

Case Study

Using the preventive care program to stay competitive with larger veterinary practices

Lexington Animal Hospital shares its hands-on experience with the MWI Easy Care Program

Challenge

Veterinary practices often struggle with ensuring their clients stay compliant with their medications and on top of all the animal health services that their pet's need.

Larger practices and chains may offer payment plans and preventive care programs that allow clients to get discounts in exchange for committing to be loyal customers. Smaller practices need their own preventive plans to help them compete.

Dr. Meghan Ryan, VMD of Lexington Animal Hospital in Lexington, Virginia, faced this very issue. The practice needed to find a preventive care plan that was easy for them, as a smaller practice, to utilize, but could compete with the services and plans offered by larger veterinary practices.

Ryan said several customers asked specifically about preventive care plans. "We get a lot of people who retire to our part of Virginia," Ryan explained. "They've lived in bigger cities and had asked about having a preventive care plan here too."

She said that after several people chose to go somewhere else after learning Lexington Animal Hospital didn't have a preventive care plan, she realized they needed to make a change. "We're just trying to stay abreast with what other clinics are doing across the U.S.," she said. "And it seemed like something that would help with the financial planning for a lot of clients."

Ensuring success

- Have an in-person meeting and allow the staff to offer ideas about which animal health services should be included in the preventive care plan.
- Utilize the automated marketing system to send out emails announcing the program and offering an option to sign-up online.
- Follow-up with every patient who visits your office, reminding them about the program and showing them how much money they can save that day. Offer to sign them up in person right there.

Action

Lexington Animal Hospital chose to implement MWI's Easy Care Program. The program allows the veterinary practice to design its own preventive care plan that fits its needs by automating the plan's administration, payment processing, and marketing to promote the plan to their clients.

To get started, they needed to launch a robust marketing push, along with providing in-depth staff training.

The initial marketing push was a success

The MWI Easy Care Program not only provides a customizable preventive care package, but it also includes automated digital marketing communications.

Ryan and her staff learned that utilizing this program that sends targeted emails was a key part of their success. The email marketing campaigns process gave a strong first exposure that helped the clients feel ready to sign up when Easy Care was mentioned to them in person. She said that clarifying exactly how the discounts worked was often the final piece in selling the preventive care plan.

"It's kind of a first exposure through online marketing," Ryan said. "And then when they get here, they're ready. One of the things that swayed people is getting the additional 10 percent off everything else. They might be like, 'Oh, that would save us a ton of money for the nine cats we have, who we all are planning on getting dentals at some point during the year.'"

While Ryan designed her practice's plan to offer a discount on additional services, this is not a requirement for every preventive care plan. It's up to each individual practice to decide whether or not they offer discounts and how much.

Training the staff was a straightforward process

Implementing a new program always involves a ramp-up as the staff learns the new system; however, Ryan acknowledges the experience has been mostly positive and straightforward.

She appreciated that Lexington Animal Hospital was able to choose the type of plan it wanted to offer. "We feel we designed all the plans that we wanted right off the bat," she said.

Result: Compliance has increased, improving pets' health

Lexington Animal Hospital has seen increased compliance from clients who signed up for their Easy Care Program. Before offering this plan, some clients would try to wait as long as possible before coming in. Now they won't delay, Ryan said.

"And then other people who might never have done any of the recommendations will all of a sudden say, 'Oh, I'm already in for a year, I'll actually do it,'" she said. "Whereas before they'd say they would come back later for the vaccine or heartworm test, and then just never do it."

Ryan said her practice is also seeing clients agreeing to more services in general, which helps their pets' health. "This pet's getting lab work that they probably would have declined if we didn't have the plan as an option," she said. "...Clients are happy that something like this exists and we're able to offer it."

Ryan said her program even reminds people to bring in their pet's poop for stool analysis. "We've never run so many fecals in our life," she said. "It's pretty awesome."

Result: A robust marketing campaign led to in-person sign-ups

Lexington Animal Hospital has signed up most people in-person. While they might learn about the program for the first time by email, it was the in-person visit that helped them make the final decision.

"It might just be that the front staff is great about reiterating to people when they come in, 'We can make you an Easy Care member and your payment today would go down by \$70,'" Ryan said. "And most people are like, 'Oh yeah, sure. Sign me up.'"

She said sometimes they'd fill out the paperwork while the staff is performing a test on their pet. It's a simple process.

"Overall, it was easy for the clients," Ryan said. "We sent out a number of emails, so people were coming in with knowledge of the program right off the bat."

Our data shows that on average, clinics with a preventive care plan may realize nearly a **190% increase in revenue** per patient annually.¹

Conclusion

Overall, Ryan is pleased with MWI Easy Care Program's impact on her veterinary practices. She is seeing numerous clients signing up and taking advantage of the services already.

The key is to combine the robust email marketing component of the plan with an in-person push to sign up when the client visits. The two types of reminders in tandem have created a strong and positive response.

Help clients say "yes" to your recommendations and keep them coming back in throughout the year

The MWI Easy Care Program helps veterinarians provide an affordable preventive care plan for pet owners. With low monthly payments spread out over 12 months, clients are able to say 'yes' to more recommendations helping you grow revenue.

Need proof?

Our data shows on average, clinics with a preventive care plan may realize nearly a 190% increase in revenue per patient annually.¹

Reference:

1. Data based on analysis of pets participating in care plans offered by Easy Care's plan administrator. Data on file with MWI Animal Health.



Interested in learning more?

Learn more about the MWI Easy Care Program and how it can help your veterinary practice at

mwiah.com/EasyCare