

2007 Marketing Competition: Entries at a Glance

Selected summaries of 2007 marketing entries are offered below.

Stafford Animal Shelter, Livingston, Montana

Humorous pet personals acknowledge hard to place issues. An escape artist named Dixie became "Dixie Chick on the Run." A baying hound: "Doorbell in a Fur Coat." A fearful older cat: "Shy Old Maid."

Walkin' the Bark Rescue, Antioch, California

Videos help place severely under socialized, fearful and timid dogs. "When strangers come to meet them, they are generally withdrawn and often so timid all they do is hide. The videos show a whole different side to these dogs, a side a potential adopter would never get to see on a typical visit. They show what the dogs can be."

Animal Shelter of the Wood River Valley, Hailey, Idaho

Pet Pals Program: Volunteers are matched with special needs pets to give them more exposure and to work on manners, obedience, confidence and socialization. The Pet Pal duo work together until the animal is adopted.

Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Teacher's Pet Program is an in-shelter training program for pets that don't present well. The program aims to correct minor behavior problems such as excessive barking and jumping.

Agape Animal Rescue, Mt. Juliet, Tennessee

A dog trainer created an 8 week training class for foster parents to teach them how to improve the manners and behavior of long-term dogs.

Marshall Animal Shelter/Animal Control-Marshall, Texas

Creates special shelter events ("Hotrod Hounds, Dog Days of Summer"); dress shelter pets according to the theme (e.g. swimwear) to generate publicity. Created "BUBBA" dogs (Big, Ugly, Black, Brown, Adoptable) and special "BUBBA" adoption certificates.

Pet Matchmaker Rescue, Walpole, Massachusetts

Gave the names of Boston Red Sox stars to non-descript slow movers. Daisuke and Big Papi were photographed with Red Sox bandanas and quickly adopted.

Pickens Animal Rescue, Gasper, Georgia

Created a *Porch Pet* program " to give the mental image of a happy dog lounging on the front porch and sauntering out to greet you." Waived the adoption fee and marketed to folks for whom the fee was an obstacle. Created nice graphics and collateral materials.

Department of Animal Care & Control, Loudoun County, Virginia

Announced the discovery of a new breed of dog the Loudon County Retriever, found only in the Loudon County Shelter, and launched their "Adopt a Loudoun County Retriever Month" campaign. Increased dog adoptions 75% over same month in previous year.

Humane Society of Somerset County, Somerset, Pennsylvania

Filled with Black Labs, the shelter organized "Black Lab Day" at the local Petco. After four of six dogs got adopted, began creating monthly adoption days and dressing dogs in themed outfits: "Boys Night Out" (neck ties and bow ties), "Doggie Mixer" (party hats & bandanas) etc.

Chippewa County Animal Control Shelter, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

When 50% of cats were black and getting passed over for more colorful cats, launched a December Lucky Black Cat Special promoting good luck in the New Year. Gave each cat a colorful elastic collar, placed cats in top tier cages, provided prime viewing locations, and found a sponsor to get cats spayed and neutered. Reduced black cat population by 60%.

Almost Home Animal Shelter, Mora, Minnesota

Created a Big, Black and Beautiful campaign for big black dogs that were in the shelter the longest. Created posters, tag line ("I deserve a home, too"), reduced adoption fees, generated publicity. Adopted 30% of shelter BBB dogs.

Kitten Rescue, Los Angeles, CA

Holds a Black Cat Affair along with flyers, posters, signage and publicity. Has become so popular and successful for black cat placements, they now hold the event in two locations.

Animal Shelter of the Wood River Valley- Hailey, Idaho

A local art gallery hosts adoption events such as "Black Pearls of the Shelter" where black dogs and cats wear a string of white pearls.

Cat ADOPTION Team, Sherwood, Oregon

To find homes for FIV positive cats, the group provides Wellness Certificates for adopters to overcome their initial fear of high veterinary costs. The certificate provides annual preventive care at CAT's veterinary hospital, a comprehensive exam after 11 months, free unlimited office calls for the first year and a \$100 credit towards dental care.

Tree House Animal Foundation, Chicago, Illinois

Provides special health contracts for FIV+ cats, some geriatric cats and cats with serious chronic medical conditions to remove barriers to adoption. Contract includes free annual or bi-annual exam and discounted medical care.

Humane Society of Williamson County, Leander, TX

The *Weekender* program is for dogs who have been in the shelter for more than 30 days. Volunteers take dogs out of the shelter and care for them as their own, taking them into the public as much as possible. The program allows the dogs opportunities to interface with the general public in various settings around town, gives the dogs a change of scenery and gives the volunteers more information about the dog. Dogs wear "Adopt Me" vests out in public.

Friends of Greyhounds, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Long-term animals become Superstars. Take glamour shots, feature in flyers, distribute throughout community, highlight Superstars in shelter by placing them where people see them first; use special lighting in kennels and paint runs in eye catching colors. Put a Superstar in every playgroup and offer "Express Delivery" to take a dog to his new home.

Coalition for Animal Rescue & Education, Hillsboro, Missouri

Flyers on Pizza Delivery Boxes. The most popular pizza parlor in St. Louis stapled flyers with long term pets to the top of every pizza box for delivery.

Knox County Humane Society – Mount Vernon, Ohio

Started The Lonely Hearts Club for cats on the adoption floor for at least 6 months (the majority of these cats are shy cats, overlooked for more social felines). Their pictures are prominently placed in shelter; adoption fee is greatly reduced. One cat member is selected each month and featured in a newspaper ad run each day for a week.

Crawford Area Shelter for Animals, Ferryville, Wisconsin

When this small all volunteer rescue group had ten beagles in foster (and little demand for this breed), it created BEAGLEMANIA!! with posters based on the Beatles (Meet The Beagles!)

Brown County Humane Society, Nashville, Indiana

With the assistance of the local newspaper, promotes most difficult pets with a series of stories: Article 1. Describes the pet's medical condition and rehabilitation protocol. The purpose is to raise money for the procedure and seek a foster home (the foster family ends up helping to place the animal). Article 2. Foster family writes about pet's attributes to help find the perfect home. Article 3. Celebratory follow up after pet adopted.

West Warwick Animal Shelter, West Warwick, Rhode Island

Shelter's resident dog trainer created Out of the Pits and Into the Ritz training program for pit bulls to develop pit bull ambassadors and speed pit bull adoptions.

Berkeley-East Bay Humane Society

Established *Golden Paws Program* for dogs and cats seven years and older. Encourage adoption with financial incentives (starter food and toys, vet check, 20% off vaccines for life). Waives adoption fees and offers two free vet exams per year for *FIV+ Goodwill Ambassadors Club* members (cats with feline immunodeficiency).

Cat ADOPTION Team, Sherwood, Oregon

Mature Companions: matches people 55 and over with cats 8 years and up and provides a wellness plan for the cats. The plan includes free office visits, free annual comprehensive health exam, 10% off preventive care, 10% off other services, reduced adoption fee, return guarantee of senior can no longer care for cat due to health reasons.

Greyhound Adoption League of Texas, Addison, Texas

Place sick, injured, old Greyhounds on Injured Reserve. Bring attention to these dogs on the website and highlight them at events; use area athletes to help promote them.

Gainesville Pet Rescue, Gainesville, Florida

Showcase elderly, disfigured, shy and unattractive cats in veterinary offices through *Adopt a Pet From Your Vet* program.

Washington Animal Rescue League, Washington DC

Silver Whiskers, Golden Years Club was originally created for six old cats who didn't like other cats. Adoption fee was waived and adopters were given all equipment necessary for new companions (box, litter, bed, toys, carrier, scratching pad, collar, brush, clippers, food). Used the club as a fundraiser and raised enough for 32 additional cat starter kits. With success, branched into helping place special needs cats (missing limbs, medical problems). 62 cats placed in first year.

Posh Pets Rescue, New York, New York

Gives senior, disabled and other hard to place pets professional photos, name changes (eg.dogs needing placement together-Romeo and Juliet), use Photoshop to include celebrity in picture with dog (e.g. Chihuahua in picture with Paris Hilton), show pictures of pets with kids or other dogs to indicate they're good with these groups.

Stray Rescue of Saint Louis, Saint Louis, Missouri

Rent-a-Pet program allows folks to take an eligible dog home for the weekend. "The feral dog leans to climb stairs, experience unfamiliar noises such as vacuums and television and spend more time in the company of humans." The program prepares dogs for life in a home and speeds their adoption.

Smitten by Kittens, Morristown, New Jersey

Foster With the Right to Adopt program especially helpful for "special needs" cats—(blind, semi-feral etc.). Gives potential adopters the ability to take cats home on a trial base to see if the match works. "Foster Care Kits" worth \$125 are given to the new adopters as an added incentive.

The Animal Shelter of Texas County, Houston, Missouri

Joined "The Taste of Christmas" where various businesses host "a taste" of pastries, soups etc. The Animal Shelter added a new category: Homemade Dog Treats! Pet owners brought their dogs for a free "taste and submitted their pet's name to be designated as a judge—all the while we had dog pens and adult dogs for adoption mingling with the crowd."

County Humane Society, Bowling Green, KY

The Humane Society teamed up with the local cable company to create a three hour even on a cable channel. Local restaurants dial in for diners to watch as they eat dinner—donation banks are located on each table. The show features local radio and TV personalities, government officials, business owners and shelter staff, all featuring animals for adoption.

Cat Adoption And Rescue Efforts, Inc., Richmond, Virginia

Developed an extensive contact list of elderly residents in their own homes, independent living and assisted living. Volunteers call on these contacts on a regular basis for placement of hard to place older or less active cats. Reach out to health care providers of seniors to inform them about the program. Help senior adopters with transportation to veterinarian or groomer, assist with vet expenses, supply food and advice as needed.

Humane Society of Bexar County, San Antonio, Texas

Created Wacky Cat Wednesdays to bring attention to adult cats; created cute collateral materials. Reduce adoption fee from \$89 to \$25.

Second Chance Center for Animals, Flagstaff, Arizona

Arranged a wedding for Dagny, a 10 year old Shepherd mix with hip dysplasia, to Buster the Beagle. "The civil ceremony was held in downtown Flagstaff and officiated by the Mayor. Dagny became a local star and was adopted in less than a week."

Friends Forever Rescue, Miami, Florida

Foster network that showcases dogs at PetsMart weekly built a 9 foot tall dog shaped bulletin board with a wagging tail featuring a dog of the week. Has become a permanent fixture in the store and a new landmark.

Foothills Humane Society, Columbus, North Carolina

Program: *On The Table*. "Pets of the Week" photos cut out to fit a 5x7 stand-alone plastic frame. Pictures are given to volunteers who distribute them to local stores, businesses and restaurants where they are placed on tables and near cash registers. Pets adopted within 72 hours. 35 businesses currently enrolled.

Humane Society of Independence County, Batesville, Arkansas

In this rural county of 10,000 with a predominance of hunters, sportsmen, shelter staff take long-term, special needs animals to Friday night football games (with the entire town in attendance) and parade dogs in front of the crowd. Volunteers wear mock football jerseys and some small dogs wear jerseys as well. Dogs are announced in football lingo (star quarterback, fastest running back). An adoption area was set up by the concession stand complete with Puppy Kissing Booth.

Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary, Bloomfield, Connecticut

Rescue Outreach E-mail. "Initially, this bi-weekly news list had 100 people we knew. Today, Rescue Outreach consists of a passionate network of 3,000 animal lovers...who forward case histories to others via e-mail, print them out and post them in their workplaces....."

Shelter To Home, Inc. Allen Park, Michigan

After pets settle in and can capture true personality, film animals and place on YouTube.com.

Humane Society of Carroll County Inc., Animal Care & Control Division, Westminster, Maryland

"Every day we send out a list to every computer station in our county government, (judicial system, libraries and schools). This gets thousands of folks interested in our homeless animals. I do think that municipal shelters in particular should tap into their IT/computer systems -- with one email to "everyone" it reaches a huge untapped network of animal advocates."

San Francisco Samoyed Rescue, San Carlos, California

Foster parents have started blogging. "This gives the foster home an opportunity to post information about their dog without having to wait for information to get posted on the main site. "It is also a way to provide more extensive informant than a web listing."

San Diego Humane Society, San Diego, California

Use online pet videos, guide web visitors to pets located in offsite areas (and not in view to public) by designating them, Hidden Gems, a special "Employee Picks" icon directs visitors to read more about what makes particular pets special to alert people to personality traits they may not see in shelter.

Animal Friends Humane Society, Trenton, Ohio

In this rural area, volunteers groom dogs and drive 40 minutes to a professional photography studio for great pictures.

Cats' Cradle, Morganton, North Carolina

Hikin' Buddies – 12 shelter dogs are taken to a hiking trail where they are available to the public to take out for a hike-provides exercise, socialization and visibility.