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TVC

June Digital Issue 2017



Digital magazine

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TVC Member/Owners
discuss ways to
enhance your pet food
sales through your
veterinary practice



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Making the Most of Your Investment

By Chad Clark,
Member Experience
Representative

By purchasing products through vendors that support TVC, you'll not only receive savings that can go back into your practice, you are supporting other independent veterinary clinics.

When you purchase a piece of equipment, you don't set it off to the side. It's too valuable. You train on it, and do periodic checks and maintenance to make sure it is working properly and providing you with the information you need to help your patients, and to make sure you are profiting from its use. In short, you do the things to get the most out of your investment.

Your TVC membership/ownership works much the same way. It's only as valuable as the commitment you put into participating, and understanding the programs and rebates available to you. It takes only an hour or two to get set up, and periodic glances at your emails can literally mean a difference of thousands of dollars in discounts or rebates.

We want to help you get the most out of your membership. On our website is a New Member Video, that can also be used as a refresher for established members, or used as a tutorial for new employees at your practice. The 20-minute video will walk you through the basics.

We also have TVC team members who would welcome a discussion of the membership benefits and programs. It's important to go through the programs to fully understand how they are set up and how you can benefit. It's also important to understand what you would miss out on by not qualifying for the program. Something as simple as buying the right type of product, but from the wrong vendor, could cost you thousands of dollars.

As a former Sales Representative/Trainer/Manager and part-time practice manager for my wife's dental office, I know how challenging it is to stay on top of the latest promotions while maintaining the day-to-day functions of the business. We try to get you the information you need in as assessable a format as possible. Check your emails for monthly promotions that may go above and beyond regular programs. Log onto the website for vendor and product updates.

By purchasing products through vendors that support TVC, you'll not only receive savings that can go back into your practice, you are supporting other independent veterinary clinics. You may also find that using a certain vendor program is identical to what you are currently paying for a product or service, and as such you may decide not to switch to the TVC Vendor, but please make sure you understand the "Rebate Participation" program we have at TVC. Qualifying for the Rebate Participation could also mean \$\$\$ to you by sharing in TVC's profits. Reach out to us if you would like to take some time to make sure you are maximizing your rebates and discounts.



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STAY CONNECTED



June: Pet Food and Profit

This month we're shining the spotlight on our Pet Food Vendors. Did you know that selling pet food can be an easy way to add profit to your bottom line, while meeting client needs at the same time? Learn how your clinic can profit with pet food from our Pet Food Vendors: Hills, Purina, and Royal Canin. The recording will be on our website by the end of June!

Purina is offering 10 Days of 10 Off: \$10 off clients first time orders on Vet Direct. 10 days only! June 6th-15th. Enter "TVC\$10" at Checkout

Promotions

Ceva - Buy 5 Get 1 + 3 pack of Catego OR Buy 25 get 10 + 5X 3 pack's of Catego ([More details](#))

Elanco - Galliprant, One Giant Leap in Treating OA! ([More details](#))

Merial - Major Summer Sale underway! ([More details Here](#))

Purina - Buy 2 (slb Bags of Purina EN Gastroenteric get 1 6LB bag free ([Details here](#))

Vetoquinol - May Carprofen Promotion - 18% - 23% rebate on Vetprofen ([More details](#))

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- Aminopentamide 0.5mg/ml Injection Solution 10ml
- Aminopentamide 0.2mg Tiny Tabs
- Aminophylline 100mg Capsules
- Aminophylline 200mg Capsules
- Ammonium Chloride 400mg Capsules 100ct
- Betamethasone (as Valerate)/Gentamicin (as Sulfate)/Miconazole Nitrate 0.1%/0.15%/1.51% Otic Suspension
- Chloramphenicol 1% 5gm Ophthalmic Ointment
- Cisapride Formulations



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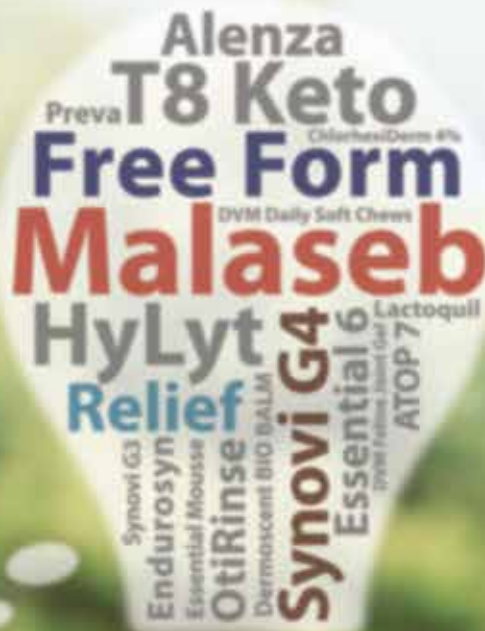
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Food for Thought

TVC Member/Owners discuss ways to enhance your pet food sales through your veterinary practice

As pet spending has steadily

risen, so too has awareness in the importance of a healthy diet and proper nutrition. TVC Member/Owner Laura Schaefer of Avery Animal Hospital in Hilliard, Ohio, says growing up, you didn't hear a lot of talk concerning choosing the right pet food. Now those decisions are becoming as important in preventive care as vaccinations and flea/tick preventives.



"It's changed significantly," Schaefer says. "I don't remember growing up worried about it with my pet. Now, it's 'What are you buying for your pet's food,' 'Where are you getting it' and 'How much are you giving?' It's a much more detailed conversation."

Indeed, pet food isn't a side topic to discuss with clients anymore. It's become important to a practice's success, according to several TVC Member/Owners. And with the right tools and strategies in place, pet food sales can become a financial boon to a practice.

Let's talk about pet food

Avery Animal Hospital emphasizes prescription diets for things like weight control and allergies. The hospital brings in more than six figures with pet food sales, including about 17 percent through its online portal with Vets First Choice.

The pet food sales start with effective veterinary-client communication. Schaefer says the veterinarians have the diet and nutrition conversation with clients. They try and steer clients away from diets that are high in fillers and colors. "They will figure out the best plan for the pet together."

TVC Member/Owner
Lori Scarlett, of Madison,
Wisc.-based Four Lakes

Vet, says her clinic gives pet food recommendations to virtually every pet owner that walks through the door.

"Especially during annual wellness exams," she says.

When it opened four years ago, Four Lakes Vet initially started out by selling a handful of different brands of food. It eventually switched to Royal Canin only, and has increased its pet food sales with Royal Canin every year. Its clientele is growing too.

Pet food is the top item in pet spending, but often a difficult one for veterinary clinics to crack into with consistent results. Often this is because of affordability/cost, and accessibility of pet food at grocery stores and retailers.

Scarlett says
that with the pet
food the clinic
recommends,
"you know what
they are getting,
how many calories
they are getting.
The hospital
can make better
recommendations
to treat a
dog's health."



Prescription diets may be a tougher sell, but the health benefits are worth it over the long term.

Although a challenge, it's something Four Lakes Vet really stresses to clients. "We're trying to get people to understand why pets should start with a prescription diet, especially when it comes to allergies," says Scarlett. "Eighty percent of the time, clients decide to do over-the-counter food, but then eventually they come back to buy from the clinic when the over-the-counter food isn't helping. Ideally, we'd like to have the time to price out the high-end diets from pet food stores compared to expensive prescription diets to show clients that they are not that different."

"The overall quality of pet's health is tied to quality of the food," Schaefer says.

Scarlett says that with the pet food the clinic recommends, "you know what they are getting, how many calories they are getting. The hospital can make better recommendations to treat a dog's health."

"There are so many pet foods out there that have fantastic marketing, so the clients get sucked in by marketing, when the food may not be that good," continues Scarlett. "And so it is our mission to make the clients educated. Good food extends the pet's life."

A click away

Good pet food can also enhance a veterinary clinic's revenue. Four Lakes Vet uses VetSource as an on-



line portal its customers can access to order pet food through them. There are still some people who prefer to pick up food direct from the hospital, but a lot of people are starting to prefer the online ordering option, and having the food shipped to their house with no extra charge, says Scarlett. Having the online options also helps the clinic compete against online retailers such as CHEWY.COM, which was recently acquired by PetSmart.

There are plenty of benefits to having the online portal, both for the client and the veterinary practice. For the veterinary practice, it helps with inventory. Using the online portal means not having to find places to store big bags of pet food, Scarlett says, thus Four Lakes Vet can use that space for other products and purposes. “We don’t have to order so much for the practice and carry extra large bags of food here,” Schaefer. “We may give two small bags to get our clients started, and then push them to online ordering after that.”

Plus, the pet owner can set up regular ordering that may otherwise have been disrupted through in-clinic visits to order more food.

One of the greatest benefits of increasing pet food sales is it’s created greater loyalty from patients, Scarlett says. “Especially with vomiting or constipated cats, where clients see results,” Scarlett says. It’s a win-win – a nice cash flow for the clinic, and pets are healthier in general.

Choice, quality, convenience – all of these attributes add up. But it all comes back to the most important factor – the pet’s health. And that’s why veterinary practices can be such a good resource for their clients when it comes to pet food.

“The overall quality of pet’s health is tied to quality of the food,” Schaefer says. ■





MAP Pricing Provides Profitability and a Competitive Edge

TVC partners with vendors that help members stay independent and profitable. We want to level the playing field for independents who have to compete with all types of corporate formats, from big box stores to corporate clinics. If the playing field is level, then more products and services will flow through the local independent clinic. This helps our vendors sell more product recommended and sold by you. It also increases sales for both your clinic and our vendors, bringing more profit to all: a win-win situation. One way that we're able to do this is by encouraging our vendors to adopt a Minimum Advertised Price, or MAP, for some of their products.

MAP origin

MAP pricing arose in the 1980s, when the Supreme Court approved a pricing law that protected the consumer and small businesses. The Supreme Court decided it was ok for a vendor to set a Minimum Advertised Price (MAP) to allow for widespread distribution of their products through multiple channels of distribution, which allows small independent businesses to thrive and be competitive from a price perspective.

The “good old days” of the 50 percent margin have gone the way of the abacus and the typewriter.

For example, a large retailer, on-line supplier or corporate clinic may be able to sell products at a very narrow margin and still make acceptable profit due to the volume that they sell (in business school this is often referred to as “Turns”). This essentially keeps the independent clinic (or any independent business) from selling at a competitive price and making the margin/profit they need.

So, to level the playing field, MAP was introduced. This enables small business owners to compete against the big box retailers, while it ensures that consumers have more choices about where they can purchase a product (such as your clinic). In today's world, vendors need to have their products available online, in small, “high-end” pet stores, and independent veterinary practices, as well as the big box retailers. All these purchasing options would not exist if the purchasing public did not prefer



different ways to buy. For a manufacturer to survive, they need to satisfy the consumers' buying preference.

TVC has been working with and encouraging our vendors to implement MAP pricing to allow you to make a reasonable profit and match the prices of the large competitors. You make money and do not look foolish (overpriced) in the market place. Royal Canin is one prime example in the pet food industry that implemented MAP pricing recently.

TVC has been pushing for MAP pricing with all of our vendors and Bayer Animal Health is a recent entrant to MAP. Bayer recognizes that you're an important part of their business and has put Seresto on to MAP pricing. Bayer is even going one step further and is also providing only independent veterinary clinics with a mail-in Seresto rebate for the consumer — so if they buy through you, the independent veterinarian, they have the ability to lower the price further.

Bayer's presence in the retail market at MAP pricing levels also sends a signal that they are seeking to prevent diversion, in which unscrupulous veterinarians buy products and sell to third parties to turn around and sell them for lower prices online or in big box stores, ultimately hurting your bottom line. MAP pricing discourages diversion, and sets a price floor at which a product can be sold in the market place. We should support Bayer for supporting the independent vets here at TVC. It will also help you make more profit.

We need to realize that when a company decides to MAP price, it's great for the little guys. No matter what price the big box stores get it for, they cannot sell it below the MAP price. The "good old days" of the 50 percent margin have gone the way of the abacus and the typewriter. If you're still expecting those kinds of margins you've got your head in the sand. It's time now to accept it and move on. The key to increasing your profit is volume (Turns). By matching price to your corporate competitors, you will build trust with your clients that your pricing is in-line. They will trust you more on all of your medical recommendations as well. As an independent, if you match price while making a profit you have the edge, as most clients prefer to purchase from their local independent veterinarian when price is not an issue. Your margin may be less than that 50 percent you are used to, but you will sell more products to more clients and still come away with a larger profit. ■

We need to realize that when a company decides to MAP price, it's great for the little guys. No matter what price the big box stores get it for, they cannot sell it below the MAP price.

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Industry NEWS

Bad summer for ticks predicted

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, milder winters, burgeoning mice and deer populations and a bumper acorn crop from two years ago mean this year's tick season is expected to be bad and more widespread, experts say. With that comes the threat of more tick-borne diseases, including the most common, Lyme disease. States like Connecticut – home to the town of Old Lyme where the disease was first diagnosed – are already reporting a higher number of ticks infected with the *Borrelia burgdorferi* bacterium, which causes Lyme disease, as well as other tick-borne pathogens. The deer or blacklegged tick can transmit up to seven pathogens that cause human diseases, including Lyme disease. The state collects ticks from residents, and of the more than 800 received thus far this year, nearly 38% have tested positive for Lyme disease, compared with an average of about 27% in the past five years for the full season, said Goudarz Molaei, a research scientist at the Center for Vector Biology and Zoonotic Diseases, part of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, a state-owned research facility.


Petplan lists states with highest unexpected veterinary costs

According to 2016 claims data released by Petplan pet insurance, pet parents in California spent the most on unexpected trips to the vet, with the policyholders paying upwards of \$1,500 annually for their pet. DC came in a close second, with Hawaii rounding out the top three. The top ten states and their average annual expenditures per insured pet are:

1. California, \$1,521.18; 2. District of Columbia, \$1,515.97; 3. Hawaii, \$1,480.41; 4. Louisiana, \$1,472.36; 5. New Mexico, \$1,459.52; 6. Colorado, \$1,434.46; 7. Maine, \$1,417.52; 8. Maryland, \$1,417.34; 9. Delaware, \$1,414.29; 10. Pennsylvania \$1,402.31. North Dakota and Arkansas tied for the state where pet parents spent the least on veterinary costs for their pets, at an average of \$769.56 and \$769.60 respectively.

NAVTA moves forward with veterinary nurse credential change

The National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA) Board of Directors announced the formation of the Veterinary Nurse Initiative Coalition to pursue legislative amendments in the 50 states to establish the credential of Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN), and to substitute the title of Registered Veterinary Technician (RVT), Licensed Veterinary Technician (LVT), Certified Veterinary Technician (CVT) or Licensed Veterinary Medical Technician (LVMT). NAVTA's board approved the action to unite the profession under a single title, credentialing requirements and scope of practice. The Coalition is currently defining the legislative strategy and is targeting 2018 for the initial legislation reform efforts to begin. "Through the standardization and public awareness of the Registered Veterinary Nurse credential, the entire profession will make significant strides towards better recognition, mobility and elevated practice standards," said Kara M. Burns, MS, MEd, LVT, VTS (Nutrition) and President-Elect of NAVTA. "All of this will lead to better patient care and consumer protection."



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¹ Poulet H, Minke J, Pardo MC. Development and registration of recombinant veterinary vaccines: The example of the canarypox vector platform. *Vaccine*. 2007;25:5606-5612.

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