

Review Rockstars: Autumn Leaves Memory Care



Written by Amelia Willson

About Review Rockstars: In this series for our senior living and care partners, SeniorAdvisor.com highlights providers who are trailblazers when it comes to online reviews and reputation management – our Review Rockstars. We’ll be interviewing directors to share their tips and tricks on making your business stand out online.

The LaSalle Group manages nearly 30 Autumn Leaves memory care communities throughout Oklahoma, Georgia, Illinois, and Texas. One of their communities, [Autumn Leaves of Bolingbrook](#), recently became one of the most reviewed communities on SeniorAdvisor.com and holds the record of the most manager responses to reviews. We spoke with [Joe Jasmon, COO of LaSalle Group](#), to learn more about the Autumn Leaves secret to success – how do they manage to keep their families so happy, all while maintaining a positive online reputation from a corporate level for so many communities?

Success is a Comprehensive Communication Strategy

Joe Jasmon explained that the key to having success with online reviews is incorporating them as part of a comprehensive, company-wide communication strategy. By eschewing standard, generic marketing communications in favor of *personalized, one-on-one communications with each and every family*, Autumn Leaves is able to differentiate themselves in an impactful way. From the highest corporate officer to the staff members in the communities, they are committed to communication and sensitive to opportunities for feedback, and the families appreciate it.

The genesis of the communications strategy began with wanting to keep families in the loop on a more regular basis. This mushroomed to include not just current but also potential families – sharing true stories of what Autumn Leaves is all about. Reviews are one way to share those stories.

“What you see on [SeniorAdvisor.com](https://www.senioradvisor.com) is the end result of a full-blown communications strategy,” Jasmon says. “We encourage all resident families to give us feedback and rate us, and we’re sensitive to respond back.” Autumn Leaves talks to every single family once a week, whether it’s by text, phone, internet, or in person. With nearly **1,200** families, it takes a large team committed to communication. The benefit of prioritizing this family communication is it results in the best kind of referrals – referrals from another family member are the strongest, most qualified because it’s someone who can relate exactly to what the prospect is going through.

This sensitivity to real-time communication is a shared value among all employees. Jasmon recalled a time one of the marketing team members was following up with older leads: “The family member couldn’t talk, she was trying to get her husband off the floor. The marketing person said we’ll be right there.” She hung up the phone and was there in five minutes with a caregiver to help them. The family wasn’t even a customer. “These are moments to celebrate,” Jasmon says.

By having caregivers and team members who instinctually rise to the occasion to help families, and celebrating those employees, Autumn Leaves is able to foster an organization of good people. [Having good people on your team leads to good reviews](#). Jasmon says Autumn Leaves views the online rating systems as “a way to reinforce that your loved one will be safe with us.”

Asking for Feedback: Perform First, Then Ask for the Favor

We mentioned earlier that Autumn Leaves of Bolingbrook is now one of the top-reviewed communities on SeniorAdvisor.com. How did the community achieve this?

“Families are happy when their loved one is happy,” Jasmon says, so they don’t consider it a burden to write an online review. When it comes to asking for reviews, Autumn Leaves operates with the mindset of **perform first, then ask for the favor.**

The individual Autumn Leaves communities and the regional teams all share a friendly competitive spirit. They thrive on challenges, so the corporate team regularly sets up series of contests for them using the census, family satisfaction surveys, and online reviews. Jasmon is proud to say they’ve received over 90% ratings across all the categories in their family surveys. “How do you do that? You have to perform. The same way you get more people to participate is the same way you get them to review your community online – *you need to personally engage every family* and ask them to fill out a review on your behalf.”

Autumn Leaves of Bolingbrook did this using the SeniorAdvisor.com Review Postcards. Big on follow-up, the Executive Director energized his staff to physically hand out the postcards to every resident, family, and tour – and then follow up with them afterwards with a gentle reminder. This strategy worked. The community is newer, and these reviews are helping them make their mark on the Chicago region and stand out among the more-established competition in the area.

Reviews are Grounds for Celebration

“For us, it’s a time to celebrate,” Jasmon says of reviews. “Even if it’s 4 stars, it’s a way to celebrate what your staff is doing and get them excited about their work.”

Because online reviews are a priority for the organization, they are managed at a corporate level. When a review comes in, it goes to Judy Brown, Internet Marketing/SEO Specialist at The LaSalle Group. Brown immediately forwards the review out to the region, the community, and occasionally the home office for especially noteworthy reviews. A 5-star rating results in celebration, consisting of kudos, handwritten notes and spot bonuses for the team. A negative review is seen as a

learning opportunity for the community – a SWAT team of sorts is formed to investigate the issue and remedy it if necessary, and someone immediately responds to the family.

Jasmon emphasizes the benefits of online reviews: “Online reviews really personalize what is a very difficult experience. It gives you reassurance that you’re not alone, and creates comfort and relieves guilt. **It gives you a team to be on.**” He says the reviews really help families narrow down their options by eliminating background noise. Online reviews provide consistency to the sorting process for families as they begin their search for providers. To be seen as reliable, families expect to see multiple reviews for a community.

“SeniorAdvisor.com has given us the opportunity for a **real-time celebration moment** that you don’t get with annual surveys,” Jasmon says. **“The site has been a real blessing for us. It automates a process which historically was very manual and months-behind, by which time you’ve lost the opportunities both to celebrate and more importantly to fix.”**