

Using SMS to make senior in-home care more reliable and efficient.

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Family Matters In-Home Care's specialty is professional, warm and compassionate senior care that allows clients to live independently in the comfort of their home, whether they're elderly, suffering from dementia, or recovering from injury or surgery. It was founded in 2002 by Carol Pardue-Spears, who, after working in the healthcare field for decades, noticed a clear need for quality in-home care services. It is Carol's belief that all those in need of home care should be treated with the same level of dignity and respect that would be provided to a family member. Today, Family Matters employs over 300 caregivers in the San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento, San Diego, and Portland, OR. They provide a wide range of services including bathing, dressing, medicine reminders, running errands, transportation to appointments, household cleaning, meal preparation, and more.

In-home care is of course a very personal service that requires a huge amount of trust, and Family Matters takes this very seriously. In order to provide the quality of service that they've always strived for, it was very important that their Operations team had a fast, easy, and effective way to get in touch with a large team of mobile caregivers at all times, so that any last-minute issues could be immediately addressed. Avochato's text messaging solution was the perfect channel for that. "Before using Avochato, we've tried a number of other text applications as well as the plug-in from our scheduling platform with poor results. Issues varied from exceeding the number of users per account to having text messages jumbled up in other previous messages. It wasn't aesthetically pleasing nor user friendly", says Rochelle Hernandez-Lomboy, Operations Manager at Family Matters.

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Rochelle Hernandez-Lomboy, Operations Manager, Family Matters

They are using SMS primarily to schedule and coordinate work shifts. Hernandez-Lomboy says that "being able to quickly connect with our talent pool has decreased response time and shortened the time to fill a shift. Our contacts are more inclined to reply back to text than email". A 23-person Operations team is regularly reaching out to caregivers to confirm availability and provide details about each shift, so the information is readily available on each person's phone. If there's a need to reschedule, caregivers can simply reply to that message, and the team can find a replacement. Caregivers also text in with any questions or concerns to report about their clients to the office.

To make their job even easier, the team also leverages features like tags and template messages, to allow them to create different segments of caregivers - for example, caregivers who are available to work on weekends - and reach out to them with pre-written messages, saving the team a ton of time.

In addition, Family Matters uses Avochato for recruiting purposes as candidates are more likely to respond to text messages. They reach out to job applicants and ask qualifying questions over text - the answers are automatically saved to each candidate's profile on Avochato. SMS is a great channel to schedule job interviews and send out reminders, which significantly reduced no-show rates. "Avochato gives us more control and the ease to filter through applicants without messages getting lost", says Wendy Wu, HR Manager at Family Matters.

Since starting to work with Avochato, Family Matters has seen a significant decrease in response time from caregivers, as well as an increase in satisfaction with communication from them, as messages were no longer being missed. As the team continues to expand into additional geographies, they know that Avochato will be a key partner in maintaining efficient and timely 2-way conversations at scale with their mobile staff, wherever they are.

The challenge

Quickly getting in touch with their large team of mobile caregivers and ensure messages were being read and replied to.

The solution

An easy to use SMS platform to schedule and coordinate shifts with different groups of caregivers.

The impact

Faster response times from caregivers.

Higher satisfaction with communication reported by caregivers.