

Weave a sticky Web (site that is)

Feb 1, 2009

FIRSTLINE

Q How do we drive clients to our Web site?



Linda Wasche

Clients need to know you have a Web site before they'll visit it. So include your Web address wherever possible. Linda Wasche, president of LW Marketworks in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., suggests adding it to your banners, mailers, invoices, and appointment reminders. She also recommends setting up a computer in your lobby that's logged on to your Web site so clients can surf while they wait.

Encourage clients to access the computer by posting signs throughout the lobby that advertise practice contests and promotions, such as pet photo contests or giveaway items. Of course, entry will require online registration via your Web site, and you'll clearly print your Web address on any freebies such as T-shirts for pets or tote bags. That way, when your clients wear or display these items in public, other pet owners will take note. Another option: Offer coupons for discounted services—available only at your Web site. You could even provide clients incentives for booking appointments online, Wasche says.

Once you get your clients to the Web site, it's time to reach out to the community, she says. The first and easiest step—which you've done before inviting clients to your site—is to include information that people would want to pass along, such as quotes, poems, and stories. This is called viral marketing. And don't be afraid to link to other Web sites that offer credible pet health content, Wasche says. Once people realize your site is a reliable gateway to valuable information, they'll visit more often. To spread the news even further and faster, send press releases to local media outlets telling them about your timely and newsworthy Web site content.