



Is Your Activity Calendar Your Best Friend, Worst Enemy or Something Else?

By Meg LaPorte

Ask nearly any activity professional in the senior living space what necessities they need in order to do their job effectively and one of the answers you'll most likely get is a calendar. Calendars, of course, are the lifeblood of any activity program, and for good reason. They enable professionals to plan for a variety of activities that happen at various times and locations throughout any given day, week, and month.

Creating and managing calendars can become nearly a fulltime job, which is not something most activity professionals want to do. Jamie Treida is the activity director at Aster Place in Lafayette, Ind., where she has figured out how to make calendaring easy with the help of a calendar tool from [LifeShare Technologies](#), a Senior Housing Forum partner.

Technology Makes it Easier

LifeShare has created a number of solutions that enable residents to stay connected via email, social media, text messaging, pictures, and videos using their existing TV and a remote control. LifeShare's CommunityShare and Calendar solutions are designed to help activity professionals manage digital signage, calendaring, music, games, notifications, and more.

Since she began using CommunityShare and their Calendar about five years ago, Treida's administrative work has been trimmed to a minimum. With activities mapped out and communicated for months in advance and call/text reminders sent directly to a resident's phone, the need to have staff knock on everyone's door to remind them something fun is happening in 20 minutes has been eliminated, she says.

Cutting Out the Time-Consuming Admin Work

Before discovering LifeShare, Treida spent hours upon hours of administrative time scheduling time and creating calendars. “It makes my job so much easier and more organized. Before, I would utilize a calendar template where I would then have to type in each box what was planned for the day,” she says. This process would take many hours to get a calendar done for just one month. “And then the font was so small that residents could not read it, therefore, I would have to type a daily activity sheet every day. With LifeShare, my calendar is done within 30 minutes for the next month and I have the ability to make it two-sided so the font is larger.”

Describing LifeShare’s technology as “amazing,” Treida points to its functionality on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. “LifeShare has a portal online where activity directors can input their activities for as far out as they want. It allows for you to make changes on demand from any computer or mobile phone,” she explains.

Among her favorite features is the repeat feature. Since many activities happen frequently, such as Bible Study every Friday at 10 a.m., instead of typing that every Friday she can press “Repeats” and select from various options such as daily, weekly, day of month, second Friday of every month, etc. “Then it does the work for you,” Treida says.

Integration with Community Program

Another key feature that Treida enjoys is its ability to enable her to integrate it with the community’s THRIVE program. American Senior Communities, owner of Aster Place, created THRIVE, which stands for: Thought, Health, Recreation, Interaction, Vocation, and Expression. When Treida puts Zumba Gold on the calendar, for example, the H (health) icon is placed next to it to explain that it is an activity to do with exercise. For Zoo Visits, Treida puts the R (recreation) icon next to it to explain that the event brings joy, laughter, and entertainment.

What’s more, if residents want a daily (or weekly) activity sheet Treida is able to press Daily PDF or Weekly PDF within the online portal and it will generate one within seconds. It also allows for digital signage on televisions throughout a building to help remind residents what is going on in the morning, afternoon, and evening, as well as in the mobile app for families to stay up-to-date with the activity schedule.



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