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AIS 4099: Senior Capstone

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Marketing in the Veterinary Field

15 Hour Project

Eastside Animal Hospital is a new veterinary hospital that opened in May of 2021. It is a small animal practice offering quality care and advanced care. The hospital was built from the ground up in an existing building that used to be a bank. There were no existing clientele or patients at this new practice. Due to the expense of building the practice, unexpected renovations and remodeling the hospital funding has been decreased for marketing. Marketing is crucial for a veterinary practice to grow, develop relationships with the clients and improve their public image. I will review literature on marketing in the veterinary field, use this information to develop this information into usable marketing materials and evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the organization itself. After reviewing the above-mentioned sections, recommendations will be made to the company to assist in developing their marketing campaign.

In the article “5 Marketing Musts for Every Veterinary Hospital.” Five marketing tips to stay ahead of competition in the veterinary field are outlined in this article. The article covers Search Engine Optimization, pay per click, email marketing, public relations, and social media usage in the veterinary field. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the optimization of wording and tools to graduate to a higher website ranking and show up earlier in searches. When creating social media projects and client education articles for their new website I utilized SEO with keywords to optimize our media. Pay per click is a tool to help draw clients to your site from search engines and advertisements. We decided that with a short budget on marketing PPC was

not in the best interest for Eastside Animal Hospital at this time. Social media platforms used to establish relationships and draw new clients to the business. Eastside Animal Hospital now has two main social media platforms Facebook and Instagram that we are currently utilizing on normal scheduled days. Email Marketing is used to target marketing articles to certain demographics in your area. Eastside Animal Hospital will utilize email marketing along with their new website to help support email marketing in their campaign. Public relations are the tools used to build brand awareness to consumers, the hospital is trying to develop relationships with the tightly knit community to help them develop their public relations within this community.

Another article “Are You Getting Full Benefits from the Use of Social Media? A Review Combining the Concepts of Social Media, Social Capital and Knowledge Sharing.” in the Brazilian Journal of management analyzed 22 papers that combined information regarding social media, social capital theory and knowledge sharing. They investigated how these components relate to each other and the outcome of combining them. The paper supports the importance of social media as a tool to facilitate knowledge sharing and increasing social capital theory. In practice this study suggests having clear strategies for social media use, motivating participation in users, and sharing knowledge through social media have a positive effect on business.

“The Importance of Personal Marketing for Veterinary Acting in the Pet Market.” addresses the new role of pets in the household as family members. There is an increase in the veterinary field in the availability of hospitals to choose from for clients, resulting in more competition within the veterinary field. This article stresses the importance of personal marketing to help build customer loyalty and help individual companies stand out from others. Instilling personable stools to help a company stand out and become more visible to the

customers. The four Ps of product, price, promotion, and plaza are discussed and how to place value on the four P's within the veterinary field.

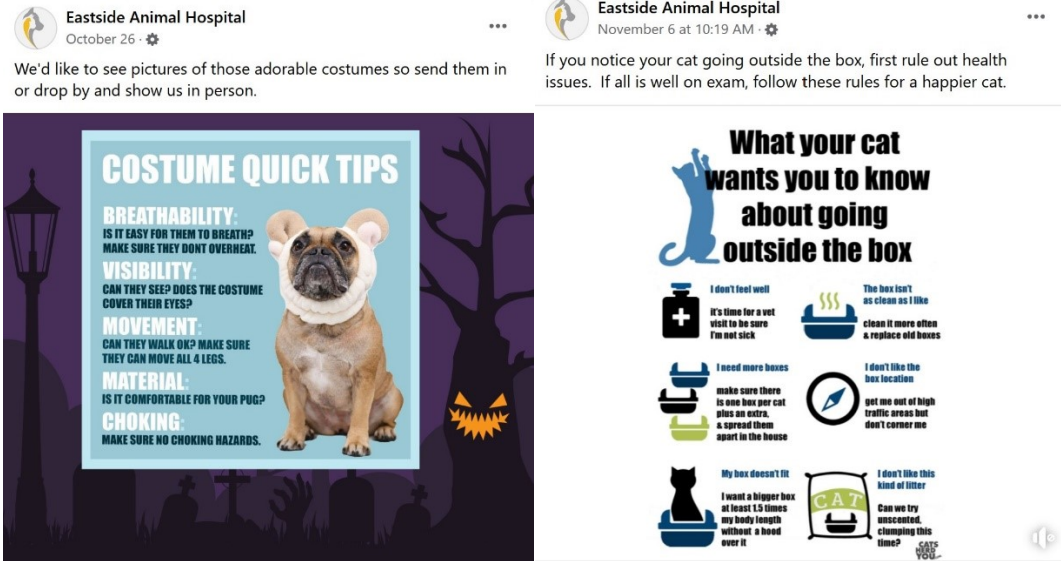
Susan McKay writes "Marketing in Veterinary Practice I: 'Talking Dirty'?" This article discusses how to achieve stronger brand recognition by evaluating the current marketing strategy in the field and employing your mission statement into that strategy. The information given is to evaluate the company's strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and to use this information to develop future goals for the current marketing strategy to ensure proper usage of resources and ensure understanding of those goals are at the forefront of that strategy.

Robert Sanchez writes "What Luke Skywalker Has to Do with Veterinary Practice Marketing: To Reel in New Veterinary Clients--and Turn Them into Loyal Customers--You Must Appeal to Their Hidden 'Hero.'" The article is about how to bypass the cortex of the brain and reach the limbic system which affects the emotions. Using the Hero's Journey to help create closer bonds with clients, support the brand and referrals and increase revenue. He suggests painting a picture for pet owners of a close relationship with the brand resulting in awareness of all the benefits you may achieve together.

My role in the 15-Hour Project has been to research marketing strategies and accumulate social media posts, and create a timeline for effective social media usage. The majority of my 15 hours were spent formatting and creating social media posts through the Canva application to schedule upcoming posts for the practice. During my project hours I have also been meeting with and helping our web-designer develop content to use on the new website that is being created.

The most progress I made in my role during the 15-hour project was creating social media posts that are driven to educate, but also appeal to our patient's emotional side. Using

these same techniques I developed approved content for our web-site developer and marketing agency to utilize in the different aspects that they cover such as email marketing and website content. Please see some examples below.



The most significant thing I learned about Eastside Animal Hospital and its clients were recognizing the clientele's needs from the veterinary practice. Learning about the correlation between the limbic system, marketing and how to appeal to the clients' emotional needs as a marketing tool have been very beneficial in helping to create posts and advertising. The recognition of how clients perceive and are drawn to different types of marketing and how to apply that in our strategy within the field. I hope that Eastside Animal can become the clientele's "Hero" that Robert Sanchez writes about.

Strengths: Some of the strengths that Eastside Animal Hospital has is that the available hours for appointments are longer than other local veterinary clinics opening up appointments for clients that may be working during normal medical veterinary hours. In support of these longer hours Eastside Animal Hospital also offers same day appointments for clients that may not be

able to make it to their routine veterinarians when issues arise. The personable veterinarians at the hospital also offer quality medicine to their patients, developing relationships with new clients and resulting in future relations.

Weaknesses: While Eastside Animal Hospital has many strengths it also has many weaknesses as it is a startup business. Due to the poor management of resources and lack of management there has been a lack of marketing and inconsistent usage of social media. The hospital is also located in a tightly knit community where word of mouth is crucial to acceptance within the community so establishing relationships and becoming a fixture in the community has been overlooked but is an important tool for Eastside Animal Hospital to develop.

Opportunities: The closeness of the community that Eastside Animal Hospital is located in can also be a great opportunity for the hospital even with a lack of funding for advertising.

Fortunately, there are many free social media tools that Eastside Animal Hospital can utilize in strengthening this community bond. By increased open hours and same day appointments offered the hospital is providing a service to the community that isn't offered by the existing veterinary practice.

Threats: The largest threat to Eastside Animal Hospital is lack of marketing and community presence. This tightly knit community is very loyal to the local existing practice and have been communicating negatively about presenting a new clinic in the area. The word-of-mouth factor is huge within the local community whether good or bad.

The recommendations and corrections I made during my 15 hour project for Eastside Animal Hospital to follow would be to utilize free social medias, create a marketing campaign and begin to develop personal relations with the community. Creating a marketing campaign

with a combination of mailers, Search Engine Optimization and utilizing this information across the board on different social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Indeed is now being implemented for Eastside Animal Hospital to help them develop face within the community. The hospital also needs to be aware of this tightly knit communities proclivities and help the staff to develop personal relations with every individual who walks through the door. Eastside Animal Hospital needs to follow Robert Sanchez's advice and become the "Heroes" of the community to help them create closer bonds with clients, support the brand, obtain referrals, and increase revenue.

As the new practice manager thrust into position at a brand new but established business, I have been spinning my wheels on what to do for this practice. The 15-Hour project I was assigned for my Bachelor's in Technical and Applied Studies has given me the focus to benefit my position and Eastside Animal in general. By focusing on one of the areas that was lacking which was marketing I have been able to better understand what steps in marketing needed to be accomplished and during my 15 hours I was able to create a marketing campaign for the practice. With better marketing and more knowledge, I will share this knowledge with the prior owners and staff and help Eastside Animal Hospital grow and thrive, while retaining our quality of care and create new relationships within our community.

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