THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE FOR ANIMAL HEALTH RETAILERS

Internet Marketing: A Continuous Process page 14

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SUMMER 2011
VOL. 10 / ISSUE 2
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Commodity prices keep rising, export demand is growing and farm income this year will be 20 percent higher than 2010. But will American agriculture, the bright spot in the U.S. economy, keep sailing smoothly over those amber waves of grain as farm subsidies and tax incentives for ethanol are reduced? *ProfitBuilder* takes a look at the agriculture trends, issues and policies – and what they mean for animal health care dealers and farm stores.

ON THE COVER

These two pets look pretty happy – probably because they're well-cared for, which means they eat right and get plenty of exercise. We'll bet they also have owners who understand how regular wellness and preventive health care programs can lengthen and improve the quality of their lives. And with the growing availability of efficacious generic products, pet owners can care for their animals economically, too.

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6| AGRIBUSINESS FORMS A UNITED FRONT

Americans have been enjoying the safest, highest quality of food and spending less for it – as a percentage of household income – than any other nation in the world. Yet 60 percent of U.S. consumers think producers are doing something wrong. An alliance of U.S. farmers and ranchers is launching a major campaign to set the record straight.

EVERY ISSUE

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A message from Bob Hormann

Missouri's Prop B ballot initiative to further regulate dog breeders passed narrowly in the 2010 General Election after a bitter, emotional campaign. Then state legislators rolled back some of the restrictions and renamed the bill, which caused an outcry from many voters. Here's how the lawmaker who led the rewriting effort explains it.

3| FIRST GLANCE

A look into what's new in the industry

The American Veterinary Medical Association just released a study indicating that even its profession which has enjoyed the respect and affection of Americans for decades, could use some retooling.

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Common Sense Prevails in the 'Show Me" State

Proposition B gets a makeover by Missouri legislators

Last fall Missouri voters faced an emotional ballot initiative that would place harsh restrictions on the state's dog breeders. During the run-up to the general election in November 2010, animal rights groups like the Humane Society of the United States had the upper hand in resources by about six to one. HSUS spent $6 million to emotionalize the measure and convince mostly urban Missourians that all dog breeders were abusing their animals.

According to Prop B opponents, key HSUS officials never even visited the state. Instead they just pumped money into the campaign from Washington and made the rounds of daytime TV stirring up passions. What was most irksome, said Missouri State Senator Michael Parson at an Agriculture Business Council of Kansas City meeting in April, was that HSUS never came to the state to air its grievances or negotiate solutions. Prop B passed narrowly.

In January, however, when 2011 Legislative Session convened, Missouri lawmakers took a hard look at the newly passed initiative. Calling it one of the "worst initiatives ever written," Sen. Parson led an effort to roll back some of the restrictions. His efforts to revise Prop B in a new Senate Bill 113 had nothing to do with partisan politics, he stressed. "If I know something is wrong," the senator added, "I have to change it."

He wasn't alone – and apparently he was right in describing the overhaul of Prop B as a non-partisan undertaking, because the majority Republican caucus was joined by Democrat supporters to get S.B. 113 signed into law by Democrat governor Jay Nixon.

Missouri agribusiness felt Prop B was a faulty initiative to begin with, barely disguised as a wedge with which animal rights activists could begin dismantling animal agriculture altogether. Its obvious flaws would make it extremely bad policy. First of all, as Sen. Parson pointed out, the formal name – Puppy Mill Cruelty Prevention Act – was a misnomer. Puppies spend the least of amount of time at the breeding facilities, so the name was chosen for its emotional tug. If the provisions of Prop B were to go into effect as originally drawn up, Sen. Parson said not one of the state's 1400 licensed breeders would meet the requirements. Most legitimate operations would simply get out of the business rather than risk harsh penalties for non-compliance.

Ironically, Prop B would exacerbate the situation it promised voters it would correct. Because it contained no provisions to address the abuses carried on by the real perpetrators – the unlicensed breeders – legitimate breeders would either get out of the business or raise the prices exorbitantly to comply with the regulations. That would only give unethical breeders already operating outside the law the opportunity and incentive to create a black market to meet the growing demand for puppies.

Prop B also would have escalated Class C felonies and misdemeanors to Class A crimes even for inadvertent negligence or momentary non-compliance of minor regulations. For example, Sen. Parson cited Prop B rules setting kennel temperatures at between 45 and 80 degrees. But if the temperature on a typical summer Missouri day climbed to 81 degrees and an inspector happened to be on the spot before the breeder could make good faith adjustments, he would be charged with a Class A crime. It's like being charged with a Class A misdemeanor for speeding.

Of course, animal rights groups are crying 'foul' and much of the media is editorializing how the will of the voters has been thwarted. But it appears Missouri's legislators – both Republicans and Democrats – won the day, using good old-fashioned, open and transparent debate and compromise to fashion a policy that doesn't have to rely on emotionalism and deception to advance hidden agendas. They did not repeal the Prop B initiative; they just made it a better law.

Sincerely,

Bob Hormann

Bob Hormann, President of Durvet, Inc.

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FIRST GLANCE

Veterinary Profession
Looking For New Approaches

Whether the challenges come from external forces – the marketplace, growing pet owner preference for generic animal drugs or the recession – or are internal in nature – fragmentation of medical services, gender and generational issues or DVM shortages – veterinarians are coming to crossroads that could change their profession. In early May, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) released findings from a major study it conducted over the last 12 months.

The report concluded veterinarians now face a group of strategic " inflection points" that are certain to change their thinking and actions. It went on to enumerate a host of issues the profession needs to address, including zoonotic diseases; antimicrobial resistance; food safety; and greater consumer information and activism.

The AVMA also presented a long list of steps the profession should take. One in particular stands out: "...the AVMA should enhance and build new relationships outside the profession…" Of course, the association was referring more to alliances with state and federal agencies as well as academicians in other health sciences.

But *ProfitBuilder* thinks the veterinary profession's outreach also ought to extend to dealers and farm store operators whose OTC interactions with ranchers and pet owners shows an increasing involvement in the health and welfare of their customers' animals. Check out the article "Get The Veterinarians in Your Corner" in this edition (page 12) to see how we have already suggested you touch base with the veterinarians in your area. ◊

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Outlook Trending Upwards For Generics

Changing attitudes among pet owners are forming a perfect retail storm that could bring windfall sales and profits to dealers who carry generic animal health care products. Since the recession started, pet owners have curtailed trips to animal hospitals, especially if those visits were only for vaccinations or routine services like flea and tick control applications. As money got tight, one way pet owners trimmed family expenses was by providing pets with health care that didn't require a veterinarian. They also became aware of the increasing number of less costly bioequivalent products available OTC. Their attitudes have been shaped along the way by the volumes of generic drug information circulating over the Internet and the steady drumbeat of promotion in the mass media touting the inexpensive effectiveness of generic equivalent pharmaceuticals.

At the same time, some veterinarians appear to have cut back on routine client visits in favor of treating more serious cases that command higher fees. As these new sentiments of veterinarians – to see fewer but higher-paying clients – and pet owners – looking for cost effective care – converge, the flood gates are opening up to allow a surge of high quality generic or bioequivalent animal health drugs into the market.

"The generic availability of an ever-increasing number of superlative veterinary active ingredients .....represents an important factor that will further shape the landscape of the animal health industry," reports London-based Piribo Publications which produces pharmaceutical market research. The established pioneer companies will hold their share for a while, Piribo predicts, but "profits will move continuously to manufacturers of branded generics ....."

Piribo also sees a trend toward generic companies that engage in market-specific research and development that build on off-patent products. "These companies strive to cut costs, add value to existing products, improve customer service and provide highly effective after-sales service."

Worldwide, generic animal health products hold about a 45 percent share of market, but in the U.S. and Europe that figure drops to about 33 percent.

That compares to the 70 percent share of market generic human drugs enjoy. But animal health drugs tend to follow the trends of the human pharmaceutical market, so dealers and farm store retailers can expect an upsurge in demand for generic animal drugs.

Fountain Agricounsel, which tracks the agriculture and animal health industries, describes generics as " potentially very lucrative, particularly with the lack of new chemical entities."

Says the Generic Animal Drug Alliance (GADA): "Much as generics have changed the face of human healthcare—making drugs more affordable for Americans—the timely availability of animal generics allows pet owners access to lower cost medications so they can treat their pets who are considered members of the family." ◊

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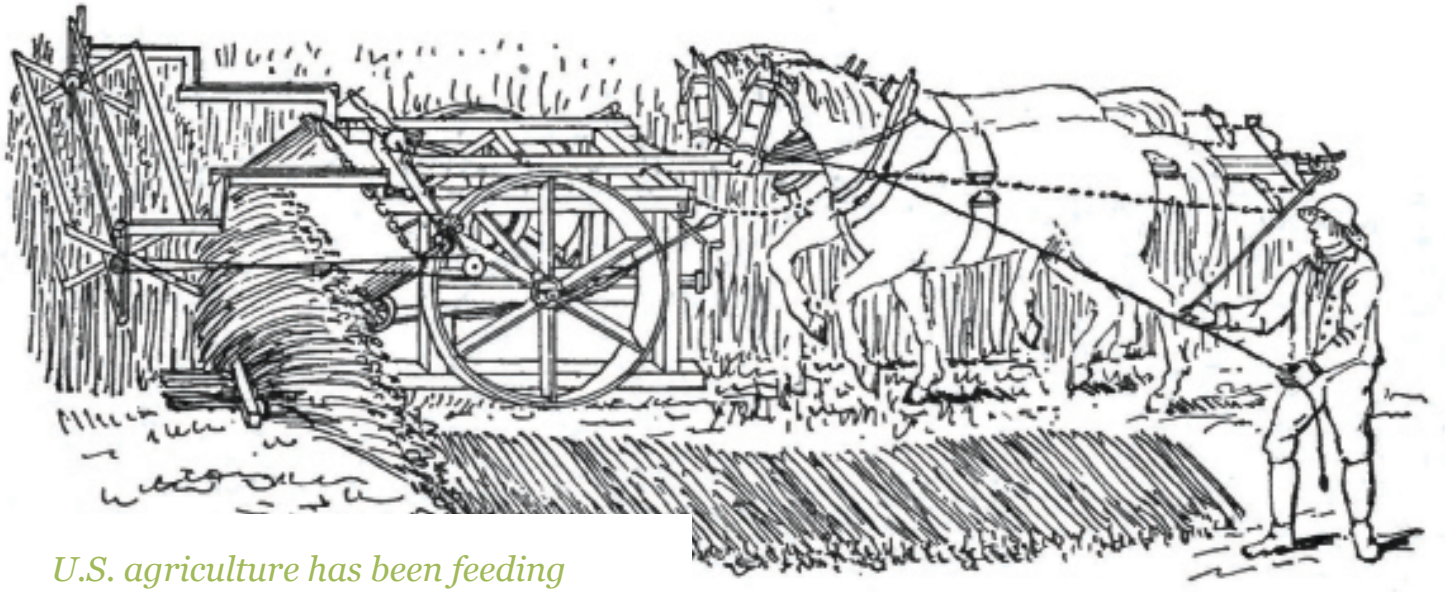

The Bell Reaper invented in 1831 by Patrick Bell of Scotland allowed grain to be harvested by machine instead of by hand. It was patented by farmers in the U.S.. Illustration credit: *Loudon's Encyclopedia of Agriculture* – 1831, via Wikimedia Commons.

U.S. agriculture has been feeding Americans for centuries, but now it's going to eat its critics' lunch

If the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance (USFRA) appears to be spoiling for a fight, it's because squabbling and bickering seem to be part of the agribusiness DNA. Long before the media started ganging up on production agriculture, farmers and meat producers had been jostling with each other for influence in governmental affairs and fighting over farm policies. The current food versus fuel debate is a pretty good example of the in-fighting.

But this time it's different. Production agriculture and food industry groups have formed the USFRA to send a strong message to both the media and Americans about how farmers and ranchers have supplied the country – and now the world – with high quality, inexpensive food using humane and sustainable agricultural practices. "As individual organizations, we had been trying to address consumer perception challenges in a fragmented, non-integrated and low-priority way," says Huge Whaley, general manager of the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance. "We lacked focus."

As a result many Americans still don't have a clear picture of how their food gets to the grocery store shelves. "They don't have much knowledge about how their food is grown, about the government regulations in place; and they don't see or talk with many farmers," Whaley notes. Consumers believe agriculture is controlled by big business. The situation has been years in the making, he adds, but production agriculture and the food industry have been slow to muster a concerted effort with a unified message.

Organizers of the Alliance maintain current consumer perceptions about the food industry are derivatives of fear and insecurity fueled by the media and pop culture. Almost 60 percent of Americans think the nation's approach to food production is on the wrong track, according to research by the Edelman company, a leading global public relations firm.

When consumers think a 'recall' indicates a failure in the food system while the producers say such an action shows how well the system works – then there's work to be done in closing the perception gap. When well- and-not-so-well meaning organic food advocacy groups and animal rights organizations foster idyllic operations where small family farms supply local markets – then somebody has to address the reality of the situation. Agriculture worldwide will have to produce as much food in the next 30 years as mankind has planted and harvested in the last 10,000 years. That will be hard to do without the advances modern agriculture has developed – such as genetically modifying crops to withstand heat and drought and other challenges from nature, or antibiotics that help food animals remain disease free and healthy.

Campaign Gets Underway

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Agribusiness Forms a Unified Front

[Continued from page 6]

the National Corn Growers Association, American Farm Bureau, NCBA and the Pork Producers Council, the USFRA now counts 32 member groups. These organizations, Whaley explains, have significantly different positions on some issues, but all want to build consumer trust. Although they have varying advocacy goals, these member organizers believe they will create a bigger impact working together.

In July the USFRA will launch a major information and promotion campaign with a single focus: To enhance consumer trust in today's agriculture. The Alliance has also developed five strategic approaches to reach that objective:

- Increase share of voice in key media (national, state; traditional and social).
- Increase the number of policy makers and government officials (at all levels) who accept the value of today's agricultural production.
- Engage key customer decision makers in the dialogue about the value of today's food production methods.
- Work with leading national influencer organizations (medical, cultural, dietary, environmental, etc.) to create partnerships in support of today's agriculture.
- Increase the role of farmers and ranchers as the voice of animal and crop agriculture on local, state and national food issues.

The USFRA has chosen public relations firm Ketchum as its primary communications agency to develop and manage the campaign. Ketchum has a track record of over 50 years of public relations, advertising and promotional service to food and agricultural organizations. "The USFRA decision to partner with Ketchum comes as the result of an extensive and deliberate decision-making process conducted by our Communications Advisory Committee, and the full support of the USFRA Board of Directors," says Forrest Roberts, chairman of the USFRA Communications Advisory Committee and CEO of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. "A nationwide review of agencies possessing the best business acumen, agricultural expertise and creative talent led us to this significant step forward." ◊

Learn more about the USFRA at www.usfraonline.org.

Make Your *Voice* Part of the Story

The USFRA is not just an organization comprising major national, regional and state farmer and rancher associations – like the National Corn Growers Association or the American Farm Bureau Federation. Individuals and small businesses are encouraged to get involved with the Alliance programs and activities. Agribusinesses can participate in a number of councils and advisory groups within the USFRA.

What makes the USFRA unique, say the organizers, is that for the first time in U.S. agricultural history "representatives from the majority of farmer and rancher groups and organizations have come together to achieve a common goal." They have agreed to tell the story of current production agriculture as one voice. USFRA general manager Hugh Whaley points out a lot of major agribusiness groups were simply tired of arguing with their counterparts. "All we'll talk about is what we can agree on," he says.

There is plenty to talk about because American agriculture continues to be unfairly and inaccurately attacked by a number of different food advocacy and media groups. Unfortunately, most U.S. consumers tend to believe the reports and articles as they become farther removed from the farm and the American agricultural heritage.

A New Strategy

Beyond hitting back at the critics in the media with a feel-good campaign portraying farmers and ranchers as wholesome stewards of the land whose family values epitomize what America is all about, the USFRA will drape its rebuttal or attack in pragmatism. It is targeting the 'customers' of agriculture production rather than just the consumers.

The USFRA maintains the best way to change attitudes among consumers – 60 percent of whom think food production is heading in the wrong direction – is to educate the 'consumer influencers' who are in even closer contact with the public than the media. Consumer influencers, or the 'customers' of farmers and ranchers as the USFRA describes them, are the food manufacturers who buy directly from agribusiness and who in turn sell their products as meals (at restaurants) and packaged goods and produce (at grocery stores). They can best explain to consumers how the food they sell to them was actually planted, harvested and nurtured, fed and finished. And how safe, nutritious and economical America's food system is.

As dealers and farm store retailers you are as close to the farmers and ranchers as the restaurants and grocers are to American consumers. So in that capacity you can influence them to take advantage of USFRA programs such as participating in the Alliance's farm studies/surveys or providing evidence and accounts of ranchers utilizing Best Management Practices in the farm and ranch operations. You can also help the USFRA by letting it know about special customers who continue to live by and uphold the highest standards of the American agricultural tradition. Agriculture has a good story to tell, and you and your customers can claim some of the authorship. ◊

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You can help your customers design comprehensive, customized strategies for controlling fleas and ticks – and sell them the tools for the fight – by having them focus on these approaches:

- Eliminating infestations in their surroundings.
- Monitoring the comings and goings of their pets.
- Restricting pet encounters with stray, feral or poorly cared for animals.
- Taking advantage of additional preventive products like collars, shampoos, sprays and such.
- Learning as much as possible about the life cycles, so as to deploy the most effective measures at the right time.
- Making flea and tick prevention a year round effort.

Research by parasitologists and entomologists such as Kansas State University's Michael Dryden, DVM, MS, Ph.D, has shown that even though fleas and ticks can be effectively eradicated from the environment and the pet, their extinction is not permanent. Paleontology backs them up on that point. Over a period of 200 million years, fleas and ticks evolved into thousands of species, all of which have developed their own unique biology that eventually adapts to whatever humans throw at them. Discontinuing flea control efforts once fleas are no longer present, says Dr. Dryden, is another problem. Continual use of prevention, he adds, is the best hope for a flea-free pet.

DISPLAYS ADD EMPHASIS

Even though fleas and ticks are top-of-mind for most pet owners, effective displays in the aisle will pay dividends, especially if they promote comprehensive control programs and feature the various products. Stores in seasonal pest areas can take advantage by doing a big promotion in the store. Areas that experience fleas and ticks year round can change displays regularly to keep up interest.

This year pet product retailers and farm store retailers can cash in on a marketing bonus. As more and more spot-on topical brands target the OTC channel, the competition has heated up. Already major advertising campaigns have taken aim at consumers via the mass media – television, newspapers and magazines. Pet owner awareness of flea and tick problems and the products that will treat incidence and infestation is already high. All you have to do is stock up and put the products on display. You can piggyback on the promotional marketing that somebody else has paid for.

But here is one thing you need to do: make sure you and your associates are technically savvy about fleas and ticks and how they can be controlled. Robert Yarmuth, president of Fleabusters in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, points out that "pet owners are asking a lot more technical questions." So he emphasizes that while it is practical to have products prominently displayed, it is more important to "have sales clerks familiar with the products and have the technical knowledge to explain the product details." That is especially good advice in the wake of a series of adverse effects from spot-on treatments the EPA investigated in 2007-2009. The incidents were caused by consumer misuse of the products, rather than from defects in the product. But manufacturers responded by increasing educational materials, changing packaging and providing point-of-sales information in an effort to make products fool proof. ◊

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Photograph by: Anthony Trollope

▼ Source: Surveys conducted in the Fall of 2002, March 2004, and September 2007 of equine veterinarians who recommended oral joint health supplements.

Get The Veterinarians in Your Corner

Their Goals Are The Same As Yours – Keeping Pets Healthy

For a group that Americans rate among the most highly respected and trustworthy professionals in the country and whom economists claim are just about recession proof, veterinarians have been taking it on the chin lately. They have seen business tail off for nearly a decade. But in the last year, veterinary visits have nosedived.

A study conducted in 2010 and presented earlier this year by the National Commission on Veterinary Economic Issues (NCVEI), Bayer Animal Health and Brakke Consulting indicated more than half (56 percent) of the practicing veterinarians reported a decline in companion animal clinic visits in the first nine months of 2010 compared to 2009. The study identified six root causes for the decline in pet owner clinic visits:

- *The economic impact of the recession:* That would seem obvious.
- *Fragmentation of veterinary services:* Pet owners have access to veterinarians at mobile vaccination clinics, animal shelters and pet store clinics.
- *Consumers substituting Internet research for office visits:* Fifteen percent of pet owners said with the Internet they don't rely on the vet as much; 39 percent look online before consulting a veterinarian if a pet is sick or injured.
- *Feline resistance:* No one – neither the vet nor owner – likes dealing with a howling, hissing, angry cat.
- *Perception that regular medical checkups are unnecessary:* The veterinary profession has not succeeded in promoting routine wellness care.
- *Cost of care:* Fifty-three percent of pet owners think the costs of a veterinary visit are usually much higher than they expected.

Others think these reasons represent only part of the situation. For the last 15 years, consultants and veterinary leaders have urged DVMs to see fewer animals and raise their rates. Veterinarians were reminded they are highly skilled medical professionals whose income should derive more from their expertise than from the products they dispense. Some of them started charging accordingly. The blowback, though, has caused an explosive drop in clinic visits instead of the controlled reduction they'd hoped for with increased billable services.

Further studies, however, paint an even subtler, more complex picture of the veterinary profession. The circumstances surrounding the veterinarians' plight can't be attributed simply to economic hard times. The situation is complicated, and starts at the veterinary school level. Although enrollment is up with about 11,000 veterinary students currently enrolled in U.S. colleges and about 2,700 graduating annually, a troubling development is on the horizon.

The applicant pool is dwindling. In 2010 there were 2.1 veterinary school applicants for each student accepted, said John Payne, CEO of Banfield –The Pet Hospital, at an Animal Health Corridor meeting last month in Kansas City. By comparison the ratio in 1980 was 3.29 to 1. By contrast the ratio for medical school is 18 to 1.

Dealers Take Up the Slack

At the moment there isn't a shortage of DVMs to treat the growing population of dogs and cats. But that's only because veterinarians are seeing an average of just 12 animals a day, Payne pointed out. They could easily see more if the demand were there; physicians, for instance, see 30 patients daily. It's not clear if the low number of visits is the result of the economy or the choice of the veterinary practitioner to limit patients and charge more. It's probably a combination of both. But eventually there could be a shortage.

When that happens, dealers and farm store retailers will have to take on an increasingly important role in the health and well-being of companion animals. But make no mistake: Veterinarians are still the experts – and *ProfitBuilder* is in no way suggesting you can take their place. The fact nevertheless is pet owners are finding it more convenient and economical to purchase some products like flea and tick control over-the-counter.

As pet product retailers and farm store operators, you can take advantage of the opportunity to sell more of the products pet owners used to get at the animal hospital, while keeping your customers connected to the expertise and knowledge of veterinarians – and keeping pets healthy, which is ultimately the goal of everyone involved.

- *Partner with a clinic* to develop technical information materials that both inform pet owners and can serve as referrals back to the clinic for other services. Many veterinarians are resigned to the idea that certain products which were exclusively dispensed through their clinics are now OTC. So work with them. You should expect to pay them, but the payback will be a cooperative relationship with a professional whose stature among consumers is high. By association, your store's reputation as a credible entity in the pet health market will grow.
- *Use social networking* not only to stay in touch with your customers and promote the store, but also to provide useful information on subjects of interest to them. Here's where you can team up with a veterinarian to provide pet health care information on a regular basis. As the NCVEI report indicates: 39 percent of pet owners go online before consulting a vet.

If you provide pet owners with regular pet health care information supplied by the local veterinary community (for which they get credit, recognition, referrals and compensation), you will have added value to your store and, more importantly, provided value to your customers. ◊

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Move *your Website* *to the* Front of *the Line*

If your website isn't taking advantage of the Internet's overall reach and interactive capabilities, it's not much more than a billboard next to a highway. In fact, that outdoor advertisement probably has a better chance of attracting the attention of a driver traveling at 60 miles per hour than a dormant website has of standing out among the estimated 266.9 million sites currently residing on the Internet.

"An effective website... has to be more than just an attractive online posting or entity."

An effective website – especially if its purpose is to promote retail sales – has to be more than just an attractive online posting or entity. Its job is to drive customers to look at and buy your products. So, the first order of business in growing your online audience is to bump your "search ranking" to the top of the list – or as the webmasters would say: Make your site SEO or search engine optimized. The higher your ranking is, the more frequently search engines like Google will bring up your website when users type in key words identifiable to your site. "Search engines like Google, Yahoo and Bing (the 'big three') don't find your site by accident," says Andy Tolbrook, a web writer and designer based in the UK, "they need to know you exist."

You can pay to have the 'big three' take notice. But there are ways and means of ascending the search rankings for free. And at the very least, Tolbrook suggests submitting your site to the 'big three' anyway; they may elevate your standing for nothing:

- www.google.com/addurl/
- http:/search.yahoo.com/info/submit.html
- www.bing.com/webmaster/SubmitSitePage.aspx

Other places – usually nonprofits – can help improve your search ranking, too. One in particular is www.dmoz.org/help/submit.html.

Drive Traffic To the Site

Besides working with the search engine services, there are other ways to encourage traffic jams around your site. Here are several things you and your web designer or manager should consider:

- ***Sitemaps*** will provide search engines with additional connectors or references to the contents of your site. Make sure you make these sitemaps available to the search engines. Several services such as www.xml-sitemaps.com can design one for you, according to Tolbrook.
- ***Content*** trumps the sizzle of the design. No matter how eye catching the site is, if the content isn't relevant your potential customers will find a way to detour away from it. For example, if you're market is in horse country, the equine products better have better visibility than the poultry inventory.
- ***Keywords*** should be sprinkled throughout the text that relate to or are synonymous with common search terms. Keywords might be colloquial or regional terms that your customers would use instead of the more universal search terms. For example, "flea and tick " control may be what your customers are looking for, but words like "insect" and "parasite" will prompt search engines to laser in on those products as well.
- ***Photos*** enhance the website appearance and influence search engines.
- ***Links*** to and from other sites can increase traffic and improve your search ranking.
- ***Meta tags*** are a good way to provide search engines with information about your site; they are inserted into the HTML document, but are often not directly visible to a user visiting the site.
- ***Headings*** are visible devices on the website that are essential reading for search engines; make them relevant by incorporating keywords into them. ◊

Source: Netcraft, Ltd; Andy Tolbrook, Costco Connections, February 2011

World Wide Web Cuts a Wide Swatch | *According to the Netcraft Web Server Survey, at the end of 2010 around 266,848,493 websites were available on the World Wide Web. There has been an increase of 47 million host names and 7 million active websites over the last few months. Netcraft is an Internet services company based in Bath, England providing web server and web hosting market-share analysis. It is known for its free anti-phishing toolbar for the Firefox and Internet Explorer browsers.*

THE GRASS MAY BE GREENER.

BUT IT'S FULL OF WORMS. HERE'S HOW TO DEWORM YOUR CATTLE, STRESS-FREE, ALL SEASON LONG.

You've turned them out to green grass, good moisture, and 150 million worm larvae. The good news is that, with Safe-Guard® (*fenbendazole*), you don't have to bring them back to the chute to keep them protected and productive.

Season-long protection

When it comes to season-long parasite control, you've got to think strategically. The first step is effective treatment at processing. Use a deworming program that works fast and effective to remove the worms, and stop egg shedding back on the pasture.

The second step is to tackle the worms already on your pasture. Did you know that pastures carry 90% of the total parasite burden?[1] So as your cattle graze, they are undergoing a serious reworming without you even knowing it.

Face facts. You're fighting a war here. The costs are high. According to a recent Iowa State study, internal parasites cost the cattle industry $190 per animal[2]. Worms suppress appetite and the immune system, reduce the ability to absorb nutrients and create damaged and diseased GI tracts.

Reduce stress, improve performance

That's why pasture deworming with Safe-Guard (*fenbendazole*) just makes good economic sense. Six to eight weeks into spring grazing, cows and bulls need to be dewormed again. For stocker calves and replacement heifers, deworm four weeks after turnout. The most convenient and labor saving way is through non-handling formulations of Safe-Guard: free-choice minerals, protein blocks, cubes, or a liquid feed added right to the lick tank. With a variety of non-handling formulations to choose from, you can effectively deworm your cattle on the pasture, stress-free.

A Better ROI

A two year strategic deworming study conducted by the University of Minnesota[3] was conducted using Safe-Guard to see what the effects a strategic treatment program at turnout and midsummer would do to improve performance of cow/calf herds over two grazing seasons. The results are impressive. There was a double digit increase in pregnancy rates – the pregnancy rate for the treated cows was 94% compared to 82% for the control animals. Not only did the treated cows produce more milk, the calves were 41 lbs. heavier at weaning.

Stocker producers also benefit from Safe-Guard pasture deworming. A stocker strategic deworming study in Eastern Oklahoma[4] resulted in 48 lbs. of additional gain over a 118 day grazing season and improved health when the cattle went to the feedlot. If sold at the end of grazing season, the steers dewormed on pasture would have delivered $33.75 more per head.

The results speak for themselves: strategic deworming with Safe-Guard delivers a better return on your investment. Just how much better? Well, multiple field trials show Safe-Guard pasture deworming delivers ROI greater than 10:1!

So whether you are a cow/calf or stocker producer, you need to think strategically to keep your cattle parasite-free the entire grazing season. Make sure they are worm-free at turnout and then deworm at the right time on pasture. Cleaner pastures mean healthier returns.

How's your deworming program working? Want to make sure it's not leaving profit robbing worms in your cattle? Talk to your veterinarian about conducting a FECRT test or call Intervet/Schering-Plough at 800.521.5767 today.

Consult your local veterinarian or animal health provider for assistance in the diagnosis, treatment and control of parasitism.

Safe-Guard block:

RESIDUE WARNING: Cattle must not be slaughtered within 11 days following last treatment. For dairy cattle, the milk discard time is zero hours. A withdrawal period has not been established for this product in pre-ruminating calves. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal.

Safe-Guard 1.96% flaked meal or mini pellets, liquid feed and mineral mix and .5% top dress pellets:

RESIDUE WARNING: Cattle must not be slaughtered within 13 days following last treatment. For dairy cattle, the milk discard time is zero hours. A withdrawal period has not been established for this product in pre-ruminating calves. Do not use in calves to be processed for veal.

Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health | www.intervetusa.com | 800.521.5767

[1]Anthelmentic Resistance, Dr. Bliss, 2008 American Association of Bovine Practitioners, Charlotte, NC.
[2]Economic analysis of pharmaceutical technologies in modern beef production, John D. Lawrence and Marc. A. Ibarburu, Iowa State University, 2007.
[3]Production responses following strategic parasite control in a beef cow/calf herd, B.E. Stromberg, et.al/Veterinary Parasitology 68 (1997) 315-322
[4]Effects on grazing performance, feedlot performance and carcass traits of yearling steers, R. Smith et al, Oklahoma State University

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Fundamentals Put You in the Finals

The NBA playoffs are a dazzling display of thunderous dunks, effortless three-pointers and jarring shot blocks. But teams don't get to the championships on showmanship alone. Behind every brilliant move of LeBron James or the artistry of Kobe Bryant are hours of practicing the fundamentals – layups, free throws, screening, blocking out.

The same applies to other lines of work. Just about every business has its mundane but essential functions that need to be practiced daily. Even if it is just to remind yourself the customer is always right even when he's not. Marketing activities are no different. "Marketing may seem too time consuming, or too expensive, but without spreading the word, a retailer's clientele will shrink," say Eric Cohen and Joyce Shulman in the March 2011 issue of Pet Business, "and so will its bottom line."

But if you and your associates feel you're in a rut doing the same thing over and over again, then Cohen and Shulman suggest mixing the routine up with ideas like the ones listed below. "Pick any five and do one a week, for the next five weeks, on top of whatever you are already doing," they advise, "and it will add to your overall campaign and spark new ideas and new customers. ◊

To-Do

- ☑ Give out 50 business cards a week.
- ☑ Start a blog and post it once a week.
- ☑ Google your store to check your listings in Yelp, Google, local.com, etc.
- ☐ Try a Groupon.com or livingsocial.com sale.
- ☐ Start a monthly clinic series on pets for kids, dog training, flea/tick control, etc.
- ☐ Join the local chamber or other business groups.
- ☐ Print a pet calendar with your store's name on it.
- ☐ Write a tagline for all your communications: radio, ads, brochure, business cards.
- ☐ Send a press release to local media.
- ☐ Donate or sponsor a local charity; write a press release about it.
- ☐ Get store shirts for the staff to wear in and out of the shop.
- ☐ Have a 'give-away' and make entries available at the store and other retail shops; use the entry forms to get new, updated email addresses for your email list.
- ☐ Update or create a press kit with bios, fact sheets and at least two press releases.
- ☐ Update your answering machine message.
- ☐ Speak in front of the Elk's, dog clubs, Boy Scouts, church and school groups, etc.
- ☐ Update your Yellow Pages ad.
- ☐ Send 20 handwritten notes to recent customers.
- ☐ Start a "customer of the month" program; hang a picture of their pet and/or owner in your store, place it on your website.
- ☐ Have weekly sales training sessions for your staff.
- ☐ Gather customer testimonials and put them in your marketing materials.
- ☐ Advertise in new, unique media: bus stop bench, flyers on pizza boxes, etc.
- ☐ Start a loyalty program: customers who buy 10 bags of dog food get the 11th free.
- ☐ Clean and update your store's entrance. Make it inviting.
- ☐ Update ad specialty give-away items: pens, mousepads, frisbees.
- ☐ Set up a referral program and reward referring customers with discounts.

Sources: The Ignition Team – Eric Cohen, Joyce Shulman; Pet Business, March, 2011; Kansas Small Business Development Center.

New Outbreak *Of Old* Disease Requires *Vigilance*

A contagious mutant form of Equine Herpes Virus-1 has emerged at several competitions from Texas to Washington infecting 34 horses in nine states as of the end of May. "This outbreak is much more widespread than most, or perhaps any, previous outbreak," says Keith Roehr, the state veterinarian for Colorado.

EHV-1 has been around for decades and a number of vaccines have been developed to control symptoms. But they have not been able to offer protection against this new strain. Horses can contract EHV-1 from water, fences, tack or other equipment that has been contaminated with just sneeze droplets from an infected animal. Symptoms include lack of coordination and loss of balance, along with fever, weakness, lethargy and nasal discharge. Mortality rates vary from 10 percent to as high as 75 percent.

Dealers and farm store owners need to be on top of this developing situation so as to advise equine owners to contact a veterinarian if they notice any of the symptoms. *ProfitBuilder* will also be keeping an eye out for ways dealers can be of further help to their customers. ◊

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23640	*New*	4pk Disposable Mouse Bait Station	4 oz	12
23704	*New*	4x1oz Refillable Mouse Bait Station	4 oz	12
22778	*New*	8x1oz Refillable Mouse Bait Station Bag	8 oz	8
22786	*New*	16x1oz Refillable Mouse Bait Station Bag	16 oz	8
22880	*New*	1pk Disposable Rat Bait Station	4 oz	4

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32465	*New*	Tomcat 4 x 1 lb Bait Block Display Box	Diphacinone	17.5 lb	4
32444		Tomcat 1 oz Bait Chunx 4 lb Pail	Diphacinone	19.4 lb	4
32446		Tomcat 1 oz Bait Chunx 9 lb Pail	Diphacinone	21.4 lb	2
32448	*New*	Tomcat 1 oz Bait Chunx 18 lb Pail	Diphacinone	19.8 lb	1
22244	*New*	Tomcat Bromethalin 1oz Bait Chunx 4 lb Pail	Bromethalin	19.4 lb	4
22045		Tomcat Bromethalin Pelleted Bait 5 lb Pail	Bromethalin	19.4 lb	4
23045		Agrid3 Pelleted Bait 5 lb Pail	Cholecalciferol	22 lb	4
23144	*New*	Agrid3 1 oz Bait Chunx 4 lb Pail	Cholecalciferol	18 lb	4
31186		Hawk R&M Bait 1.5 oz PLPK 86 ct Pail	Bromadiolone	18.5 lb	2
31270		Hawk 1 oz Bait Chunx 9 lb Pail	Bromadiolone	21.4 lb	2
31410	*New*	Jaguar 20 g Bait Chunx 9 lb Pail	Brodifacoum	21.4 lb	2
32545	*New*	Eraze Ag Pelleted Bait 5 lb Pail	Zinc Phosphide	22 lb	4

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