Social Media for the Veterinary Practice

Eric Garcia, IT & Web Consultant
Simply Done Tech Solutions, LLC
1 (813) 545-3044
eric@simplydonetechsolutions.com
www.simplydonetechsolutions.com

Quick Poll

• How many practices have:
  • Facebook
  • Twitter
  • YouTube

About Me!

• IT & Web Consultant & Owner of Simply Done Tech Solutions - Specialize in enhancing client value and patient care through the use of technology
• Former Vice President of Pets Vets and You, Inc.
• Vet Partners Member Consultant
• International Speaker: USA, Canada, Europe, Turkey
• Author of over 15 chapters in the upcoming 5-Minute Veterinary Practice Management Consult (Due in 2014) on technology and web marketing
• Business Management Team at Large Practice in Florida
Resources

- Private link will be sent out by Elanco
- Copy of the presentation
- Social Media Policy
- Cell Phone Usage Policy
- Network Acceptable Use Policy
- Photo Release Form
- And more...

Not Generation Specific Anymore

- Google
  - All generations
- Social Media
  - People aged over 55 are driving the force of social media
- Texting
  - 65% of adult mobile phone users sleep with the phone either on or next to their bed
- Websites
  - Baby boomers turn to Google to search for new businesses
- Email
  - 91% of Internet users are between the ages of 18 and 64 and send email

Source: Nielsen Company (February 14, 2011)

The Challenges We Face

- Business Competitors
  - Over saturated market place
  - Mobile vaccination clinics
  - Various not for profits

- Online Competitors
  - Online pharmacies
  - Non-DVM pet experts
  - Online Reputation
  - Google, DVM
What To Know...

• How the “bad” stuff gets on Google
Score Card

Horrible Person

1

Veterinarian

0
What We Need to Do...

- Bond clients to the practice by keeping in touch
- Allow clients to obtain information 24/7
- Develop websites that are content rich, search engine optimized and become THE resource for clients
- Share our knowledge of pet care across social media platforms

The Power of Education

- The power to beat Google, D.V.M.
- An educated client is a compliant client
- Clients have the CORRECT recommendation... the PRO-VETERINARY recommendation
- Educate starting at ground zero

For once....

- We can support our profession
- We can market to existing clients
- We can bond with clients
- We can attract new clients

The new word of mouth is social media.
Traditional Forms of Communication

- Post cards
- Letters delivered by the pony express
- Emails that only include text
- Simple websites
- Phone calls on a home phone

Forms of Digital Communication

- Online Patient Portal
- E-Mailing Reminders
- Texting
- Social Media

Why Are You Afraid of Social Media

- It is detrimental to the employee productivity
- Fear of the unknown
- We already have information overload
- No guaranteed results
- We will lose control of our brand and image
- Lack of experience
- Ignorance
- Hard to determine the ROI
Online Patient Portal

- What is a Patient Portal?
  - Patient information accessible 24/7
  - Reminders, prescriptions, pet info
  - Ease of sending in requests
  - Abundance of resources
  - Ease of ordering prescription refills
- Satisfy a need for information
- Practice benefits
  - Better compliance
  - Practice is open 24/7
  - Automated processes

Enhanced Websites

- Where do pet owners go for pet care information? The Internet.
- Develop a complete practice website
  - Visually appealing & easy to navigate
  - Content rich & Search Engine Optimizeable
  - Appointment and RX refill request
  - Resource center with multiple resources (min. of 3 per pet care topic)

Interpreting Web Analytics

- Changes in interpretation – Focus on time spent per page not just per person
- Pages where most time is spend:
  1. Team/Staff
  2. About Us
  3. Various Blog Articles
Mobile Communication - Reminders

- Emailing
- Texting

*Nearly 40% of social media users access social media from their mobile phone.*

Source: Nielsen Company (September 2011)

Post Card Reminders

- Still prove high return success rates
  - Four series of reminders are still effective
- Pitfalls (Risky Business)
  - Incorrect addresses
  - Damaged post cards
  - Lack of quality = lack of interest
  - Cost of failed delivery

Email in General

- All generations use it
- E-mailing is still the #3 activity among internet users
- Email ROI is the highest when compared to other paid internet marketing mediums

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.
Source: Direct Marketing Association
Source: Nielsen Company
Email Reminders

- Supplement “traditional” reminder services
- Ease of replying – Call to action in email
- EDUCATION

Texting Statistics

- The average U.S. Mobile subscriber sends and receives more SMS text messages than phone calls
- 72% of adult mobile phone users send text messages with their phones
- 65% of adults sleep with their phone either on or next to their bed
- One technician checked their cell phone 72 times within a few hours

Types of Web Based Texting Plans

- One on One Texting Plans
  - Send clients updates during patient visit
  - Normal lab results
  - Prescription pick up time
- Mass Texting Plans
  - (GroupTexting.com or ipipi.com)
  - Alerts & Important Information
  - Reminders
  - NOT for marketing
One on One Texting – Sample CAN DO Messages

- Quick update on how a client’s pet is doing while boarding or dropped off for a surgical procedure
  - “Elvis is doing great Mr. Garcia! We will keep you updated.”
  - “Elvis is recovering from his neuter nicely. We will call you soon.”
- Quick reminder of a service becoming due or overdue
  - “This is a reminder blood work is required before Elvis’ next medication refill”
- Quick confirmation of a prescription filled
  - “Elvis’ meds are now ready to pick up.”

One on One Texting – Sample DON’T DO Messages

- Full doctor update on how a client’s pet is doing while boarding or dropped off for a surgical procedure
  - “Elvis is getting ready to undergo anesthesia. We just put his catheter in and we have him hooked up on IV fluids. He is in his cage waiting to go next.”
  - “We gave Elvis his vaccines and exam. Everything is normal except his left eye has some discharge so I’m going to prescribe an antibiotic ointment. I also sent his blood work back and right up. His blood work results came back a bit elevated and I suggest medication ABC to go home and be given tonight. Call me if with any updates.”
- Abnormal Blood Work Results
  - “Elvis’ liver enzymes came back elevated. I suggest we take an ultrasound and x-rays to work up the case more and find out the cause of it. In the mean time I have some medications up front for you to pick up when you are able to.”

Texting Appointment Reminders

- Supplement existing appointment reminder procedures (i.e. receptionist calling & email)
- Schedule an appointment before client leaves the practice….. Then, help the client remember!
- Ease of scheduling appointment after text reminder through smart phones
Social Media

- What is social media? Media for social interaction normally accompanied with a voting process to make the media “popular”
- Why does Gen X & Y heavily use this as a source of communication?
- Popular Social Media Channels
  - Facebook.com – Social Networking
  - Twitter.com – Micro Blogging
  - Youtube.com – Video Blogging
  - Wordpress.com – Blogging
  - Pinterest.com – Picture Blogging
  - Foursquare.com – Location Based Platform

Social Media Statistics

- Social media is the #1 activity online
- U.S. Internet users spend more time on Facebook than any other brand
- People aged 55+ are driving the growth of social media
The “Rules of Social Media”...

- Never relay any type of medical information
- Do not plan on utilizing any messaging service as a form of e-mail
- Do not come off as a marketer
- Stay away from negative topics
- Recognize clients and patients
- Educate

The Social Media Cycle for a Veterinary Practice

Awareness → Socialization → Discussion → Purchase → Inquiry

Worth Going Over Again...

- Do not come off as a company or person constantly trying to sell a service or product

Monday: We have hot deals for you today! Buy 6 of this and get 5 of that FREE!
Tuesday: We have 65% off vaccines!
Wednesday: We have 50% off neuters!
Thursday: We love pets!
Friday: Come in tomorrow for a free rabies vaccine with the purchase of another vaccine.
Facebook Statistics

• 50% of users login to Facebook any given day

• Average user has 130 friends

• More than 30 billion pieces of content (web links, news stories, blogs posts, notes, photo albums, etc.) are shared each month

Create a Happy Feeling Space

One in three pets will become lost at some point during their lifetime. Without ID, 90% never make it home. Does this worry you? If so, a microchip is your answer. A microchip is much more reliable than a collar and tag because there is no chance that it will fall off. Getting a microchip placed is quick, easy and can be done at our practice during a 15 minute appointment. Share this post with your friends and reduce the rate of lost and homeless pets in our community.

Sample Conversation Starter
Sample Conversation Starter

Wow! We just received Penny's mix-breed DNA results back from the lab and it turns out she is actually a Yorkie/Maltese mix. What do you think the ancestry of your mixed breed loved one might be?

Sample Conversation Starter

Did you know flea prevention not only protects your pets but it can help prevent an infestation that will protect you. In one day, a single flea can bite your cat or dog more than 400 times. During that same day, the flea can consume more than its body weight of your pet’s blood. Thanks to revolutionary products, such as Comfortis and Trifexis, you and your pet do not have to suffer. Comfortis and Trifexis can kill 98% of fleas within 4 hours of the first dose. Is this something you have dealt with in the past or deal with today? Share your story, ask us a question or give us a quick like!

The 3 Elements of an Effective Marketing Post

Marketing Mention

Fun, Interesting or Engaging Fact

Socialize
Sample Conversation Starter

**Fun, Interesting or Engaging Fact:** One in three pets will become lost at some point during their lifetime. Without ID, 90% never make it home. Does this worry you? If so, a microchip is your answer. A microchip is much more reliable than a collar and tag because there is no chance that it will fall off. [PHOTO]

**Marketing Mention:** Getting a microchip placed is quick, easy and can be done at our practice during a 15-minute appointment.

**Socialize:** Share this post with your friends and reduce the rate of lost and homeless pets in our community.

---

Sample Conversation Starter

**Marketing Mention:** Wow! We just received Penny’s mix-breed DNA results back from the lab and it turns out she is actually a Yorkie/Maltese mix. [PHOTO]

**Socialize:** What do you think the ancestry of your mixed breed loved one might be?

---

Sample Conversation Starter

**Marketing Mention:** Thanks to revolutionary products, such as Comfortis and Trifexis, you and your pet do not have to suffer. Comfortis and Trifexis can kill 98% of fleas within 4 hours of the first dose.

**Fun, Interesting or Engaging Fact:** Did you know flea prevention not only protects your pets but it can help prevent an infestation that will protect you. In one day, a single flea can bite your cat or dog more than 400 times. During that same day, the flea can consume more than its body weight of your pet’s blood. [PHOTO]

**Socialize:** Is this something you have dealt with in the past or deal with today? Share your story, ask us a question or give us a quick like!
Potential Outcomes

- Client learns you offer the mentioned service
- Story shared with friends of clients and/or within a community of non-clients
- Client comes in for mentioned service outside of preventive care visit

The Share Web – 440 Impressions

Reach

- Suburban Animal Clinic – Columbus, OH
- Green Valley Veterinary Hospital – New Brighton, PA
- Veterinary Medical Clinic – Tampa, FL
- North Star Animal Hospital – Palmer, AK
YouTube Statistics

• More video is uploaded to YouTube in 60 days than the 3 major US networks created in 60 years

• YouTube’s demographic is broad: 18-54 years old

• Millions of subscriptions happen each day – Subscriptions allow you to connect with someone you’re interested in

Improve Compliance with YouTube

• Topic of Interest – Link to Invoice
  ▫ Puppy & Kitten Care
  ▫ Senior Pet Care
  ▫ Behavior Training
  ▫ Teeth Brushing
  ▫ Ear cleaning

• Share on all social media channels
Rewarding Results
Negativity

- What is negative? Will it hurt the practice?
- STOP – Don't freak out. Review the comment and present it to an administrator/owner.
- CONTACT THE POSTER – Discuss the posting by commenting back (if not offensive or obscene comment) in a polite manner (not defensive)... and/or contact the poster via phone.
- FIND OUT WHAT WENT WRONG – Discuss with the appropriate departments. Ask yourself... can you learn from this?
- Use Facebook moderation list
Don’t let this become your online presence...

Thrive in the Future & Stand Out Among Competitors

Some practices are making it happen…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice A</th>
<th>Practice B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 Florida Avenue</td>
<td>448 Florida Avenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still has yellow pages ad</td>
<td>Marketing through Social Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail communication does not exist</td>
<td>E-mail reminders and send e-mail newsletters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner and/or Administrator would rather not get involved with potential headaches of digital communication</td>
<td>Website loaded with information and resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result - Lower average transaction &amp; number of new client visits</td>
<td>Able to communicate while on the go via mobile website and text messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result – Higher average transaction &amp; increasing number of new client visits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cornerstone Practices - Percent Growth Practice Revenue

80% of practices have grown greater than 3%

Change in Gross Income (yearly)

*Final number of those reporting were 128, of which 120 have had growth of greater than 0%*
You can be a “Strong Grower” or a “Major Decliner”

- **Large Practices** ($2.5M+ in revenue)
  - “Strong Grower” – 11% average
  - “Major Decliner” – 5% average
- **Medium Practices** ($1M to $2.4M in revenue)
  - “Strong Grower” – 16% average
  - “Major Decliner” – 7%
- **Small Practices** (Less than $1M in revenue)
  - “Strong Grower” – 28% average
  - “Major Decliner” – 10% average

Source: Idexx Cornerstone data (n = 2,000 practices with Cornerstone)

Observations About Fastest Growers

- Skilled at recognizing and implementing innovative technologies and enabling strategies that strengthen the client bond
- Crave tools that enable them to practice high quality medicine AND improve practice management
- Recognize the imperative that drives better client communication
  - Clients want to be MORE empowered
  - Clients as consumers are MORE critical of value they get from ALL products/services
  - Information is empowering and value is a MUST!

Noticeable Differences

- “Growers” distinguish themselves by their focus on client experience and practice marketing
  - Growth attributed growth to client communication methods
  - Decliners lacked focus on client communication methods

Source: Idexx – Practice Management Consultant Summit 2013
Community Awareness

- Become the expert within your community
- Help educate an audience that needs proper pet health education
- Take back control of what is hurting your bottom line
- Resource for pet care information

How much communication is too much?

No such thing when the client is in control.
Thank You, Elanco!

Eric Garcia, IT & Web Consultant
Simply Done Tech Solutions, LLC
1 (813) 545-3044
eric@simplydonetechsolutions.com
www.simplydonetechsolutions.com

5/10/13