



another excellent way to strengthen relationships with existing clients. Dental care, parasite control, diet and how to care for elderly pets are just a few of the many subjects that your practice could cover. Depending on the topic, you may also be able to get funding or 'giveaways' for the event from other animal organisations, such as pharmaceutical and pet food companies.

Educational events are also the perfect way to introduce your practice to new clients because they open up opportunities for media coverage. Promote the event by sending out a press release to the editors of local newspapers – making sure to keep it interesting and positive. In the press release, explain how your practice

contributes to pet health care in the local community and the benefits of registering with your practice.

Organise an open day

Open days give people an exciting chance to explore your surgery, speak to your team and ask lots of questions. They also give your practice the opportunity to raise funds for your chosen charity or put back into the local area. When planning for your event, set a date that doesn't clash with any local, national or sporting events – weekends and evenings are a good time for many people.

Your open day should include a range of enticing activities that will keep your visitors entertained. Try to include aspects geared towards children using a

'fun for the whole family' theme and invite as many charities or stall holders as you can to keep the event looking busy. Ideas might include a children's round-the-bases quiz, equipment demonstrations and first aid for pets workshops.

On the day itself, keep yourself free to speak to clients as they arrive and be on hand to sort out any problems that might emerge. Most importantly, don't forget to smile! This is a fantastic opportunity to sell your practice and get to know the people that live in your local area.

A lasting effect

Giving back to the community through volunteering, sponsorship, charity or other means can be incredibly rewarding. It supports the organisations and individuals that already do so much for the local area and gives your team the opportunity to share its expertise.

Why not research upcoming events and organisations in your area and plan your own unique way of giving something back? In return, this will have a positive effect on team morale and a lasting impact on animal welfare. ■

"Sponsorship doesn't have to be financial – it could be a case of simply 'lending a hand' or donating prizes for raffles and auctions."



References

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