

# Engage More Clients, Retain More Clients

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Veterinary practices continue to face growing challenges in the world of retail and client retention. Retail makes up 25 to 30 percent of total gross income for most practices. But long gone are the days of reasonable margins on prescriptions: flea, tick and heartworm medications, to name a few.

The fact is that today more than ever clients can easily resort to Dr. Google for their "expert" advice and recommendations, and often they are purchasing their pet's medications from online retailers and big box stores.

Budget constraints and the inability to buy in bulk often limit the veterinary practices of today from demanding the same pricing as competitors. That's why they need a strategy to combat the competition and retain as many clients and revenue as possible.

But what do veterinarians need to do to maintain their sales, productivity and keep clients engaged? *Veterinarians must create value.*

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Clients want to feel the money they spend is worth the expense. Clients also want to *feel* valued and have a sense of belonging, while buying not simply a product, but an experience—a positive, memorable experience to share with their friends and family. Clients are willing to pay a little more for such an experience but at the same time they must feel valued.

The value comes from the service, culture and education they receive when they walk through your door. Most hospitals have a healthy client base ... on paper. At the same time, most clients are not seen frequently enough to have formed a bond with your practice. However, when a bond is formed with you and your practice, they will turn to you for their pet's needs, and not a faceless online provider.

But how does a practice create value? *By engaging the client.*

Client engagement starts as soon as he or she walks through the door—a smile, greeting, an acknowledgment of the client's presence even though your staff may be otherwise occupied. Every staff member is responsible for enriching the experience the client receives. Just as with every long-lasting relationship in life, this relationship must be nurtured. It is important your clients feel they are welcomed and not an inconvenience—that their pet's well-being is of primary importance, and that each time they come back, they're remembered—their name, their pet's name etc. In return, you will be fostering a loyal customer and forging a hospital ambassador. An engaged client will continue to trust your expert advice and be more inclined to purchase all pet needs from you.

Client engagement creates loyalty. Equal components to client loyalty are communication, education and reward. The longer your client goes without visiting your practice, the more likely it is that he or she will go elsewhere for

pet needs. Don't simply wait for an emergency visit or an annual check-up to ensure your clients receive updates on the latest preventatives, the most effective treatments or the most practical approaches to pet care. Ensure your clients always have a multiple touch-base with your clinic/hospital throughout the year. Establishing your clinic's name is always top of mind—that way you're ensuring repeat visits for their variable needs. Rewarding them for their repeat business will cement the value you've delivered.

An engagement program with multi-touch messaging and a strategy to drive client loyalty is key to a hospital's success. What if this could all be implemented and managed with minimal effort? What if there was a program out there that provides such effective results? What could that do for your hospital? The possibilities are endless once you've created a loyal client base. Repeat visits and increased revenue are just the tip of the iceberg when incorporating the right elements.

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Building strong relationships with your clients ensures that they will always think of you first for their veterinary needs. MyVetPerks gives you a tool and resources to help build those relationships. It offers much more than the average loyalty program and is specifically designed for the veterinary industry. Our client engagement program is simple to use, completely customizable and there are no costs or contracts to the veterinary hospital. Our number one priority is to increase revenue, compliance and repeat visits. See [myvetperks.com](http://myvetperks.com) to learn more.

MyVetPerks is an MWI Animal Health Distinct Advantage™ program partner. To discuss how your practice can qualify for a free Distinct Advantage program membership, contact your MWI Territory Manager.

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