Marketing That Moves Hard to Place Pets

Caitlin Quinn – HeARTs Speak
Hard-To-Place Pets

Who needs a little more help?

- Behavior cases
- Medical Cases
  - Ringworm
  - FIV/FeLV and special needs cats
  - Mange
  - Otherwise Special Needs
- Larger Dogs/Dogs labeled Pit Bulls
  - Often related to behavior
  - Sometimes by nature of what they look like and community misconceptions/myths
- Longtimers/Long Stays
  - Can turn into a cycle of the longer they stay, the longer they stay
- Other types of pets
Identifying Who Needs Promotion

KC Pet Project Workflow

- Every Sunday, professional photographers take photos of all new adoptable dogs
- KC Pet Project Behavior Manager pulls reports of dogs who have been with us for 30, 60, 90, 120+ days
- Posts to volunteer pages so they can help promote those pets
- We started to post an “At Risk” list to employees who want to be a part of this FB group each week and marketing takes that list and promotes pets on there.
Strategies

1) Hook ‘em with images that build connection

- Photos that include people
- Embrace humor
- Don’t let perfect be the enemy of good (or good enough!)
- Subtly break down stereotypes
- Video, video, video!
Mythbusting + FAQs
LifeLine Animal Project - Atlanta

Consistently + strategically share photos and videos that showcase the value that they see in their shelter dogs

Including directly pushing back against misinformation + myths

Source: LifeLine Animal Project Facebook Page
Case Study: All eyes on pit bull dogs
2) Craft your voice

- Language matters
- Consider the audience
- Step outside the animal welfare bubble
- Use everyday terms – like you’re explaining to a friend
- Don’t shy away from transparency and humor to build connection and generate trust
Case Study:
Adding Value to Adult Animals
Case Studies: Creative Promos

**FACT:** A WHOPPING 90% OF DOGS THAT ENTER THE SHELTER ARE HEALTHY AND READY TO BE ADOPTED WITHOUT ANY MEDICAL ATTENTION!

*Lifeline Animal Project*

#ADOPTASHELTERDOG
Case Studies: Group Promotion

Awkward teens are the best.

SAT, DEC 2 11AM-6PM
Cats 5-11 months only $13
Forget-Me-Not's

Occasionally there are animals in our care who wait longer than most for a new home. Despite being wonderful pets, they are overlooked by potential adopters. We know how special these animals are and once you meet them, you will too. One of these long-term residents might be your perfect match!

Sometimes, we don’t choose our best friend — they choose us.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thelma</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mouse</td>
<td>13 years old</td>
<td>St. Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Domestic Medium Hair</td>
<td>15.6 years old</td>
<td>Golden Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malfoy</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Domestic Shorthair</td>
<td>3 years old</td>
<td>St. Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maxie</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Domestic Shorthair</td>
<td>5.4 years old</td>
<td>Golden Valley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shelter cat Gemma is a Calico in the know.

Thank you so much for speaking with us, Gemma.

Of course! I've always got time for visitors.

Would you describe yourself as a 'people person'?

No. I'd describe myself as a 'people cat.'

Ah, of course. Apologies.

Not at all. I like to think I fit in with the two-legged crowd. Humans and I... we just relate, you know?

How so?

Well, we both love eating, sunbathing, and good company. And we both love chasing string!
Strategies

3) Refresh your Bios

• Interview-style
  • Playful and memorable
  • Humorous
  • Personality driven

• Mix n’ Match Approach
  • Fill in the blanks to help overcome writer’s block
  • Alternative adjectives to help get out of the “cute” and “awesome” rut
Bio-writing Resources

In terms of other pets, ________ gives roommates a ______ .
(For example: thumbs up, thumbs down, A+, a chance if they are low-key and respectful, a chance if they give him/her space.)

Do you need a gym buddy? ______________ is working on his/her fitness and would make a great workout partner while he/she gets into shape.

Belly rubs are just the beginning. __________ is a connoisseur of snuggles and demands a good amount of pampering.

Despite a less than ideal start in life, ______ has flourished in our care and is now ______.

We’re not sure about ______’s past, but based on our interactions, we can highly endorse him/her as ______
(For example: a snugglepotomus, respectful roommate extraordinaire, the best cuddler this side of the Mississippi, etc)
WRITER'S BLOCK

Expand your animal bio vocab with these personality adjectives:
adaptable  affectionate  amiable  charming
considerate  debonair  decisive  diplomatic
easygoing  exuberant  generous  honest
independent  introvert  jovial  kind  modest
passionate  polite  reserved  selective  shy
thoughtful  adventurous  bright  communicative
courteous  determined  discreet  emotional  frank
gentle  humorous  intellectual  intuitive  loving
neat  patient  quiet  resourceful  sensible  sincere
unassuming  affable  ambitious  amusing  calm
compassionate  creative  diligent  dynamic  enthusiastic  funny  good  people  imaginative
intelligent  inventive  loyal  optimistic  pioneering
reliable  romantic  sensitive  sympathetic  witty
BIO WRITING
ADJECTIVE
ALTERNATIVES

- Sympathetic
- Snuggly
- Loving
- Warm-hearted
- Affectionate
- Mushy
- Bear-hugging
- Cozy
- Warm tender
- Welcoming
- Caring
- Little spoon

- Extroverted
- Dynamic
- Dexterous
- Adventurous
- Enthusiastic
- Progressive
- Vivacious
- Diligent
- Simmering
- Athletic
- Decisive
- Mobile
- Exuberant

- Jolly
- Becoming
- Romantic
- Considerate
- Charming
- Sensitive
- Communicative
- Amiable
- Jovial
- Polite
- Patient
- Relible

- Classy
- Debonair
- Handsome
- Alluring
- Dreamy
- Darling
- Elegant
- Good-looking
- Delightful
- Dainty
- Suave

- Resourceful
- Sharp
- Astute
- Alert
- Clever
- Bright
- Determined
- Intelligent
- Pioneering
- Nimble
- Ingenious
- Intuitive
- Whip-smart

- Nice
- Cuddly
- Adorable
- Pretty
- Handsome
- Dreamy
- Darling
- Elegant
- Good-looking
- Delightful
- Dainty

- Active
- Cute

- Smart
Case Studies: Bio Magic in Social Marketing

Lois, 8  
Former Esquire Model  
Clicker training graduate, 2015

Location  
LifeLine Animal Project, Avondale

Info  
As a senior girl, I was nervous creating a profile on here, but the response has been great! I'm a former Esquire model, so my looks always attract lots of attention. I'd prefer someone without other pets, because I'm quite the diva. I'm just a girl, standing in front a family, asking them to love her.

DADE ANIMAL SERVICES EXCLUSIVE

JEREMY

7 YEARS OLD  
AND LOVING IT!

WOULD MAKE A GREAT HIKING BUDDY

ADOPT JEREMY  
Dade Animal Services  
#A343678  
www.dadeanimals.com

VALUABLE SKILLS  
SIT. STAY. DOWN.  
High-fives all around.

“I'M NEUTERED!”  
ONE MAN'S STORY

MY BEST FRIEND IS A CAT.
Strategies

4) Take Advantage of Social Trends + Community Events

• Pay attention to what is happening on a local and national level
• Take longtimers and fosters on media appearances
• Naming pets after celebrities, TV/movie characters, local personalities can help attract attention
• Tag them on social media and use hashtags to get more impressions
• Have fun with holidays! Even silly ones.

Catrick Mahomes
Case Studies: Leverage Community Connections

https://www.facebook.com/maclethal/videos/2313830915517196/
Case Study: Social Trends

- Have fun with viral trends to promote longtimers
- Name hard-to-place pets after popular TV show and movie characters
- Work with sports teams to potentially promote pets and adoption events.
3) Embrace the Challenge – Honesty Builds Compassion + Community

- It’s easy to make up stories to get more attention, but don’t lie to the public.
- Use language that talks about the pet’s obvious struggle but tell people how they can help.
- Sharing your honest data on a regular basis will help build trust with your community.
"I know 'sit' and I love squeaky toys, treats, and just cuddling with these volunteers at KCPP. I may have a few scars on my face from some bullies in my past, but I know that only soft pillows, yummy snacks, binge-watching Netflix, and playing in my own back yard are just a few of the good things in my future. Come meet me at KC Pet Project this week."

- Ribbon

https://www.facebook.com/DeKalbCountyAnimalServices/videos/10155601250183771/

Despite her uncomfortable skin condition, Betsy and is all love! This super sweet pup is looking for a foster or forever home where she can continue healing and grow back her beautiful coat! This super sweet, gentle gal came to us with a non-contagious skin condition that will heal much faster in a low-stress environment. Can you help Betsy Ann continue her road to recovery? Meet her at LifeLine's DeKalb Animal Services!

If you are interested in fostering Betsy Ann, email foster@dekalbanimalservices.com.

https://www.facebook.com/DeKalbCountyAnimalServices/videos/10155601250183771/
Case Study: Long-timers

• Posting longtimers on a regular basis helps increase interest in them. Even if that pet ends up not being a good fit, we can find them another pet.

• Dress them up, post them on holidays, turn them into a sort of mascot for your organization.

• Often you can get some unique media attention for longtimers.

Reference: Polina at KCPP: Story of Her Wanting A Home Story of her Finding a Home for Christmas

https://www.facebook.com/pg/BARC Sbaltimore/posts/?ref=page_internal
Case Study: Medical Cases

It's ok to share your hard cases.

• Roadrunner at KC Pet Project
• Atlanta Humane -- Scabigail or Not.Harriet
  • “Not hairy yet but working on it”
• Austin Animal Center Lord of the Ring-Worm
Case Study: Behavior Challenges

Perfectly Imperfect Pets

- **OAS NC-17 cat**
- **Dwayne, unrepentent bad boy of OAS**
- **Eddie the Terrible**
  - Satire
  - Social Campaign (won a Shorty Award)
  - Eddie = Not so terrible in a home! Teddy The Beloved

[Link to article](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/3-life-lessons-eddie-the-terrible-dog-adoption_b_7957390)
Case Study: Adoption Specials

**Catch the Wave Adoption Special**

**WAIVED ADOPTION FEES**
for the first 50 adult dogs (9 months & older) adopted!

Don't miss your opportunity to adopt your new best friend for life, just in time for the summer fun. Take advantage of this refreshing waiver by Saturday, June 1!

San Antonio Humane Society
4004 Fredericksburg Rd., 78229
12-7 p.m. daily
SAHumane.org

**FELV FEST**

**Fall in love with a feline!**

Free adoptions!
makesale!
gifts!

**austin pets alive!**

**APRIL 18th 12 to 6 pm**

**TLAC**

**FREE MEDICAL CARE**

**and SUPPLY OF CAT FOOD**

**for ADOPTED FELV CATS!**

**Celebrate wonderful, adoptable feline leukemia - cats!**

**KC PET PROJECT PRESENTS**

**SHED SOME SHELTER POUNDS ADOPTION EVENT**

Start the new year off right by adopting a new best friend!

**JANUARY 25-27**

**$40 ALL DOGS**

40 LBS. OR MORE

**$25 ADULT CATS**

**ALL THREE LOCATIONS**

**KC Shelter**

17472 Oakley Rd

Kansas City, MO

816-531-6200

**Zoe's Place**

1100 E. 26th St., Kansas City, MO

816-281-0293

**Petco**

16720 E. 120th St.

Olathe Park, KS

913-428-8493

kcpetproject.org
Thank You

Caitlin Quinn

Caitlin@heartsspeak.org
www.heartsspeak.org
Resource Links


Adopt a Grown Ass Adult Dog, APA Missouri, BARK magazine https://thebark.com/content/dog-adoption-campaign-because-im-grown-ass-adult

Marketing is Not Adoption Counseling: Keep ‘Em Separate, Save More Lives https://animalfarmfoundation.blog/2016/02/18/marketing-not-adoption-counseling/

Unicorn Frappacino video from Front Street Animal Shelter in Sacramento https://www.facebook.com/FrontStreetAnimalShelter/videos/1324660374266082/


Funny adoption videos from Humane Society of West Memphis. Example: https://www.facebook.com/westmemphisanimalshelter/videos/1269450096547094/

HeARTs Speak Bio Writing Resources

Mange Dog video from Dekalb County Animal Services/Lifeline Animal Project: https://www.facebook.com/DeKalbCountyAnimalServices/videos/10155601250183771/

Eddie the Terrible: https://www.google.com/search?q=eddie+the+terrible&oq=eddie+the+terrible&aqs=chrome..69i57j65j69i60l35i39j0j0i7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

https://shortyawards.com/7th/humane-society-silicon-valley-presents-eddie-the-terrible