



innovative
PETCARE

Social Media & Blogging Guide

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First, a thank you...

By opening this guide, you've reconfirmed something that everyone in the Innovetive Petcare Marketing Department knows: **You're committed.**

Innovetive Petcare is a different kind of veterinary company because of you, its hardworking people. You give your all, every single day, to improving the lives of pets in your communities. Your job isn't easy, and you do it with a smile.

By being an Innovetive Petcare family member, you're among the best in your field. This guide is meant to empower you to share your clinic's story. We encourage you to show your communities just how exceptional you are by using social media.

Thank you for your work, and thank you for opening this guide. You're appreciated more than words can describe.

The Innovative Petcare Difference

Why Innovative?

Before we get to the details of how to post on social media, let’s talk about why we post on social media.

Social media is an opportunity for us to share Innovative Petcare’s story. It allows us to communicate our values. It gives us the chance to share the incredible things that happen in our clinics on a daily– if not hourly–basis.

As an Innovative Petcare employee, you know that Innovative Petcare is unlike other veterinary companies. Through social media, we can communicate this to our current and potential clients.

What sets us apart



We’re inquisitive

Entrepreneurial to our core, we always want to do and be better.



We’re all about quality

Quality medicine, quality service, quality staff, and a quality experience for all



We’re passionate

Pet owners can feel our love for animal care every moment they’re in our clinics



Our culture matters

To us, culture isn’t just a buzzword. It’s the driving force behind our business.





Our Values

We believe in the potential of our practices.

We recognize the importance of people.

We focus on opportunities for development and growth (like this guide!)

We prioritize capabilities, ideas, and best practices.

We're approachable.

We're honest.

We truly care.

Why Social Media?

You're probably thinking, "Why should I post on social media? I'm not a marketer!"

Well, exactly. We want you to post on social media specifically because you're not a marketer. This ensures that your posts will **authentically capture day-to-day life at your clinic!**

In today's digital age, clients rely on social media to make choices. Proximity isn't enough for someone to give you their business. People make decisions about where to take their business based on Yelp, Google, and what they see on social media. That's where you come in.

The benefits of social media for your clinic are countless, but some highlights include:

- It helps you stay in touch with pet owners outside of clinic hours
- You can share the incredible things you do daily to better your community
- It's an easy way for potential clients to get in touch

What Will I Learn in This Guide?

If you read this guide cover to cover and implement the recommendations with your team, you will know how to:

1. Take amazing photos, schedule and post in an optimal way
2. Understand what content you should (and shouldn't) be sharing
3. Distribute responsibilities among a designated social media team
4. Increase your clinic's digital footprint by reaching more people!

The What's What of Social Media

While our guide will only be focusing on a select few recommended platforms, it's important to understand that the social media landscape is wide, and there are countless opportunities for your brand to reach potential clients. Here's an overview of a handful!

Facebook

The world's largest social networking website, where individuals and companies share short-form text and video posts.

Instagram

A visually driven app owned by Facebook, Instagram allows users to privately or publicly share photos, short-form videos, long-form videos, and graphics.

LinkedIn

A social network with a professional angle. LinkedIn is owned by Microsoft and facilitates work connections, education, and job hunting.

TikTok

A social network meant for creating, publishing, and sharing short videos. (Formerly known as musical.ly)

YouTube

A video-sharing service and search engine that's owned by Google.

Twitter

A microblogging system where users distribute short-form text, photos, and link in a format called a tweet.

Pinterest

A virtual scrapbook that allows you to share photos and links while ramping up your SEO value on Google.

Measuring Success

We know: Measuring success on social media is hard. It's not the same as measuring client retention rate or the volume of prescription dog food sold at your clinic.

We encourage you to think of social media as a relationship-building tool that allows you to meaningfully connect with people in your community. But, if we had to chalk up success on social media to a few key metrics, we'd recommend looking at the following:

Likes

The number of people who have given your post a “thumbs up”

Shares

The number of times a client has distributed your post on to their own page through a share button

Engagement

The total amount of people who interact with your content (likes, shares, and comments)

Comments

The number of written responses in reply to your posts

Impressions

The amount of “eyes” that see your post on your page and in their feed

Engagement rate

The total engagements divided by the total impressions. (This ends up being a percentage!)

Think About Your Audience

Rule of thumb: Always think about your audience when posting on social media.

When you're marketing on behalf of your clinic, it can be easy to post what you find entertaining. Your audience will have different needs than you, and the content you post on social media must address specific values of your clients.

After a lot of consideration, the Innovative Marketing Team has identified the following points for your audience:

1. Clients want to feel welcomed.

Trusting a new business with your pet's health (and life!) can be overwhelming. It's important that your content makes your client feel warm and fuzzy.

2. Clients want to know you're capable.

Show that your clinic knows what you're doing! It will put the customer at ease knowing that you're professional and good at your job.

3. Clients want to feel like they're part of a community.

This means that your client wants to be acknowledged and seen outside of their pet's appointment. They welcome check-ins and acknowledgement on social media.

4. It's not always about clients! What about recruiting candidates?

What if potential candidates, veterinarians and job seekers are checking out your page? What does your social feed say about your team building? Professional development? Local area?

Your Innovative Petcare Support Team

Just like all things in life, success on social media is most easily achieved by working as a team. It's a big job for everyone! Your Innovative Marketing Team is here to help your clinic shine online. In order for us to best help you, consider exercising the following skills in your practice:

Creativity

For us to do the best posts possible for you, we love creativity! Here are some ways you can exercise your creative muscles:

- Take photos of patients during special moments
- Interview fellow staff members about a topic they love
- Capture videos of day-to-day life around the practice
- Share photos of thank you cards and nice messages from clients
- Show the human/animal bond in your practice
- Promote any new doctors, staff members, or services
- Educate clients on puppy breeds

Research

You're the best in your field, and we're here to help you augment that voice! Here's how you can research to rock on social media:

- Share any interesting articles about the veterinary profession
- Send us links to media appearances by veterinarians
- Highlight any interesting studies and/or treatments conducted in your clinic
- Keep us up to date with equipment worth mentioning to your potential clients

For transparency, here are some of the skills we'll be utilizing in the Innovative Petcare Marketing Team:

Organization

When it comes to social media, we keep the trains running! We'll be helping your practice:

- Create & recommend photos using WorkPlace to share (we help design, you have choices, and we work together on a schedule)
- Set a posting schedule for tomorrow, next week, and next month
- Optimize all the assets
- Decide what's posting when
- Check in on content once posted to make sure everything's going smoothly

Editing

We'll help your practice put its best foot forward by:

- Editing draft ideas for grammatical perfection
- Review all content before it publishes to your social media channels
- Double-checking for typos again after publishing (It happens!)

Your team's "pre-production" workflow

This workflow will happen *before* your content goes live. Here are some tasks to help make "pre-production" easier for your team. When you're done, the Innovative team will handle the rest for you!

- Find any articles or blog posts to potentially share with Marketing Team
- Capture any photos of pets visiting the clinic
- Ask one of your veterinarians a question that you think your audience wants to know the answer to. Film or write down the response.
- Hear a team member say something profound? Write it down and share with the team!
- Get a great compliment from a client? Share!

Social Media Tools Worth Knowing

We recognize that your job responsibilities extend far beyond social media. To make your social media process as efficient as possible, you may want to familiarize yourself with the following tools:

Hootsuite

This is the platform Innovetive's Marketing Team uses to schedule your posts for Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Pinterest. We use this tool to make your life easier for your practice - and we can empower you to have a full access pass!

Preview

If you're a visual person, you might want to get Preview to plan out your Instagram feed. You can see how the feed will look with your posts before they even publish!

Dropbox

We save all of your files, images and videos here. Each clinic has their own folder.

Workplace

A workplace collaboration tool where it's easy for us (and you) to share articles and ideas between the Innovetive teams. We pull newsletter stories from Workplace!

Canva Pro

A simplified Photoshop that helps you create *amazing* templates for your Instagram Stories, Pinterest pins, and social media artwork. Try it!

Grammarly

A grammar editing machine that helps you pinpoint your tone of voice and sentence structure!

Temi

A transcription tool that costs \$0.10 per minute and is worth every penny. Instead of sitting down to write, you can record yourself “speaking” potential posts, then edit the transcription within minutes.

PicMonkey

Basic photo editing that’s much easier than Photoshop!

Unsplash

Professional photography that doesn’t require permission to use. If you ever need a stock photo, this is your place! Marketing also uses Shutterstock and can help find that perfect pic.

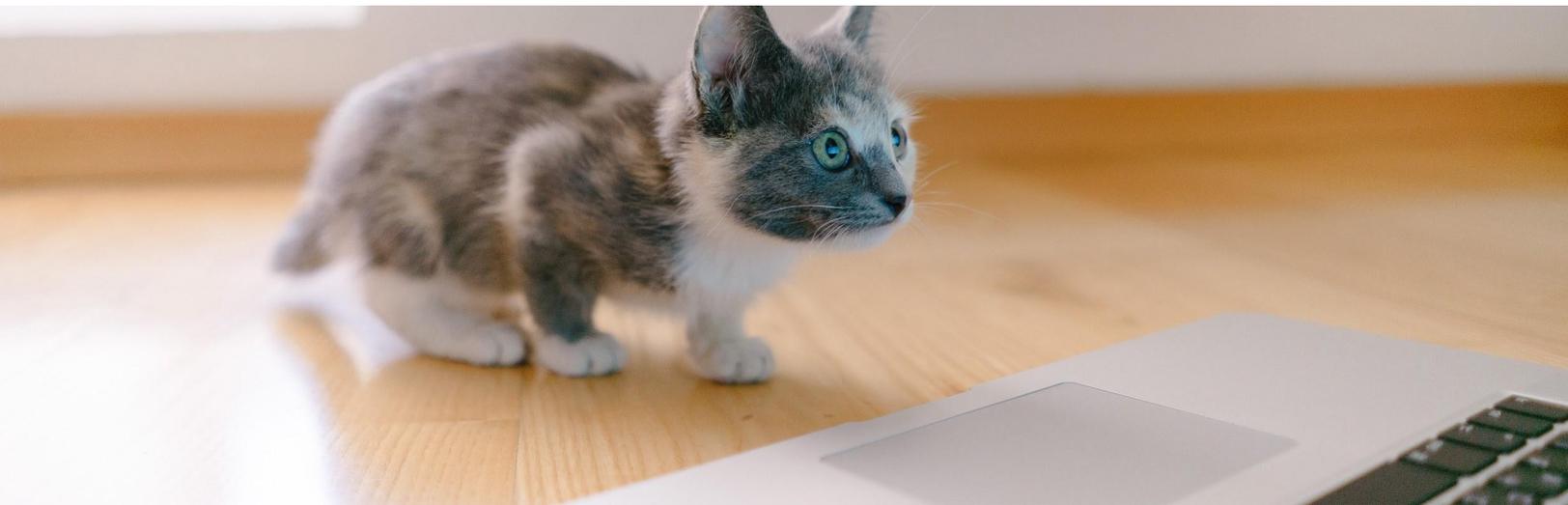
Recommended Resources

Social media is always changing, and while we'll try to update this guide as often as possible, sometimes it's easier to get new updates straight from the source.

Below are some recommended publications that write solely about social media. If you're interested, subscribe to these newsletters so you're always in the loop!

- Social Media Examiner
- Social Media Today
- Later.com/blog
- Social Media Explorer
- Web Ink Now
- The Future Buzz (note: for advanced social users 😊)
- SocialMedia.biz

And remember: Your Innovative Marketing Team is always here to help!



Communicating on Social Media

Every clinic is different, which is why we encourage you to write posts in a way that sounds true to your clinics! While there's no "wrong" way to write for social media, we recommend following these general guidelines:

1. Do always run spell and grammar check.

Make sure to avoid spelling and grammatical errors when possible. Casual language is okay, but errors are not.

Don't... Assume you'll catch typos on your own. Ask a coworker to review if you don't have time for spell check!

2. Do be positive!

Remember: You're creating an online community. Always refrain from negativity.

Don't... Be sarcastic or edgy with your voice. Positivity is preferred.

3. Do encourage engagement with every post.

In every single post, ask your user to take one action: comment, like, share, or click.

Don't... Post with a single sentence or photo. Use every opportunity for engagement!

4. Do promote your community.

If you want to promote local activities or highlight something exciting about your community, go for it! Not all of your content has to be related to pets.

Don't... Only post about what's going on in your practice. Poll your team for their favorite pizza place, mention your favorite hiking trails, and tag whenever possible.

5. Do use credible sources.

If you're sharing an article, make sure the article comes from a credible source.

Don't... Share opinion pieces or links from crowd-sourced sites like Wikipedia or Reddit.

6. Do be brief.

Your clients are busy people! Try to write with brevity for every post.

Don't... Write hard-to-read paragraphs. Write your initial post, then edit with the goal of chopping in half!

7. Medical credibility

Should you be wearing a face mask? Gloves? Check your background to avoid seeing someone's lunch in the photo. Always know clients will notice anything that does not fully display your gold standard of medicine. A picture says a thousand words.

Master Your Photography

With iPhones today, it's easier to take a photo than ever before! Use the following tips to get a high quality photo:

1. Always focus your phone camera.

Before you snap a pic, tap directly on the screen of your phone to focus on your "subject." This ensures that your camera focuses on the pet or person, not background decor.

2. Get natural light when possible.

We recognize that clinic lighting can be harsh. When possible, try to take a photo where there's natural light. It softens the picture and reduces shadows.

3. For wiggly pets, choose video!

Pets can move really fast! If you've got a particularly rambunctious pet and can't focus your camera, switch to video to convey the energy!

4. Capture moments, not poses.

It's much more interesting to see a doctor in action than smiling politely for the camera. Pretend you're paparazzi when capturing images! Refer to the IPC Photo Guide on www.innovetivepetcare.com/resources page for tips!

5. You can always crop!

It's much better to have lots of space around your image. You can always crop later.

Got a client who doesn't like to be photographed? Check out **Skitch** for tools on pixelating a face in a cool way.

Sizing Your Social Media Photo*

Once you start posting regularly on social media, it's important to get the size of the photo optimized* for the platform.

Use a free tool like PicMonkey to crop your photos to the following sizes:

Facebook

Sharing images: 1,200 x 628 pixels

Sharing links with an image: 1,200 x 628 pixels

Instagram

Sharing square images: 1,080 x 1,080 pixels

Sharing horizontal images: 1,080 x 566 pixels

Sharing vertical images: 1,080 x 1,350 pixels

If you don't have time to edit, just remember: Squares are always cool.

*Based on 2020/2021 requirements. These specs are subject to change.

Posting on Facebook and LinkedIn

Your goal on Facebook and LinkedIn: Create an engaged community. Think of your page as a forum for conversation with pet owners (FB) and like minded-professionals (LI). You can create this conversation through the following post types:

Image(s) or Video post

It is as easy as it sounds: post an image(s) or video! For this type of post, it's best to craft a caption to go alongside your photo/video.

Celebrate an Occasion

Welcome to the Team, Give Kudos, Launch a Project, Work Anniversary, New Position - It's easy on LinkedIn!

Link post

You know when you see a news article pop up in your feed? That's a link post. Generally your link will auto-populate a "thumbnail preview" that makes it easy to click. Link posts are good for sharing interesting articles or promoting new blog posts with your community.

You are Hiring? Tell your audience more!

What are great way to recruit candidates, especially on your clinic's LinkedIn page- Marketing can ensure you have full content access to your pages!

Text post

Not all social posts need an image! Sometimes the best way to get your community talking is by posting with text only.

Do I Need Hashtags?

A hashtag is a way to be discovered for trending keywords on social media, it's like a digital filing system to find topics quickly.

We like to use #IPCdifference, #WeAreHiring, #VeterinaryMedicine, #IPCcultureclub to name a few! Choose a hashtag that works for your clinic or department and use those 1-3 hashtags every time so your audience can identify the # with your clinic, brand or message.

Companies like ours love to use hashtags on Facebook and LinkedIn.

However, we think it's more important 1) be consistent with the hashtags you use, 2) use no more than 3 so your audience focuses more on your content, and 3) use hashtags on the right social media levers (Compare hashtag use on LinkedIn versus Instagram/Facebook)

Make sure to add them sporadically or at the end of your post so nothing interferes with your post content.

Using Hashtags Effectively

Like we mentioned, hashtags are keywords or phrases that help you reach people searching for specific keywords or phrases. Think of it as a way to make your post even more tailored to your audience.

In fact, if used strategically, you can increase the odds of standing out against the competition.

The key is to use hashtags that are a “sweet spot”: not too common and not to *uncommon*.

Here’s an example: If you were to pull out your Instagram account right now and search for #dog, you’d see that there are **251 million** posts using that hashtag. It would be really hard for your post to thrive against 251 million competitors, so the hashtag #dog isn’t recommended for your posts.

Ideally, you want to use hashtags that are used up to 1 million times. Instead of #dog, you could use #dogsmile, which, at the time of this guide being written, is used 726K times.

Instagram only allows you to use 30 hashtags per day, so choose your hashtags wisely with every post.

Recommended Hashtags

Pick and choose from the following hashtags to help your Instagram post be seen:

#dog

#dogsdaily	#doggram	#dogphoto	#puppiesofinsta	#dogfeatures
#lifewithdogs	#puppyfun	#dogsareawesome	#puppymodel	#dogstagramming
#dogstar	#dogumented	#dailydogs	#pupoftheday	#pupinfluencer

#cat

#pleasantcats	#catsofday	#bestcat	#catscatscats	#catsanddogs
#kittenoftheday	#kittensofig	#bestcatsclub	#catfeatures	#kittens_of_instagram
#catsogram	#catoftheworld	#cats_of_day	#catofinsta	#meows

#veterinarian

#instavet	#vetsofinstagram	#veterinaryadventures	#veterinarylife	#dogtor
#vetlife	#vetmedworld	#iloveveterinary	#veterinary	#veterinaryclinic

Posting on Instagram

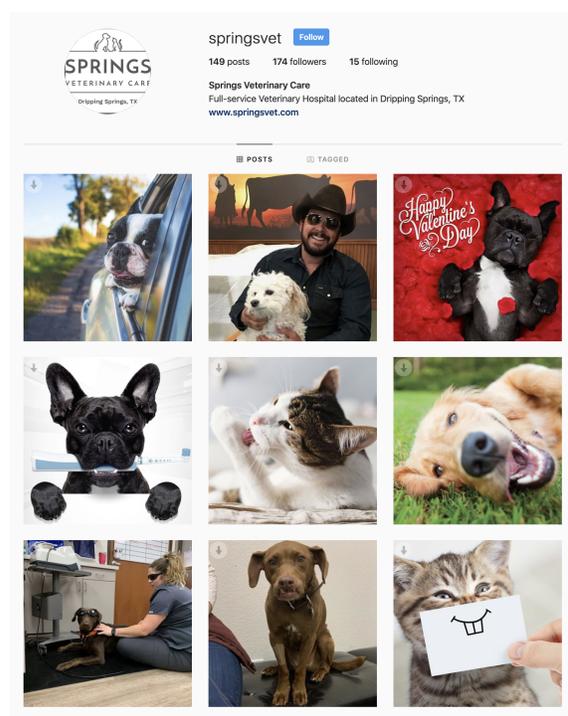
If you don't have an Instagram account, don't worry! It's an easy-to-use social media platform that's all about visual content. You should try it!

While Instagram is one social media platform, we prefer to think of it as four separate platforms:

Instagram Feed

This is the main published part of your feed, where all of your scheduled posts will go. These feed posts can be in the form of photos, albums, and short videos.

For example, Springs Veterinary Care, one of our clinics, has a bright and engaging feed.



Instagram Stories

These are real-time, brief updates about your clinic that last for only 24 hours at a time. The Stories will not show up in your feed. Stories are a good way to highlight what's happening in your clinic that day.

Instagram Live

We only recommend Instagram Live for advanced users. Essentially, it's like a news anchor, where whatever you're filming is done live! You can film for up to 1 hour, and your Live afterplay will be available on your Instagram stories for up to 24 hours after going Live.

The risks with Live: There's no editing and your audience will be immediately alerted when you go live. If you do choose to use Instagram Live, we recommend starting simple, like "interviewing" different employees within your clinic.

IGTV

Most Instagram videos are capped at one minute, but with IGTV, you can publish a video that's up to one hour in length. Think of IGTV like YouTube, but on Instagram. It's permanently on your feed once you publish.

Inspiration for Your Social Media Posts

Not sure what to post on social media? Use these topics to guide you!

- A team photo
- “Meet the team” where you post a photo of each team member and explain their role at your clinic
- A senior pet visiting your clinic
- A pet having their first appointment
- A tour of the equipment, such as your ultrasound machine
- Photo of an X-ray, where people can guess what your team sees
- Pets owned by your team members
- Events or open houses
- Holidays and well wishes
- Clinic news and updates, such as new hours
- An inspirational quote about animals
- Fun facts about animals and pets
- Stories about the history of your clinic

How to Blog (Which Helps to Create Newsletter Content)

Imagine: You've just moved to a new town and decide you want pizza. You open Google, type in "pizza" and the name of your new town, and then Google gives you a whole bunch of options to choose from. You go with one of the top results and within 45 minutes are enjoying a tasty bite of 'za.

What just happened there?

Similar to how you (hypothetically) searched for pizza, pet owners are searching for a veterinary clinic. The order that Google shows recommended sites is based on search engine optimization (SEO). If a site has good SEO, Google will suggest the site to users based on the terms they're searching.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of factors affecting your clinic's SEO. While the Innovative Marketing Team is handling a lot behind the scenes, there's something that your clinic can participate in: blogging!

Why Blogging?

Blogging helps your site's SEO for a number of reasons:

- If your site is frequently updated with new high-quality content, Google will interpret this as regular maintenance, which shows that you're making an effort to satisfy users
- If you write a post with keywords people search for, you'll generate more traffic to your site
- If a user reads multiple blog posts in one visit to your site, Google interprets this as a positive experience and will 'recommend' your site to more users

Understand Your Clinic's SEO Potential

When creating content on any social media channel or blog, we recommend having an understanding of what people are searching for online.

One thing to note: Your marketing team is here to help you with blogging! If you have an idea but aren't sure how to put it into words, contact the marketing team for help.

However, if you're excited by the idea of managing your clinic's blog, there are a few tools we recommend:

[Answer the Public](#)

This free tool presents searched topics in a visual way. We recommend starting off by searching for "veterinary medicine" and getting more specific with queries as you progress.

For example, when you search for "puppy health," you'll see the following questions by the public:

- Is puppy health insurance worth it?
- How to check puppy health
- What is a puppy health certificate?
- What does a puppy health check entail?
- How to treat a puppy at home
- What to know about puppy health

And more. These are all questions that people are searching for on Google. If your blog answers each question one at a time, it could help your SEO while being helpful for clients at the same time!

In fact, using the puppy health example, you could answer this question across multiple posts, like this:

- Blog post: “How to treat a puppy at home” - a written step-by-step guide of treating your puppy at home
- Blog post: “A veterinarian’s guide to treating a puppy at home” - a blog post that has a *video* of your clinic’s veterinarian walking through their perspective of treating a puppy at home
- Blog post: “Five ways to treat a puppy at home” - a written list of how to treat a puppy at home

You can see how just one topic has been transformed into multiple uses. All of these can help your site’s SEO through Answer the Public!

[Pinterest](#)

Pinterest is a shockingly effective search engine. If you search for “dog” (when logged in), you’ll see related keywords of searched terms show up at the top, like:

- Dog breeds
- Dogs and puppies
- Dog quotes
- Dog photography
- Dog accessories
- Small dog
- Dog training
- Dog ideas
- Dog videos

And more. Since Pinterest and Google are closely intertwined, these could all be topics in your blogs posts that help your clinic get more exposure on Google.

Keywords Everywhere*

**For advanced users only!*

Keywords Everywhere is a paid service that allows you to see the exact search volume for topics on Google. The software will also suggest similar terms that have a high search volume. The software is a browser plugin that adds another “layer” to your Google search results that shows you search volume *and* the competition ranking (which should ideally be below 0.2 to rank).

This tool is useful for advanced users who want to refine their blog posts based on real-time SEO.

As an example, at the time of this document’s creation, if you search for “dog emergency,” Keywords Everywhere shows a search volume of 1,600/mo with a competition ranking of 0.32.

The Keywords Everywhere plugin also shows this:

People Also Search For ✖

[Export to CSV](#)

★ Keyword	Vol	CPC	Comp
★ hospital for dogs near me	8,100	\$2.58	0.19
★ pet emergency near me	1,900	\$3.80	0.26
★ pet emergency hospital	1,900	\$3.44	0.21
★ aspca phone number	1,600	\$2.27	0.28
★ dog emergency hospital near me	590	\$3.38	0.3
★ dog breathing heavy and fast	590	\$0.00	0
★ dog emergency room near me	480	\$0.00	0.01
★ dog emergency near me	320	\$3.33	0.3
★ dog emergency kit	320	\$1.40	1
★ dog emergency clinic near me	260	\$3.15	0.32
★ when to take dog to vet for vomiting	170	\$1.07	0.06
★ angell memorial pharmacy	170	\$0.00	0
★ dog emergency 24 hour	140	\$2.12	0.23
★ veterinary emergency care	110	\$3.68	0.11
★ who to call for pet emergency	110	\$2.92	0.26
★ emergency veterinary medicine	90	\$1.82	0.24
★ dog unresponsive eyes open	70	\$0.00	0.02
★ angell animal medical center waltham	50	\$2.89	0.02
★ mspca angell staff	40	\$3.23	0.05
★ dog emergency room cost	30	\$3.49	0.15
★ vet helpline nationwide	30	\$1.06	0.35
★ dog unresponsive after seizure	20	\$0.00	0.06
★ dog emergency symptoms	20	\$0.00	0.08
★ emergency vet information	10	\$1.23	0.54
★ your veterinarian	10	\$0.00	0.02
★ what is wrong with my pet	10	\$0.23	0.11
★ common dog sickness symptoms	10	\$0.00	0.14
★ dog emergency cost	10	\$0.00	0.21
★ veterinary payment assistance	10	\$0.00	0.54

While it's sometimes hard to rank for ambiguous terms like "animal hospital for dogs near me," there are some potential blog posts for your clinic here. Just isolate the topics with a competition ranking of under 0.2, like these:

- Dog breathing heavy and fast
- When to take dog to vet for vomiting
- Veterinary emergency care
- Dog emergency room cost
- Dog unresponsive after seizure
- Dog emergency symptoms
- What is wrong with my pet
- Common dog sickness symptoms

All of these topics could be turned into blog posts. Just make sure that your blog title is as close to these terms as possible, and aim for 300-500 words with every blog post.

Blogging Checklist (and feel free to contact Marketing for help!)

Ready to start blogging for your clinic? Here's a checklist to get you started!

- ❑ A title to inspire your post (instructions on the next page!)
- ❑ At least three points you'd like to convey in 300-500 words total
- ❑ Once you're done your draft, integrate the word "veterinarian" and your location at least 5 times each in your post
- ❑ Run your post through Grammarly or past a team member who's a strong writer. (The marketing team can help you with this, too!)
- ❑ A large photo that can be used as a hero image
- ❑ Consistency! Create a schedule and stick with it.



Compile your keyword searches

In an ideal world, your clinic should never ask, “What should we post on the blog today?”

Instead, keep a running document that tracks as many of the potential post topics as possible. This way, you’ll be able to plan out your posts for the entire year while helping your site’s search value.

Here are some potential blog post titles to get you started:

- What shots do cats need?
- Cat flea protection 101
- Common cat health problems
- Can I get fleas from my cat?
- Taking care of a cat in an apartment
- Heartworm prevention for dogs
- Dog dental health overview
- What to expect: dogs after surgery
- What age is a dog too old for surgery?
- How to decide on pet surgery
- Effects of dog anesthesia
- Questions to ask your vet before surgery

We're here to help!

For more support, contact your Innovetive Petcare Marketing Team. We're excited to help you!

