

2008 Marketing Competition: Entries at a Glance

Selected summaries of 2008 marketing entries are offered below.

Categories:

[Senior Pets](#)

[Hard-to-Adopt Due To Size and/or Color](#)

[Behavioral Problems](#)

[Puppy Mill Dogs](#)

[Medical Problems](#)

[Long Length of Stay](#)

[Special Needs Pets](#)

[Shy Pets](#)

[Focus on Shelter and Rescue Dogs](#)

[General](#)

Senior Pets

Animals Friends, Inc, Pittsburgh, PA

Created “The Red Collar Society” to initiate interest in older, harder to adopt animals and to emphasize the positive aspects of old age. Animals are given distinct red tags for their collars to highlight, rather than disguise, their maturity. Initiated extensive marketing of the showcased animals and allotted special bonuses to adopters.

Seattle Humane Society, Bellevue, WA

Incorporates extensive media presence, education programs, and special events to aid the adoption of older pets. These included “Adopt-a-Senior-Pet” month, “Media Stars” on air and print, online information on how to care for older animals, and discounted adoption fees for harder to place pets.

Senior Pets for Senior Folks, Venice, Florida

A community wide “Mega Flea Market” helped raise \$1,500 to support seniors with the ownership of their senior pets. “Angels” check up on adopters and pets to provide any necessary food or medical support, “Walkers” find people to check up on adopters and provide dog walkers, and “Drivers” satisfy any transportation needs.

ASPCA, New York, NY

“ASPCA Tri-State News Alert” features harder to place pets as does the “Pet of the Week” component. Photos and waived adoption fees for older pets like “Free over Three,” a campaign for older cats which included free merchandise and information to the new owner, stimulate interest in overlooked animals. The “Best in Show” competition showcases older, large breed dogs and creates great public interest.

Humane Society of Western Montana, Missoula, MT

“Seniors for Seniors” campaign waives all adoption fees for often-overlooked senior pets adopted by seniors. Special signage within the shelter and community indicate the benefits of having a senior animal.

Last Chance Rescue, Gregory, TX

Through email flyers, a ‘pet of the week’ announcement in local newspapers and flyers, and digital slideshows pets are marketed to the public. For older cats, a partnership with a local bookstore acts as a ‘temp agency’ and allows the cats to live and roam freely about the store until they find a home.

Waggytail Rescue, New York, NY

Through online social networks, senior dogs are highlighted and emphasized. Dental care and blood work are provided for senior dogs to reduce an adopter’s uncertainty about the high cost of medical expenses.

Basset Rescue of Florida, Inc., Sunrise, FL

“Seniors for Seniors” program places senior pets with senior residents of the community. All food, medicines and veterinary care for the animal are provided free of charge for the senior adopter while a “mentor” visits the home once a month to provide food and supplies and any needed transportation.

Conway Area Humane Society, Conway, NH

The “Lifelong Friends Program” matches senior citizens with older, harder to adopt animals. Adoption fees are waived, veterinary fees are reduced by 10%, and a surrender fee is waived if necessary. The program allows animals to return for an unlimited amount of time if the senior owner is hospitalized.

Doberman Rescue Unlimited, Sandown, NC

A “Senior and Special Needs Program” helps raise awareness about the benefits of older animals and stimulates public interest in senior dogs. Veterinary costs are also continually covered by DRU and program donations after the adoption of a senior pet.

Indiana Petite Paws Rescue Angels, Inc., Boone Grove, IN

Through tactics such as word of mouth, a volunteer teen group, postings on social media websites and petfinder.com, participation in local holiday events, ads in a local newspaper, discounts for a “Seniors for Seniors” program, and adoption discounts for dogs over the age of ten, hard-to-adopt animals are marketed thoroughly.

Sanctuary Animal Refuge, The, Clewiston, FL

A “Seniors to Seniors” program covers all cost for a senior animal, including food and medical expenses, and carefully partners senior dogs with seniors in the community. Regular, weekly check-ups make sure all supplies are delivered to the residence and that the owner and the dog are a solid match.

Shorewood Cocker Rescue, Twin Lakes, WI

To help bring attention to senior dogs, an annual dog walk praises those who have adopted older dogs, a quarterly online newsletter features a “Celebrating Seniors” section, and handouts and flyers often emphasize older dogs.

Capital Area Humane Society, Lansing, MI

Created a marketing program geared at pairing elderly animals with elderly people in the community, which included placing posters emphasizing “unconditional love” in popular senior locations.

Sunshine Airedalers of FL, Sebring, FL

“What a Guy” or “WAG Fund” allows all adoption and medical fees to be waived for a senior dog’s entire life. Each special needs dog undergoes “A Day at the Spa” where they are made over before entering the foster home system and are featured in a quarterly newsletter.

Hard-to-Adopt Due To Size and/or Color

Tony La Russa’s Animal Rescue Foundation, Walnut Creek, CA

Worked alongside the Oakland Raiders with a three month “Silver and Black” promotion geared towards the adoption of overlooked cats. All silver and black adult cats were named after Oakland Raiders players and housed in football themed areas. Pets were waived of adoption fees, paid for by the Oakland Raiders, and the ARF mobile van appeared outside an Oakland Raiders game.

SPCA of Wake County, Raleigh, NC

Created a “Blue Light Special” for all black and darker-colored dogs. The program highlighted often overlooked dogs through the reduction of adoption fees and gained popularity through plugs on evening news channels, radio, an individual webpage, and in the local newspaper. In-house promotion included large colorful signs indicating the featured dogs, and a digitalized blue dog symbolized the campaign.

Nevada Humane Society, Reno, NV

The campaign, “All Dressed Up & Nowhere to Go,” promoting black, white, or black and white pets, highlighted the disproportionate number of overlooked black pets. The participating animals were dressed in colorful and shiny bandanas whilst the shelter was also decorated in the black and silver theme. Adoption fees were lowered and local TV stations, radio stations, magazines, and newspapers were informed while posters were placed around town.

AnimalKind, Inc., Mission Woods, KS

To aid the adoption of hard-to-place, big, black dogs, pets are posted on petfinder.com and the local paper. A foster dog program, which allows likely adopters to take a dog home for a brief stay, and “Take a Dog to Work Day” help the dogs become acquainted with new environments and people.

Coalition for Animal Rescue & Education (CARE), Cadet, MO

An “Inventory Clearance” campaign spotlights large and/or black dogs through customized T-Shirts with the slogan “Big Black Dogs Seek Good Homes,” and “Will Love For a Good Home.” The T-shirts are worn to all events and initiate not only interest in the featured dogs but interest in local spay/neuter programs.

Guardian Angels for Animals, Sault.Ste. Marie, MI

A “Black Dog Special” promoted the adoption of hard-to-place black dogs through certificates offering free alterations for dogs involved in the campaign and flyers featuring the highlighted animals.

Fuzzy Friends Rescue, Waco, TX

Through obedience and socialization training, large dogs are given the chance to improve their mannerisms in order to better appeal to adopters. A free lesson with the trainer is given with every adoption from the program. “Large Dog Month” also emphasizes hard-to-adopt dogs through weekly events and by walking the dogs around the shelter grounds.

Oregon Humane Society, Portland, OR

Created “End Petlessness” marketing campaign consisting of clever posters equipped with the slogans, “There’s a furry soul mate for everyone” and “A pet for every man, woman and child.” Strategies for highlighting “less desirable” attributes in pets include holiday promotions like “Black Friday,” where discounts are offered for black pets.

Behavioral Problems

Bay Area Humane Society, Green Bay, WI

Externships from the Animal Behavior College (ABC) allow dog-training students to train dogs with behavior problems. Previously misbehaving, difficult-to-adopt dogs are taught basic commands with an extremely positive response.

Central Pennsylvania Animal Alliance- Hounds for Prison Education, Mechanicsburg, PA

“HOPE”, a collaboration between inmates of the State Correctional Institution (SCI) and dogs with problematic behaviors, allows inmates to act as handlers and train dogs under the supervision of a HOPE trainer. Exercises regarding socialization, aggression, and self-control are documented in journals kept by the handlers. Once the dogs make “parole” they are released from the program and set up for adoption with the journals as reference for the new owner.

DAWG, Gardnerville, NC

To market dogs with behavioral/breed issues volunteers are taught by professional trainers how to handle/train dogs, individual volunteers act as “advocates” for specific dogs to build relationships, dogs undergo socialization training, and volunteers are given free, local training classes.

Helen Woodward Animal Center, Rancho Santa Fe, CA

Techniques for stimulating public interest include “Home for the Holidays,” a worldwide program encouraging adoptions during the holiday season, a large scale foster program, an in-house dog trainer who helps socialize and train dogs, and the “No Dog Left Behind” program which offers three free visits from a trainer to the home of a misbehaving dog.

PAWS Shelter and Humane Society, Dripping Springs, TX

“Pets in Prison” program pairs inmates with dogs with behavior issues for an eight week long training session. The session ends with each dog being trained basic commands and one trick and many of the dogs are adopted even before they leave the program.

Refurbished Pets of S. Mich., Coldwater, MI

The “Canine Correctional Program” allows two inmates to pair up and train a poorly tempered dog. After the training program, dogs are given a Canine Good Citizen Certificate and are adopted out into loving homes.

Tipton Treasures PAWS New England, Millington, TN

Through techniques such as professional photos and thorough bios on adoption websites, postings on Craigslist for foster homes and volunteers, a poster campaign focusing on ideal adopter locations, and through knowledgeable volunteers hard-to-place dogs are emphasized.

Lorain County SPCA, North Ridgeville, OH

“Pound Puppy” is a program that partners inmates with misbehaving rescued dogs for a twelve week course on obedience and agility that finishes with a “graduation” ceremony with potential adopters. “Paw Prints to our Community” is a free six week training program offered to those who adopt a “Pound Puppy.”

Puppy Mill Dogs

Pekingese Charitable Foundation, Cortland, NE

Service learning internships for local college students and pre-vet students help provide care for rescued puppy mill dogs. Knowledge about adoptions and puppy mill abuse is encouraged by an adoption logo on public transportation, pamphlets, talks given at local institutions, and billboards supporting pet adoptions from petfinder.com. Online view-books provide photos and descriptions of rescued puppy mill dogs.

Hearts Untitled for Animals, Auburn, NE

Programs focusing primarily on puppy mill dogs include: “Pooches Going Postal,” post card mailings promoting “Don’t Shop. Adopt.,” “Puppy Mill Survivors in the News,” coverage of rescued puppy mill dogs, “Jet Set Dogs,” business cards promoting long distance adoptions, and “HYA T.V.,” videos documenting the lives of rescued dogs on an award winning website.

Medical Problems

Placer County SPCA , Roseville, CA

“Flabulous Felines Free to a Good Home” month was promoted through radio, newspaper, and television. Adoption fees were waived and adopters were given a signed copy of local author Martha Garvey’s book: *My Fat Cat: Ten Simple Steps to Help Your Pet Lose Weight for a Long and Happy Life* in addition to counseling to help them properly care for their new overweight friend.

Humane Society of Collier County, Naples, FL

The “Cinder House Society All-Star Pooch Program” and the “Cozy Care Cat Club” both strive to spark interest in animals with medical needs and animals too often overlooked. Interest in these “special” animals is created through posters around the adoption center, behavioral training prior to adoption, rebated adoption fees, and either training or health and wellness vouchers.

Berkeley-East Bay Humane Society, Berkeley, CA

HOPE (Help Our Pets with Emergencies) Medical Fund provides the money needed for seriously ill or injured animals entirely through donations from the community. Pets in need of HOPE funds are highlighted on the BEBHS website, monthly online newsletter, bi-annual newsletter, and star in major fundraisers (Mozart for Mutts and Meows) that highlight the animals through photos and descriptions.

Mid-Michigan Boxer Rescue, Mt. Morris, MI

For pets with chronic medical conditions, MMBR continues to cover all medical expenses after adoption along with training and other resources. Difficult-to-place dogs are showcased regularly at adoption fairs, dog related events, and online.

Cat’s Cradle of Greater Richmond, Richmond, VA

Launched the campaign, “Whole Lotta Love,” in order to initiate attention towards special needs cats, especially FIV+. The program consists of an individual logo, pamphlets given to adopters informing them about FIV and other cat ailments, a web page, and special adoption fees.

Long Length of Stay

Cocker Spaniel Rescue of E. Texas, The Woodlands, TX

Created *Cold Case Cockers*, a spin off from the television show *Cold Case Files*, to initiate interest in dogs that have been without a home for at least six months. Hard-to-place dogs can be found on the programs website under “Cold Case Updates” along with a brief description. They’re tagged “Case Closed” once adopted.

Knox County Humane Society, Mount Vernon, OH

Created “The Lonely Hearts Club,” a program designed for cats that have been on the adoption floor for over six months. The campaign includes large photos of the cats placed in the shelter, reduced adoption fees at \$25, and a “cat of the month” featured in local daily paper and weekly shopper. During Valentine’s Day weeklong “The Lonely Hearts Club Open House,” fees were further reduced to \$20.

Anderson Humane Society, Lawrenceburg, KY

Personalized flyers, attached to the kennel doors of dogs that have been without a home for a month or more, emphasize the unique personality and history of each animal.

Special Needs Pets

Michigan Humane Society, Bingham Farms, MI

Stimulated interest in special needs pets during the 09' election season by showcasing animals as unique candidates. Slogans like "Race for the Right House," and "help them find the change they need" accompanied pet photos while election themed blurbs appeared on websites, television, posters and e-newsletters.

Dog Pack Rescue, Kingston, GA

Special needs animals are highlighted through local newspapers, magazines, community websites, local bulletin boards, and frequent promotions at local PetSmart stores. Free training classes, gift cards to PetSmart, and reduced vet care are offered to adopters of special needs animals.

Foothills Humane Society, Columbus, NC

Extremely successful column in local newspaper, titled "Humane Society Special Cases," recognizes special needs animals through heartwarming stories generating generous donations and interest in the animals. "Pet of the Week" advertisements promote specific adoptions while also promoting the shelter.

Gainesville Pet Rescue, Gainesville, FL

The "Dr. Dolittle" ("DD") program highlights special needs animals through signage on the animals cage and front desk, biographies in the newsletter, flyers sent to email lists, "Adopt a Pet at Your Vet" campaign which showcases a certain "DD" animal, and PSA's to local media.

Loving Companions Animal Rescue, Inc., North Pole, AK

Through postings of hard-to-place animals on websites, flyers, and posters throughout town, along with PSAs on local radio stations and Tabletop advertisements in local restaurants, special needs animals are highlighted.

Tree House Animal Foundation, Chicago, IL

Unique profiles describing the personality and medical requirements of special needs cats are posted on free pet websites and local newspapers. An eNewsletter regularly focuses on hard-to-place pets as does the print newsletter issued three times a year, which includes an "Overlooked but Not Unloved" section, generating many successful adoptions of overlooked cats.

Walkin' the Bark Rescue, Antioch, CA

Focusing entirely on special needs dogs that are very difficult-to-place, dog diaries were created. The diaries included photos, videos, and written entries to help adopters see past severe disabilities and instead the personality of the overlooked pet.

Clark County Humane Society, Neillsville, WI

Techniques like word of mouth, petfinder.com, posters around the community, a "Pet of the Week" in local papers, a "Special Needs Pets" page on their website, and educational tours at the shelter all help this small, rural town spread the word about hard-to-adopt cats and dogs that oftentimes need donations to afford extensive medical care.

Foothills Animal Rescue, Cave Creek, AZ

Special needs animals are recognized through weekly adoption venues and are given extensive medical evaluations and temperament testing in order to thoroughly inform adopters about their new pet. Veterinary care is offered at discounted rates with partnering hospitals and clinics.

Ken-Mar Rescue, Burbank, CA

Marketing strategies include a website focusing on the desirable traits of “special” dogs, involvement in pet adoption sites, postings on bulletin boards, flyers, mobile pet adoptions, behavioral training, and online networking outreach.

No More Homeless Pets in Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah

“Special Pets for Special People” Program promotes special needs animals through mailings, e-newsletters, online postings on petfinder.com and utahpets.org, and TV and radio spots. These postings and presentations to the public generate donations and have allowed for the adoption of 50% of the pets so far.

Noah’s Ark Animal Welfare Association, Ledgewood, NJ

A “Doggone Purrfect Golf Classic” helped raise money while highlighting hard-to-adopt pets on the event brochures. An “Adopt-a-thon” helped spread information on pet adoption while also placing special needs pets in the spotlight.

Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary, Bloomfield, CT

Campaigns to advertise special needs pets needing homes include “Rescue Outreach,” an electronic newsletter sent to 3,000 people state-wide, features on the our Companions website, a poster campaign involving colorful posters sent to people across the state to print and post locally, media partnerships with two local newspapers and two radio stations, petfinder.com, adoption events, and a Our Companions news magazine which features a “Take Me Home” page.

Pets with Disabilities, Prince Frederick, MD

To encourage adoptions of special needs pets, especially those in need of wheelchairs, methods include drawing people in with a state of the art shelter and extensive woodland trails, a new logo and poster, eye catching merchandise, and participation in pet expos.

Safehaven Foster Home, Tionesta, PA

Broad public exposure, including bringing special needs dogs to local adoption events, visiting pet friendly shops, grand openings and more, helps the public interact and fall in love with disabled dogs.

Southern Cross GSD Rescue, Clarkesville, GA

Collaboration with sister rescues across the states through web boards allows special needs dogs access to more adoption applicants and promotes the sharing of common medical issues between rescues.

SPCA Serving Erie County, Tonawanda, NY

The “Yelp for Help” (YfH) program helps special needs animals find homes and collects donations from the public through a special YfH section on its website, a wall of photos in the adoption lobby with a donation box, radio and television segments featuring YfH animals, and through education material provided by volunteers and online.

Ahisma Rescue Foundation, Muldrow, OK

Stylized digital photography created by a local artist, a “Pets for your eyes and Soul” slogan, and whimsical personal stories in the first person highlight both pets with special needs and hard-to-place pets.

Shy Pets

Independence County Humane Society, Batesville, AR

Started a “Dog Walking Club” to help previously shy, overlooked dogs become more comfortable and playful, while also helping leash-train the dogs. Meeting once a week and generating local publicity, the program initiated interest in the shelter and transformed the temperament of previously hard-to-place dogs.

Merrimack River Feline Rescue, Salisbury, MA

“A Meet the Cats” page on the MRFRS website allows potential adopters to view the cats along with their temperaments. Division of selected cats into “barn cats,” shy, less-social cats, and holding annual “kitten showers” during kitty season allows adopters to easily find their new pet. Signature events, like “Fur Ball,” and “Strut for Strays,” along with media outreach in special cases (“fish cats,” naming 52 similar-looking cats after sea creatures) all help stimulate adoption attention.

Heart and Hand Society Inc., New York, NY

Feral cats find homes through word of mouth between TNR advocates and through online communities, feral kitties are actively socialized and posted on major pet adoption websites, fearful and shy cats are also posted on pet adoption websites with honest notes describing their demeanors and how to work with them to become more social.

Focus on Shelter and Rescue Dogs

Parke-Vermillion County Humane Society, Hillsdale, IN

A “Pets and Petunias” event consisted of a plant/bake sale with craft activities in a local park to showcase shelter dogs being walked around the park and to raise awareness about the needs of shelter animals. “Mutts and Music, Pets in the Park” is a fall concert during a local festival to raise awareness about the shelter. Other activities include local television spots, PetFinder postings, and middle school volunteer programs.

Pom Rescue, Drayton, SC

Extensive internet postings on PetFinder, Craigslist, the Pom Rescue website, MySpace and Facebook help the networking and promotion of rescue dogs along with frequently updated blogs, videos, and slide shows.

General

Flint Humane Society, Vienna, GA

Hard-to-adopt dogs were named after prominent local officials, generating large media coverage. Publicity for dogs and cats included newspaper ads, appearances on television, partnerships with local clubs, and appearances at functions throughout the county. Adopters are also offered all basic supplies, food, bedding etc. for free.

Tuscaloosa Metro Animal Shelter, Tuscaloosa, AL

A “Pimp my Kennel” campaign during the month of October allowed people to vote for the best decorated kennel, all of which were for hard-to-place dogs that needed attention.

Southeastern Greyhound Adoption, Newnan, GA

To promote high-prey greyhounds, individual Blogs are updated weekly by foster families documenting their daily activities with the dog. These Blogs, oftentimes accompanied by YouTube videos, help adopters realize the adoptability of an individual dog and help eradicate breed stereotypes.

Pet Pals, Hawk Springs, WY

Unusual names help this small town market their animals. Animals found in groups are uniquely named with themes such as cars, cleaning supplies, presidents etc.

Animal Welfare Association, Voorhees, NJ

Offers “sleepovers” for hard-to-place pets, allowing the true personality of a pet to shine and encouraging quick but thorough adoptions. Bi-weekly newsletter updates feature special animals with “studio” photographs along with YouTube videos of special needs pets. Reduced fees and a “Free to a Great Home” program highlight older animals with medical conditions.

Willamette Humane Society, Salem, OR

Helped difficult-to-place dogs with “Junior Trainer’s Camp” pilot program which relied on campers (12-15 years old) to enhance the dogs adoptability through basic training and socialization. Logs recording the dog’s preferences and skills were given to the eventual adopter of the dogs during the final showcase of the animals.

Animal Aid, Inc., Oakland Park, FL

Uses various techniques to place special needs pets such as use of national adoption websites, a free training lesson for every dog, pet insurance, free 1st grooming, and lifetime joint and arthritis medications for elderly dogs. Also, hard-to-place dogs are highlighted through “dog of the month” features in the local paper and “adopt-me” T-shirts.

High Plateau Humane Society, Alturas, CA

Appealing photography of hard-to-adopt animals are posted on Petfinder.com, breed rescue sites, and a regular “Dog Log” newsletter to allow the true personalities of the animals to show. Collages of the photographs are also posted at the local HPHS thrift shop.

Oshkosh Area Humane Society, Oshkosh, WI

Offers a “Home at Last” program waiving all adoption fees for cats over three, a “Best Friends” reducing the adoption fees for special needs dogs, and a discount for senior adopters.

Animal Defense League, San Antonio, TX

Project “Best Paw Forward” focuses on highlighting desirable attributes of hard-to-place animals through a revamping of their appearance, time with a dog trainer for those with behavioral issues, a reduced adoption fee, and a pet of the week on the local radio and television channels.

Anjellicle Cats Rescue, New York, NY

A personalized information folder is created for every hard-to-place cat including a unique drawing/painting of the cat, a description of the cat’s temperament, photos, and information on any medical conditions. At adoption events a “minder” informs the public of the cat’s history while PetFinder, YouTube, and a newsletter highlight the positive aspects of hard-to-adopt cats.

ARFHouse, Chicago, IL

Senior and hard-to-place pets join the “All-Star” team under the tagline “Special Needs make Extra-Special Pets.” Members of the team are highlighted through the monthly newsletter, enhanced biographies, and signature vests.

Best Friends Animal Society, Los Angeles, CA

“Date-With-A-Dog” allows people to take dogs out to the park, for sleepovers etc. in order to improve the dogs’ socialization and temperament in new environments. Email blasts, national adoption websites, large-scale adoption events, and spots on local television stations all elaborate on and highlight specific hard-to-adopt pets.

Happy Cat Club/Dane County Humane Society, Verona, WI

Attention is brought to hard-to-place cats through: quality photos and videos depicting the cat in its natural environment posted on PetFinder, creative posters placed locally, postings on Craigslist, attending weekly adoption fairs, a digital frame at a local pet food shop displaying the cats’ photos, and pins for volunteers to wear depicting the most difficult-to-place cats.

Humane Society of Hamilton County, Noblesville, IN

Stories and photographs for all hard-to-adopt animals are displayed on the animal’s cage with a link for “Survivor Program” donations, which helps fund emergency medical care for severely injured animals.

Humane Society for Huron Valley, Ann Arbor, MI

Programs such as “Diamonds in the Ruff,” highlighting overlooked animals with reduced fees and free coupons, “Pet of the Week,” “Local Dog Network,” helping to promote dogs with less “curb appeal through local businesses,” “Community Access Television Network,” free

announcements of adoptable pets, “Golden Oldies,” free adoptions of senior pets to seniors, and “Fairy Godmother Fund,” a way for donors to designate where their money falls, all help stimulate public awareness.

Humane Society of Williamson County, Round Rock, TX

“A New Leash on Life” campaigns for large, long-time resident dogs through behavior assessments and marketing the results of grant funded training programs along with “Glamour Shots” of the dogs. “Care-Full Companions” helps special needs cats through “Glamour Shots,” bios, and stories distributed to the media.

Irvine Animal Care Center, Irvine CA

“Providing Animals Love” (PALs) focuses on hard-to-place dogs. Once chosen, quality photos are taken and made into posters to display in the facility, promotional flyers are distributed, and a compelling narrative is written and posted on PetFinder. PALs promotes dogs at local adoption events and provides a thorough training and review of the dog before it is placed into a home.

Saving Paws Animal Rescue, Appleton, WI

“Post for the Paws” program: A list of adoptable pets including photos and biographical information is sent out on a monthly basis to all 215 volunteers who in turn print and distribute the flyer around the community. Every week a hard-to-place pet is featured and distributed in the same manner.

TLC Canine Center, Newell, IA

Established “Paw Prints,” a weekly newspaper column in local papers on responsible pet care that also showcases specific hard-to-place dogs. Combining facts and emotional draw, the article helps inform rural communities of pets needing forever homes.

Alley Cat Angles, Inc., Battle Creek, MI

Hard-to-place cats are showcased through videos and bios on petfinder.com, emails to friends and family, ads in newspapers and community shoppers, and are brought to all local adoption events. These special needs animals are then rechecked for recurring medical problems and reevaluated on their temperament and socialization. A “Cat of the Week” on the ACA website highlights the animals “problem” instead of disguising the issue.

Animal Friends Rescue Project, Pacific Grove, CA

Through the AFRP website, local newspaper ads, the AFRP newsletter, attending off-site adoption events, monthly emails, posting on pet adoption websites like PetFinder, special adoption events, and a “Pet of the Week” spot on local radio and television, hard-to-place pets are extensively featured.

Animal House Shelter, Huntley, IL

A “Senior for Senior” program allows adopters over fifty to adopt a senior pet at a reduced adoption fee. A section on their website “Extra Special Pets” and articles in their newsletter emphasize special needs pets with detailed histories and photos.

Big Sky Rottweiler Rescue, Laurel, MT

Professional photographs and detailed, first-person narratives accompany each hard-to-adopt dog on individual pages of the BSRR website.

Boston Terrier Rescue of Greater Houston, The Woodlands, TX

Techniques to attract interest in senior and special needs include showcasing them on petfinder.com, posting flyers throughout the community, attending adoption events, and “Dog Blogs,” which provide extra photos, videos, and stories for the most difficult-to-place dogs.

Caroline County Humane Society, Ridgely, MD

Two free obedience classes for difficult-to-place dogs are offered at a local training facility—one while the dog is in the shelter and one once the dog has found a new home. This allows difficult-to-place breeds, such as pitbulls, to gain the training they need to appeal to an adopter.

Cat Depot, Sarasota, FL

Difficult-to-place cats are featured in the quarterly newsletter, have weekly spots on the morning and afternoon news, and a regular time on the radio. Flyers are posted around town focusing on senior pets while cards on cages indicate special needs animals. Specific, hard-to-place cats are also highlighted on their website.

Col. Potter Cairn Rescue Network, Romoland, CA

Extensive use of YouTube, around 139 videos ranging from individual dogs to information about puppy mills, actively promotes hard-to-place dogs. Thorough internet use includes a popular website and postings on Dogster, Facebook, My Dog Space and Windows Live.

Dent County Animal Welfare Society, Salem, MO

Postings of hard-to-place animals are found on their website, petfinder.com, bulletin boards around the community, pet food collection boxes, and on their quarterly newsletter. Pets are also featured weekly through a local newspaper and radio station. Tips to PetSmart and local schools and other groups promote specific, special needs animals.

Friends of the Rifle Animal Shelter, Rifle, CO

Strategies to market hard-to-place animals include: pet lists sent to a bimonthly e-mail group, a weekly “Pet of the Week” in two local papers, restaurant table toppers and delivery order flyers, bag stuffers at local shops, online venues like petfinder.com, individual flyers posted once a month throughout town, off-site adoption events, and shelter-to-shelter transfers.

Greyhounds Only Inc., Carol Stream, IL

A “Hounds in Need” webpage highlights the stories of special needs and broken leg dogs and their medical conditions. The webpage raises funds on behalf of the dogs while regular updates indicate the adoption status of each pet in need of a home. A quarterly newsletter, “The Skinny,” features special needs and hard-to-adopt black dogs frequently.

Homeward Trails Animal Rescue, Arlington, VA

Outlets for promoting pets include postings on pet websites that specialize in overlooked pets and special adoption events such as “Turning Over a New Leaf Adoption Event,” which features

fall colored animals, and the “Two cats are better than one” adoption event featuring bonded pairs of cats. Also blogs, news outreach and coverage, and press releases for animals with outstanding stories are used to stimulate interest in unique animals.

Hood River Adoptadog Found., Hood River, OR

Two-pronged approach focuses on emphasizing a dogs “unadoptable” quality and using it to attract specific audiences and then distributing information about hard-to-adopt dogs over a large geographic area. Resources for distribution include elaborated petfinder.com profiles including videos, postings on national websites like craigslist, a “Pet of the Week” ad in local a paper, a plug on the local radio station, and flyer distributions.

Humane Society of Madison County, London, OH

“Slobberfest” is an event featuring shelters and rescues from around the area promoting adoptions. It consists of a “Pet of the Month” being put in a weekly paper and monthly newsletter, a senior pet program to help pair up pets and adopters, a “Festive Feline Frenzy” campaign with reduced adoption fees for older cats and the “Fresh Start Training Program” that pairs inmates with pets needing to be fostered and trained.

Monroe County Volunteer Humane Society, Madisonville, TN

Photos showing hard-to-adopt dogs in many different environments, along with detailed, first-person bios, help dog’s personality’s appeal to potential adopters rather than their “defects.” These custom profiles are listed under “Dogs Are People Too” on the Asian Dog Rescue website.

PAWS of Marion, Marion, AR

Through quality photos, postings on national/breed specific pet websites, individual dog blogs, a “Sponsor Me” program that allows donations to be made for specific animals, and coverage in the local news and newspapers, hard-to-place dogs are emphasized. A “Vote For Honorary Major of Marion” campaign placed dogs as election candidates on patriotic themed posters.

SPCA of Westchester, Briarcliff, NY

Regal and touching photos of the pets, donated by a volunteer professional photographer, allow adopters to fall in love with an animal over PetFinder, local media, and through printed and electronic newsletters.

SQ Rescue, Columbia, SC

Ads in local and bordering states’ papers, obedience courses, flyers in local businesses, the transportation of dogs to areas where animals are needed, attracting attention to black dogs with bright accents and waiving vet bills for senior dogs, all help to quicken the adoption of special needs dogs.

Stray Rescue of Saint Louis, St. Louis, MO

Techniques to train and place hard-to-adopt dogs include in-home behavioral training, intensive obedience classes, foster care, visits to a certified animal behaviorist, and training support with the “Post Adoption program.”

The Merrick Fund Foundation, Harrisburg, PA

Eight behaviorally challenged dogs were enrolled in the PetSmart Basic Obedience program. The dogs, during the eight week training program, showcased to the public in the PetSmart store and quickly adopted.

Washington Alaskan Malamute Adoption League, North Bend, WA

The “Adoption Buddy” program matches an adoptive family with a volunteer to help guide the process. The WAMAL website, along with PetFinder and other dog rescue websites, provides the primary marketing tool for hard-to-place senior dogs and misbehaving teenage dogs.