

Case Study

Straight forward preventive care solution encourages staff buy-in

New River Animal Hospital reveals 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.

Action

To solve this problem, New River Animal Hospital in Hinton, West Virginia chose to implement MWI's Easy Care Program. The program allows the 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, New River Animal Hospital needed to launch a robust marketing push, along with providing in-depth staff training.



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.

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. Ronielle Cole, practice manager at New River, learned that utilizing this program that sends out targeted emails was a key part of their success.

"The very first email that was sent out, we had a handful of clients call us and say, 'This sounds too good to be true. Tell me more,'" she recalled. "That led to a conversation of what's included and things like that. So the very first email really caught everyone's attention."

She said that between the emails and conversations in-person, they've achieved a "drip marketing campaign." To take advantage, New River Animal Hospital's staff had to be ready to follow up when clients stopped in for their pets' healthcare visits.

"Marketing continues when they enter the door," Cole said. "The tech talks about the program, the doctor talks about it, and we get more sign-ups that way."

Training the staff was a straightforward process

Implementing a new program always involves a ramp-up as the staff learns the new system. But Cole remarked that the experience has been mostly positive and straightforward.

She admitted that when they first broached the subject of a new preventive care plan to the staff at New River Animal Hospital, the employees were a little hesitant. But once they saw how easy the process was, their opinion changed.

"At first they were like, 'No... I don't want to do anything new,'" she said. "But once they started seeing how clients are liking this and it's easy to apply, well it's just a piece of cake now. It's pretty straightforward for them."

As part of the onboarding process, Cole said they had a staff-wide meeting to get everyone's input on which vaccines, services for cats and dogs, and labs should be included in the preventive care plan. After they chose what to include, a representative worked closely with them to help them create the plan. "We designed it to be under \$50 a month as a selling point to clients," she added.

Cole shared some advice on tracking plan usage for fellow small veterinary practices using primarily paper patient records. She explains, "We are about 90 percent paper records. I created a checklist. It is easier for us to have that paper record visible at each visit. This makes sure we're not leaving things out or giving them too much of one thing. That's been helpful for our practice."

Result: Compliance has increased, improving pets' health

New River Animal Hospital has seen increased compliance from clients who signed up for their preventive care plans. Clients are agreeing to more services now that the preventive care plan is available. For example, instead of just leaving with a month's supply of flea, tick, and heartworm preventive, they're now leaving with three-month supply. And because their preventive care plan covers a full year's supply of parasiticide prevention, this eliminates the need for pet parents to search online for a better price.

"They're getting those products from us," she said. "That was a major selling point to me."

The only downside to the service so far, Cole said, is that it takes a while before the revenue they're bringing in matches the cost. But that's a problem she expected, that will resolve over time. "That'll catch up once we get more people on the plan," Cole said.

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

Cole said it's been easy to drum up interest and sign people up on the clinic's plans. While most preferred to sign up in person at the office, a few used the smartphone or online forms instead. But overall, about 90 percent of New River Animal Hospital's clients who were initially interested in the plan have asked the veterinary office to sign them up during a visit. "I think people just like the convenience," she said.

So far, the only complaint they've had from clients is that when they miss a monthly payment, the program was a little insistent about getting the payment. "But that could be a good or a bad thing," Cole added.

Overall, the turnout has been great for New River Animal Hospital. Cole said that the small rural practice signed up 29 new clients to the plan in just the first two months.

"We're always looking to try new things," Cole said. "We do all the major credit cards, cash, checks... You name it, we take it. So it was really nice when they can also do a payment plan for these preventive care items... So far it's taken off."

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

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