

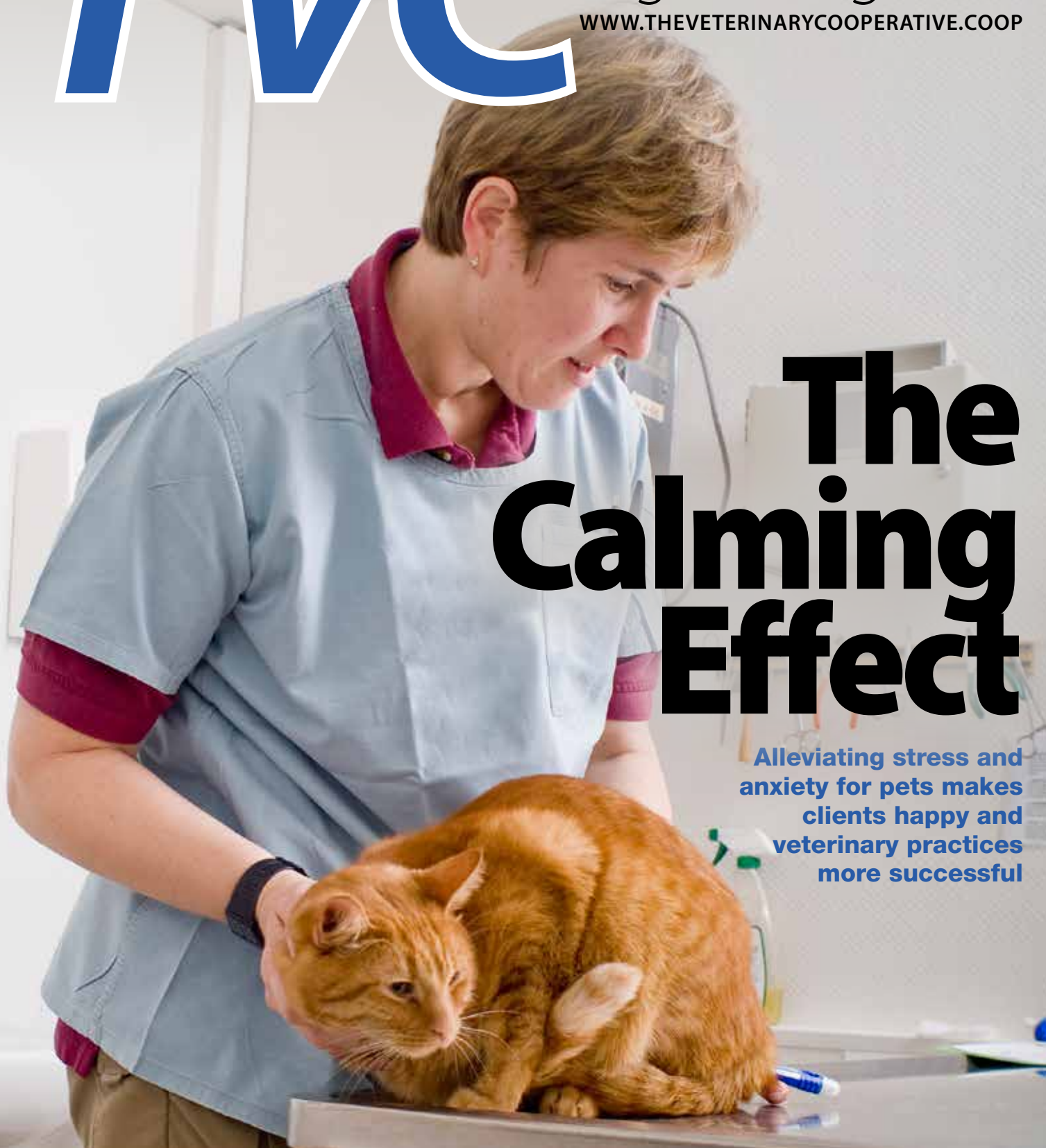
# TVC

Digital magazine

[WWW.THEVETERINARYCOOPERATIVE.COOP](http://WWW.THEVETERINARYCOOPERATIVE.COOP)

# The Calming Effect

**Alleviating stress and  
anxiety for pets makes  
clients happy and  
veterinary practices  
more successful**



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**To find out how using Feliway® and Adaptil® in your hospital can help reduce the signs of stress in pets, contact your Ceva sales representative.**

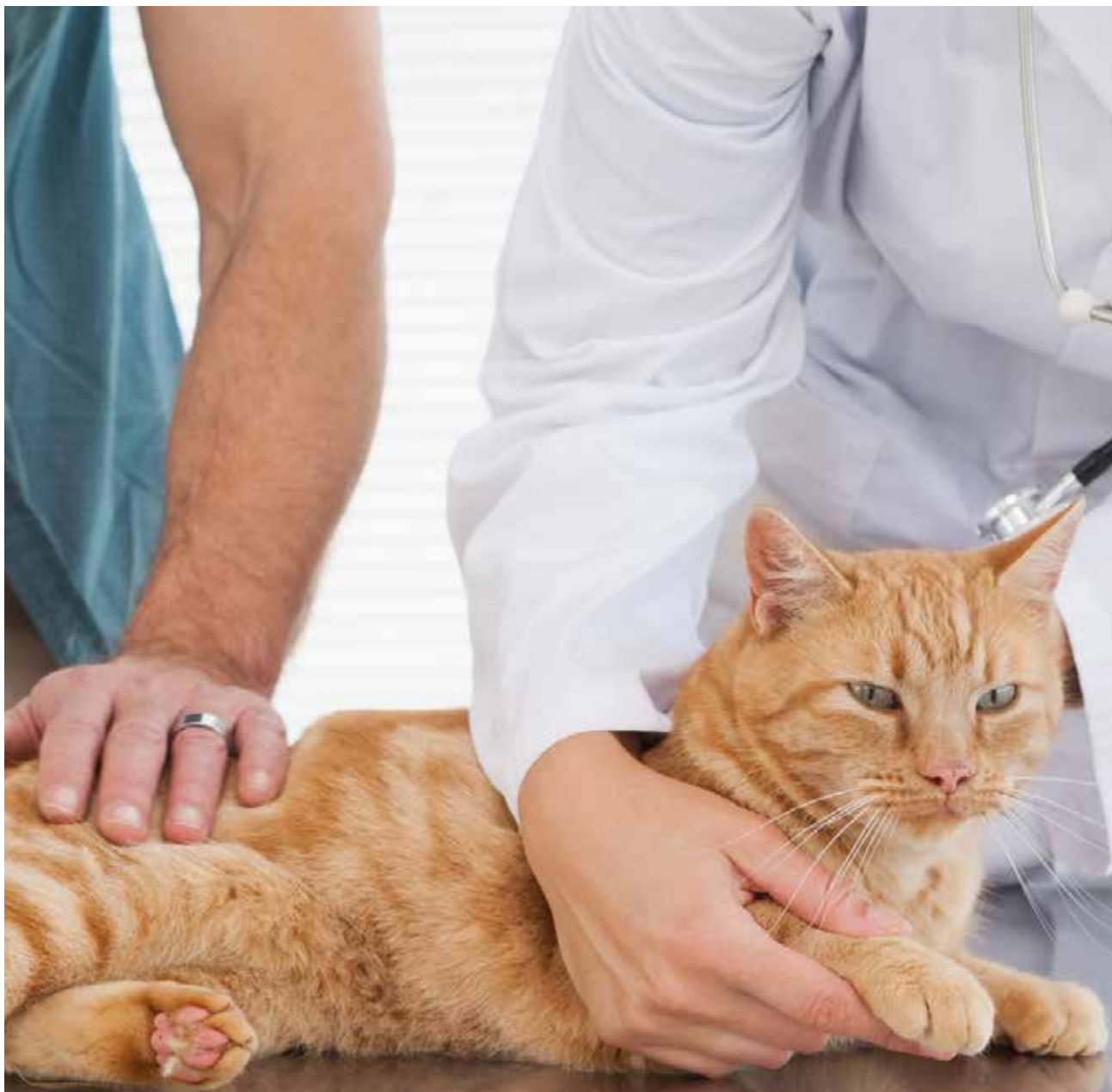
**To find out more about the Fear Free™ initiative, go to [FearFreePets.com](http://FearFreePets.com).**

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**We all need to swim together**

**pg4**

**TVC News**

**pg6**

**The Calming Effect**

Alleviating stress and anxiety for pets makes clients happy  
and veterinary practices more successful

**pg8**

**Growing Feline Revenue**

**pg14**

**Industry News**

**pg16**

# We all need to swim together

By Dr. Anna Coffin, Chairman of the Board, TVC

## The marketplace has changed dramatically

in recent years. Corporate veterinary practices are consuming many locally owned practices. These corporate clinics have better buying power and resources than individually owned practices. Another major change is the rapid growth of online pharmacies.

I joined TVC because I needed help competing with the corporate practices and online pharmacies. TVC has over 3,000 clinic locations, so we are able to negotiate deals with manufacturers and vendors just like the corporate practices do.

Supporting those vendor programs is vital to our success as a Cooperative, but also as individual practices.



programs, that vendor won't look at TVC as a place to help grow their business. They will disengage, and TVC Owners will lose the benefits, rebates, discounts, and support we've built up. Not only with that vendor but maybe with others as well.

As a TVC Owner, you're independent. You have choices. When making evaluations of products and services in my practice and whether to make a switch, I've found the following three categories helpful.

Why should you support the Cooperative? Here are a few reasons:

1. You own it. This is the most important component of being a member. You support the direction of the Co-op, and it is tied to the future of your own clinic. The Cooperative is there to give you all the benefits of a corporation, but also to allow you to be an independent practice. It's the best of both worlds. You maintain your independence but get the buying power and other resources of a corporation. But if you don't support the Cooperative, you're ultimately hurting your business.
2. You share in the profits. By supporting vendors that support TVC, you're supporting the financial bottom line of the Cooperative – which is tied back to you. Profits are delivered back to participating members. The emphasis is on participation. There is a point system in place for each vendor you use. Some are weighted more than others, but the [rebate program](#) is in place to reward you for utilizing the vendors.
3. Vendors are paying attention. Vendors see TVC like a corporation with 3,000 locations. If the majority of those locations aren't utilizing their products, services, rebates and

First, never switch to a vendor that is going to hurt your business. If you believe a vendor's product or service could be bad medicine for your clients, please check out the research available on TVC's website on that vendor. Our Product Committee has gone to great lengths to vet vendors, but we also want to hear from you. If you see a vendor as bad medicine or bad for business in the short and long-term, then don't engage.

On the other end of the spectrum, you should always make the change if it's good for business, financially, and for the patient.

The third category is the in-between. Maybe it will be difficult to make the change today. But will it have benefits to your business long-term? Will it benefit your clients? Will it benefit the Cooperative, which then comes back around to benefiting you?

Relationships are important in life, and in business, but at some point, you may have to decide between a relationship you may have with an individual at a certain company, and what you need to do for your business to thrive. It's a tough call we all must make at some point. But we cannot let emotions drive decisions.

Change is always difficult to make, but if you don't make changes, your business is at risk in today's competitive marketplace. ■





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## NEWS

### This Month at the Veterinary Cooperative

Join us at the VMX / NAVC  
TVC members enjoy a 10% discount

[More info here](#)

### Promotions



#### New Distribution Partner: [MWI Animal Health](#)

As we're sure you've heard by now, as of January 1, 2018, TVC's new distribution partner will be [MWI Animal Health](#). We're excited about our new partnership, and even though it represents change, we are confident it will be positive for all TVC Coop Owners. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to any of us here at TVC.

#### [BI](#) Immiticide Special TVC Offer Ends Soon

Immiticide is back, and [BI](#) is providing TVC Owners with a special offer through December 29th. All TVC Owners will receive an 18% discount on their first 2 boxes. The 2 boxes do not have to be purchased at the same time.

#### [Ceva's Q4 Promos](#) Ending Soon

[Ceva's Q4 promos](#) are ending soon. Be sure to check them out and have your clinic well-stocked for winter and the stressful holiday season.

#### The clock is ticking on the Elanco Client [Galliprant](#) Rebate

Elanco has been running a client rebate for [Galliprant](#), its drug to treat canine osteoarthritis, on all strengths and sizes. However, the rebate is scheduled to end 12/31/17, although clients have until 3/1/2018 to submit a postmarked rebate request.

#### [Wedgewood Pharmacy](#)

Remember to always check out [Wedgewood Pharmacy](#) for back-ordered medications

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# The Calming Effect

Alleviating stress and anxiety for pets makes clients happy and veterinary practices more successful

**Fear can cost a veterinary practice** in more ways than one. Fearful animals mean stress on the client. Fear can lead to difficult examinations – or worse – work injuries. And fear could ultimately lead to the client opting against future visits for preventive care.





One way to help alleviate the pets' anxiety is to use stress-reducing products, such as [Ceva's](#) Adaptil for dogs and Feliway for cats, as well as [Vetri-Science's](#) Composure for dogs. The Veterinary Cooperative reached out to several TVC Owners to get their thoughts on products that can help take the fear out of a visit and promote the wellbeing of the pet:

**Jamie Holter**, Practice Manager,  
Dodgeville Veterinary Service

**Doug Knueven**, DVM,  
Beaver Animal Clinic

**Anna Piper**, DVM, Angel Animal Hospital

**TVC: Why is it important to reduce fear and anxiety for pets?**

**Jamie Holter:** I feel being fear free is very important to the veterinary profession. Potentially less confrontations from pets, which means less Workers Comp Claims. We hardly hear barking or howling, and if we do we revisit the case and see what the next step is so the pet is less fearful next time. We still have the dogs that like to talk, but not much that growl or exhibit scared barking. We do spend a lot of money on bandanas, extra towels and pheromones, but it makes all of our jobs so much more enjoyable to see happier pets and less scared ones.

**Dr. Doug Knueven:** When animals are fearful, they are suffering. I think it is important to address that suffering. Fearful animals are also more likely to try to hurt someone at the office. I like to do all I can to keep my staff safe.

**Dr. Anna Piper:** If you look at veterinary medicine, especially now, the welfare and the happiness of the pet is extremely important. The days are long gone when a veterinarian walks in and pokes the animal and the pet owner won't care about what pain level or anxiety level the animal has. Owners expect to have a positive experience, and when their pets love coming in, then they love coming in. It's not fair to the animals to ignore sources of stress.

**TVC: Where do you use Adaptil/Composure/Feliway in your hospital?**

**Holter:** The reception area, exam rooms, treatment, kennels, and grooming.

**Owners of fractious cats actually see the product being used. Other than that, I explain the idea of calming pheromones (most people are familiar with pheromones these days). I have not found it to be difficult to sell.**

**Dr. Knueven:** We have Adaptil and Feliway plug-ins in our waiting room to help get the whole exam process off on the right foot. To be honest, we've been doing it for 4-5 months and it is difficult to tell if it is making a difference. I do know it is doing no harm. We also spray Feliway on any towel we might use to help restrain a fractious cat. I have one tech who is even more proactive and uses the Feliway spray on a towel before the doctor comes into the room if the cat is especially nervous.

**Dr. Piper:** With Adaptil, we have the diffusers, sprays and bandanas, although we don't leave the bandanas

on the pets in the hospital, we send those home with the owners. We do have a lot of different sizes of the sprays depending on what the owner wants to use it on. They may want to use it on blankets, in the car or in the crate. If we have the pet in exam rooms, we put Adaptil on the blankets or the pads we are using.

The same thing would go with the Feliway products. We like to use the wipes. If we can send home the wipes for the owners to use in the crates before their next visit, that's even better.

**TVC: What is it that you like the most about using the products and what benefits have you seen from doing so?**

**Holter:** Dogs and cats are so much calmer. Some of the pets we had a hard time examining in the past don't seem to be an issue now.

**Dr. Knueven:** The thing that I like most is that these are natural products so are much less likely to cause any side effects. I think spraying the towels for nervous cats definitely calms them down a little.



**Dr. Piper:** The products don't work by themselves – they must be used in conjunction with everything else that you do. Making sure that you don't have a barking dog in front of a cat that's in a carrier on the ground in a waiting room; trying to help direct clients on how to get their pets into the hospital and exam room without stress; that all goes together. The majority of pets that we use these products with have benefited.

If we can get the owners on board with their use during visits, the pets will start to understand it's not such a bad place when they come in; then that repeated smell means "Ok this isn't going to be so bad a deal." These products aren't going to make the cat that wants to claw your eyeballs out an easy cat, but it does help most of those pets who are nervous. It helps to take that edge off, and as they learn through every visit that things won't be so bad, each visit builds on itself.

**TVC:** For what behaviors exhibited by the animal would you recommend any of these products?

**Holter:** We would recommend to all pets that shiver, ears down, cowering, tail tucked, just to name a few. We even recommend coming in to get pheromone to use for the ride in or to acclimate the cat to the cat carrier before their appointment.

**Dr. Knueven:** I recommend them for all anxiety related issues – separation anxiety in dogs as well as feline house-soiling and inter-cat aggression.

**Dr. Piper:** For the purpose of getting pets who may have anxiety into the clinic, we would absolutely recommend being proactive, not necessarily waiting for a

bad activity to use. For instance, using the Feliway spray or wipe in the crate before the trip. Anything that signals that they are going to bring in their pet into the hospital, we want to be putting down the Adaptil or the Feliway prior to that event. If it's not bringing them in to the hospital, then any sort of stressors – if you are trying to introduce a new pet, if you have grandchildren coming over – you need to be proactive.

**TVC:** How do you inform your clients about these products?

**Holter:** We have a poster by our scale and all the products are displayed by it. This makes conversation very easy. Our front staff put a bandana sprayed with Adaptil and towels on cats sprayed with Feliway to cover the cat carrier and place on the exam table, and they explain that the bandana/towel has been sprayed with a



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calming pheromone Adaptil/Feliway. If clients aren't interested in it, we tell them it can't hurt, and if it is a dog they say something about how cute the dog would look with the bandana.

**Dr. Knueven:** Owners of fractious cats actually see the product being used. Other than that, I explain the idea of calming pheromones (most people are familiar with pheromones these days). I have not found it to be difficult to sell. Most clients these days are looking for natural solutions to these problems.

**Dr. Piper:** We have printed materials. We talk about behavior during their visit. We ask about lifestyle, and if there are any problems that they want

If clients are used to buying stuff online, they're going to be able to get it, so our pricing must be competitive. The counseling is where we excel as far as being able to move that product off the shelves.

to address. Depending on what those answers are, we will have other guidelines that we can put in their hands for them to read. Using those products, showing them pictures, offering Feliway or Adaptil brochures, maybe even having some specific examples either in the hospital or in our personal lives, are all good talking points.

**TVC:** Do you have the option to sell the products yourself, or redirect clients elsewhere?

**Holter:** We sell all the products and even brought in the new Feliscratch and have sold some. Looking for feedback from the clients.

**Dr. Knueven:** We sell them at our office – why send people elsewhere?

**Dr. Piper:** We sell these products in our practice. I think it's important as we have it in the hospital to talk to clients about it, have the product there, available, for convenience sake so they can purchase it right there. If clients are used to buying stuff online, they're going to be able to get it, so our pricing must be competitive. The counseling is where we excel as far as being able to move that product off the shelves.

**TVC:** What is the general response from returning clients?

**Holter:** They all comment on how the visit isn't as stressful for the pet or the client. Many have been purchasing the spray to use as needed at home.

**Dr. Knueven:** Many clients are happy that something natural can solve their problems. ■

## Meet the Products

The following products from TVC Vendors can help calm your patients, both at home and while visiting your practice.

**Ceva's** Adaptil is a synthetic pheromone that mimics the pheromone mother dogs emit after giving birth to help their puppies feel calm and secure. Dogs of all ages recognize this pheromone throughout their lives. The Adaptil range of products offer help in many situations, both indoors and outdoors, and for short-term and long-term use.

**Ceva's** Feliway products (including sprays, diffusers and wipes) for cats mimic the natural feline facial pheromone used by cats to mark their territory as safe and secure. This helps cats cope with a challenging situation such as moving or traveling. FELIWAY® helps reduce or prevent unwanted behaviors caused by stress.

**Vetri-Science's** Composure™ chews for dogs are a calming supplement designed to support relaxation when your dog is experiencing stress or exhibiting nervousness.



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# Growing Feline Revenue

By Wendy S. Myers, CVJ

**Cats are underserved patients in most veterinary hospitals.** So how can your veterinary practice reach out to cat owners who haven't visited within the last year? One strategy is to target overdue patients with calls, texts and emails.

Run a report to identify feline patients that haven't visited in the last 12 months. For the greatest success in booking exams, start with calls to clients whose cats are 30 to 90 days overdue for preventive care. Receptionists should guide clients to book exams, saying, "This is <your name> calling for the doctors at <Your Veterinary Hospital>. <Cat name> is now overdue for his preventive exam, vaccines, diagnostic testing and preventatives. We are worried about his health. When can we get <cat name> up to date? The doctor could see <cat name> at 6 p.m. Thursday or 9 a.m. Saturday. Which do you prefer?"

The phrase "calling for the doctors" communicates the veterinarians are aware of the cat's overdue status and are genuinely concerned. The warning of "may now be unprotected" is a call to action. Offer the next two exam times, which is known as the "two-yes-options" technique. This phrase is stronger than "Do you want to make an appointment?" which is a yes-or-no choice.

If the receptionist gets the client's voice-mail, leave this message: "This is <your name> calling for the doctors at <Your Veterinary Hospital>. We are worried that <cat name> is past due for his checkup and is now unprotected. Please call us this week at 555-555-5555 to schedule his exam. Get information about our preventive care plans



Run a report to identify feline patients that haven't visited in the last 12 months. For the greatest success in booking exams, start with calls to clients whose cats are 30 to 90 days overdue for preventive care

with monthly payments at <website> and book online."

Use a combination of texts and emails to clients whose cats are between 90 days and 12 months overdue. The text would state: <Cat name> is past due for a checkup. We want to keep your kitty healthy. Schedule online at <link> or call <phone>. The same week, send an email blast. The email would remind the client her cat is overdue, explain the risk, share local rabies statistics, and urge the client to schedule an exam this week.

Here's a sample email: Dr. <Name> checked <cat name>'s medical record and found he is overdue for his preventive exam, vaccines, diagnostic testing and preventatives. Even indoor cats can be exposed to parasites from soil in houseplants, flies, cockroaches and mice.<sup>2</sup> Cats are masters at hiding illnesses. We can get <cat name> up-to-date in just one visit. Virginia state law requires rabies vaccination in cats. This year, 153 animals have tested positive for rabies in Virginia, including 11 cats.<sup>3</sup> Because rabies can be passed from pets to people, our doctors urge rabies vaccination for all pets. Let's get <cat name> up-to-date this week. Call us at 555-555-5555 or click here to request an appointment through our website. ■

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# Industry NEWS

## Consumer spending projected to be up this holiday season

*Pet Product News* reported that consumers surveyed say they will spend an average \$967.13 this holiday season, according to the annual survey conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytics for the National Retail Federation. That's up 3.4 percent from the \$935.58 consumers said they would spend when surveyed at the same time last year. The consumer survey comes on top of NRF's annual holiday spending forecast, which takes into account a variety of economic factors, and projects that holiday retail sales in November and December this year will be up between 3.6 percent and 4 percent for a total between \$678.8 billion and \$682 billion. According to the 2017-2018 American Pet Products Association (APPA) *National Pet Owners Survey*, half of dog owners and 39 percent of cat owners buy gifts for their pets for Christmas or Hanukkah. The APPA survey also reveals that dog owners spend an average of \$14 on any gift for their canines while cat owners spend an average of \$12.

## Ceva Animal Health introduces FELISCRATCH by FELIWAY™

Veterinarians have a new solution to help cats scratch in places which won't drive their owner crazy – preventing the request for declaw procedures, improving feline welfare and cutting down on cat relinquishments, according to a [Ceva Animal Health](#) release. The new, one-of-a-kind product, FELISCRATCH by FELIWAY™, is clinically proven to stop and prevent both vertical and horizontal destructive scratching in the home. It does this by redirecting the cat to scratch his or her scratching post – not the couches and curtains. In clinical studies, FELISCRATCH® attracted more than

80 percent of cats to use their scratching posts within the first week of use. More than 90 percent of cats never started destructive scratching when adopted into a new home using FELISCRATCH®.

## NAVC's Veterinary Innovation Council (VIC) introduces 7 Guiding Telehealth Principles

The NAVC's Veterinary Innovation Council (VIC) introduced 7 Guiding Telehealth Principles, providing a practical approach for legislation to advance the profession through telehealth, and encouraging veterinary professionals to welcome telehealth to their practices, according to a release. "Telehealth is the way of the future, and the Veterinary Innovation Council and NAVC are proud to aid in proactive legislation to integrate telehealth into all veterinary practices" said Tom Bohn, CAE, Chief Executive Officer of the NAVC. The 7 Guiding Telehealth Principles are outlined below:

- Telehealth tools will be an integral part of the future of veterinary medicine.
- Telehealth will aid in veterinary healthcare business growth.
- Expanding telemedicine use should be encouraged.
- Telemedicine in human healthcare has paved the way.
- The Veterinary-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR) is fundamental and clients' expectations are changing.
- Veterinarians are capable of exercising their professional medical judgement in telehealth.
- State Boards should continue to regulate veterinary licenses within their jurisdictions.

For the complete list of principles and for more information, visit [NAVC.com/VIC](http://NAVC.com/VIC).