

Take Your Dog to Work Day® Friday, June 26, 2009

People and Pets: Possible Show and Segment Ideas

1.

"Secondhand dogs" offer first rate love—and families across the country are benefitting. Interview pet owners or families whose lives have been touched or changed completely by an adopted pet.

As people look for ways to do more with less, adopting a dog is one of the basic, most affordable ways to bring joy to a family—and the return on investment is often immeasurable.

Segment ideas include:

- Families that have seen their bond and "family time" increase because of the adoption of a new pet
- Adopted dogs that performed acts of heroism or unusual feats
- Adopted dogs that are giving back to the community as therapy dogs or working in the military or in law enforcement

2.

Dogs make us healthier and happier...and we need them now more than ever! Feature individuals who have seen improved health after the adoption of a new pet—whether through weight loss, decreased stress or cancer or recovery from a major surgery. Highlight the benefits of pet ownership on the health of children, adults and seniors.

Research shows that having a dog leads to lower blood pressure and cholesterol, diminished levels of depression and an increased sense of well-being—and dogs can even help us lose weight!

Consider this:

- A new study, published in Cancer Epidemiology Biomarkers and Prevention, found that keeping animals can cut the risk of developing the relatively common cancer of the immune system, non-Hodgkins lymphoma, by almost one third (2008).
- A study by Dr. June McNicholas found that children brought up with pets had more stable immune systems. Other studies suggest that children born into a household that already has a dog or a cat are less likely to develop asthma (2002).
- Dog owners walk an average of 300 minutes a week versus 160 minutes a week for those without a dog. Dog walkers lost an average of 14 pounds during a one-year study, (University of Missouri, 2006).



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3. Even with the economy going to the dogs, companies can offer pet perks to boost employee satisfaction. Visit businesses that have successfully implemented dog-friendly policies or offer other pet benefits, such as pet insurance or reimbursement of pet-care costs.

Explore how large companies, such as Google, or Replacements, Ltd., a facility that houses more than thirteen million pieces of fine china, have "gone to the dogs" and developed policies and practices that work for their businesses.

Dogs in the office... a growing trend:

Employee Benefit News explains that low-cost, high-value benefits can help with employee retention in a difficult economic climate and that a pet-friendly event, such as *Take Your Dog To Work Day*, is an ingenious but low-to-no-cost perk that can improve moral, loyalty and productivity (September 2008).

A 2009 *USA Today* article describes that pet-friendly policies allowing dogs at work are popping up all around the country, with minimal downsides.

A recent survey by the American Pet Products Association found that 20% of companies now have pet-friendly policies.

Visit a local shelter, humane society or rescue group to explore the impact that the economy has had on the facility and the number of pets surrendered or abandoned.

4. The recession has taken a toll on our four-legged citizens as well—and adoptable pets need our help. Learn how shelter workers have had to alter their practices or increase euthanasia rates to deal with the increased influx of pets.

Across the country, shelters are being impacted and adoptable pets are waiting:

- Petfinder.com currently lists more than 270,000 adoptable pets from 12,468 adoption groups.
- In New Haven, CT, where foreclosure went up 80 percent in 2008, local animal shelters report an average of one call per day from someone looking to surrender a pet.
- The Animal Protection League saw a 500 percent jump in the number of abandoned animals found from last year.
- According to the ASPCA, five out of ten dogs in shelters are destroyed simply because there is no one to adopt them.

"Secondhand Dogs" offer first-rate Love

Try your local animal shelter!

