be installed on individual TVs in a person's home or apartment in a senior residence," Steve said. "Usually one family member will set the program up, but any number can connect. Residents, their family and friends can stay in touch via email, social media, text messaging, and in-room phones."
2. **The community with residents and visitors:** Residents and visitors can enjoy and celebrate the community's day-to-day fun via photos and video. Staff can control and distribute content with a web login to display important activities, special occasions, and menus, on TVs in public areas of the community as well as announcements and alerts to residents' rooms.
3. **Families with the community:** Using a free robust mobile app, family can stay informed about what's happening in the community, upload pictures for their loved one, add calendar appointments, and even share notes with other family members.

Value-Added for Senior Living Communities

Other special features of particular interest to senior communities include the following:

- **Calendar Generation** – makes it easy to create, manage and publish attractive Community Calendars
- **Notifications** – can be set and distributed via the TV, phone call, text, or all four
- **Activity Programming** – games, news and other engagement resources are available for communal or individual use
- **Wellness Programs** – in conjunction with Coro Health, music and faith programming are scientifically selected by functional need and available for use in individual or group settings

To learn more or schedule a demo, call (317) 825-0320 or visit their website at www.lifesharetech.com.



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