Next Loop Co.

A FREE GUIDE FOR HOME CARE OWNERS

What one enquiry is worth to a home care agency.

The numbers behind it, where each one comes from, and a checklist you can work through this week. Nothing to sign up for.

Neill Papa, Next Loop Co. · Updated September 2026

The short version

1. The average home care client brings in **$14,830** over their whole stay.[1] In the Bay Area, where rates run higher, it's more.
2. Agencies spend a median of **$800** to win each new client.[2]
3. Reply within an hour and a lead is about **7 times** as likely to turn into a real prospect as one you answer an hour later.[4]
4. In a 2026 study, **63 of 331** home care agencies never answered the phone, even after three tries.[6]
5. Agencies that track every enquiry report median revenue of **$3.15 million**, against $1.40 million for those that don't.[3]

So the cheapest new client is almost always the one who already reached out. Most of what follows is about not losing that person.

1. What one client is worth to you

Start here, because every other number only means something next to this one.

$14,830 **average lifetime value of a home care client**

Home Care Pulse 2023 Benchmarking Report, 2022 data[1]

That's revenue, not what you keep. The same report puts the direct cost of care, mostly caregiver pay, at 61.3% of revenue.[1] What's left is about 39%, so roughly $5,700 a client before your other costs.

Bay Area numbers are bigger. Genworth's 2024 survey puts California home care at about $38 to $39 an hour, against $33 to $34 nationally.[5] Owners I've talked to here charge anywhere from about $40 to $70 an hour and pay caregivers $30 to $35.

Your own number beats any benchmark. It's four figures you already know:

What you charge per hour, minus what you pay the caregiver	**$ per hour**
× hours a week for a typical client	**$ per week**
× weeks a typical client stays	**worth of one client**
Example: ($42 – $32) × 20 hours × 52 weeks	**$10,400**

That's before payroll taxes and workers' comp. There's a calculator that does this for you on my homepage. Nothing you type in it leaves the page.

2. What it costs to win one

$800 **median cost to acquire one new home care client**

Activated Insights 2024 Benchmarking Report, 2023 data[2]

That was the highest in five years, up $208 in a single year.[2] It covers what agencies spend on advertising, referral sites and marketing, divided by the clients it brings in.

Referral sites are one of the ways agencies buy clients. A Place for Mom, for example, says it's paid by home care agencies each time it refers a family.[9] Those can be worth it. But every family who found you on their own, through your website or a friend, is a client you didn't have to pay for twice.

3. How fast you reply decides a lot

7× **as likely to qualify a lead when you reply within an hour, compared with an hour later**

Harvard Business Review, 2011[4]

The same research found leads answered within an hour were more than 60 times as likely to qualify as ones left for 24 hours or longer.[4] An older MIT study found calling within 5 minutes, instead of 30, gave 21 times the odds of qualifying the lead.[7] Neither study is about home care. But think about who's writing in. It's a daughter who just got a call from the hospital, filling in three agencies' forms on her phone in the parking lot. That's who is waiting on your reply.

4. How many calls agencies miss

63 of 331 **New York home care agencies never answered a family's call**

JAMA Network Open, May 2026[6]

Researchers called as a family looking for care for a 70-year-old, up to three times each. Sixty-three agencies never picked up, and 27 more had numbers that didn't work.[6] The callers were on Medicaid, not private pay, so it isn't a perfect match for a Bay Area agency. It's still one in five.

Web forms go unanswered too. In the Harvard audit of 2,241 companies, 23% never responded to a web enquiry at all, and the average reply took 42 hours.[4]

5. Track every enquiry

$3.15M **median revenue of agencies that track every client enquiry, against $1.40M for those that don't**

Activated Insights 2026 Benchmarking Report[3]

To be fair to the numbers: this shows the two go together, not that tracking alone doubles revenue. Bigger agencies are more likely to track. But you can't fix a leak you can't see, and tracking is how you find out whether your enquiries dry up, go unanswered, or come in fine and don't turn into clients. Those three have three different fixes.

Families look before they call. In a 2026 UK survey, 40% of families said they started their search for care online,[8] so your website is the first conversation you have with a lot of them, and you're not in the room.

The checklist: work through it this week

None of this needs a new website. Most of it takes an afternoon.

1. **Send yourself an enquiry.**
   Fill in your own website form from your phone and time how long it takes to reach you. Then call your main number after hours and listen to what a family hears.

2. **Get a buzz, not just an email.**
   Make sure a new web enquiry makes your phone buzz, not only lands in an inbox you check at night. Your phone's mail app can usually alert you for one sender or label.

3. **Set a one-hour rule.**
   During business hours, every enquiry gets a call or text back within the hour. Decide now who covers it when you're with a client.

4. **Fix your voicemail.**
   Your business name, that you'll call back today, and a second way to reach you. Call back every missed call the same day.

5. **Start a simple log.**
   For every enquiry: the date, where they found you, how fast you replied, and what happened. A spreadsheet is fine. After a month you'll know which of the three leaks you have.

6. **Work out your number.**
   What one client is worth to you, using the table above. Write it where you'll see it when deciding what a new client is worth spending on.

7 **Ask for reviews in week two.**
When a new family is settled, ask them for a review. Families read them before they call.

8 **Check your phone number everywhere.**
Your website, your Google Business Profile and any directory listing should show the same number and the same hours.

Want this set up for you?

This is what I build for home care agencies: a website where every enquiry buzzes your phone, lands in one place, and gets tracked from first message to new client. If you'd like me to look at what you have now, the site check is free and takes twenty minutes.

Book it at nextloopco.com, or call or text (510) 516-6781.

Sources

1. Home Care Pulse, 2023 Home Care Benchmarking Report (2022 data), as summarised by Stephen Tweed, Homecare CEO, June 2023: average client lifetime value $14,830; direct cost of care 61.3% of revenue. homecareceo.com
2. Activated Insights (formerly Home Care Pulse), 6 key findings from the 2024 Benchmarking Report: customer acquisition cost $800, up $208 on the year. activatedinsights.com
3. Activated Insights, 2026 Home Care Benchmarking Report release, July 15, 2026: median revenue $3.15M for agencies that track every inquiry, $1.40M for those that don't. activatedinsights.com
4. Oldroyd, McElheran and Elkington, “The Short Life of Online Sales Leads,” Harvard Business Review, March 2011. hbr.org
5. Genworth and CareScout, Cost of Care Survey 2024: national median $34 an hour for a home health aide, $33 for homemaker services; California $89,232 a year for a home health aide at 44 hours a week. carescout.com, genworth.com
6. “Challenges With Accessing Home Care Among Medicaid Beneficiaries,” JAMA Network Open, May 26, 2026. 331 licensed New York home care agencies called; 63 did not answer, 27 had non-working numbers. nih.gov
7. Oldroyd and InsideSales.com, Lead Response Management Study, MIT, 2007. PDF

8. Sapio Research for Care England and Log my Care, 2026. A survey of families in England.
9. A Place for Mom, Eldercare advisors. aplaceformom.com

Next Loop Co. · San Francisco Bay Area · (510) 516-6781 · hello@nextloopco.com
Share it with anyone who runs an agency. The figures are the sources' own; the example is illustrative.