

## AMERICANS OPEN THEIR HEARTS TO PETS DURING NATIONAL PET MONTH

American Pet Products Manufacturers Association with Jericho Communications

Category 62: Special Event: (Ongoing Event/Observance Lasting More Than Seven Days)

### OVERVIEW:

What do Presidential pooches, Mary Tyler Moore and Dr. Doolittle have in common? Together, they helped Jericho Communications open the hearts of Americans to pets. Owning a pet can provide a variety of health and emotional benefits -- it's a proven fact. And, that is exactly what the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association (APPMA) charged Jericho with communicating to American consumers everywhere. Jericho developed a multi-faceted publicity program -- driven by high-profile events and doused with a hearty sense of humor -- to demonstrate the positive influence of pets during National Pet Month in May 1999. More than 33 million people learned through heart-warming news stories how pets can contribute to their lives, and hundreds more experienced this first-hand at fun-filled events for pets and the people in New York City. With Jericho's help, APPMA is on its way to realizing its vision of a society where every household has pets that are treated responsibly and with care.

### PLANNING:

The sole objective of this public relations program is to:

- \* Raise awareness and excitement among the American public about the health/emotional benefits of pet ownership.

To accomplish this goal, the following strategies were employed:

- \* Leverage an official holiday (National Pet Month) to create a "buzz" about the benefits of owning a pet
- \* Create a series of events at high-traffic venues that demonstrate how responsible pet ownership is good for the health and lives of Americans
- \* Develop an educational component that reaches out with a positive pet ownership message to young Americans through the school system
- \* Showcase celebrities from both the entertainment and political arenas as spokespersons to endorse APPMA's key messages

APPMA's target audience is:

- \* Current and potential pet owners living in the United States
- \* Consumer-oriented print and broadcast media, as conduits to above audiences

### JERICHO'S CREATIVE PHILOSOPHY:

We believe that emotion -- a deeply felt sense of understanding and feeling -- is the fuel that drives the influence of public relations. Intelligent use of emotion secures media placements and generates awareness. But most importantly, by effectively awakening emotion through publicity, we help target audiences to internalize the messages that our clients intend for them. When creating publicity campaigns, we always consider what will motivate our clients' audiences, and then build messages and tactics that speak to the audiences' viewpoint. We concentrate not only on what the client does, but on what the client does for its target audiences. For APPMA, for instance, we flipped the focus from the typical approach of pet message "out" (simply declaring that "pets are healthy for you") to consumer need "in" (we demonstrated how sharing their lives with animals can actually help people). APPMA's key audiences heard our call to action.

#### EXECUTION:

Presidential Pooches and Pets Exhibit – Jericho organized a "Presidential Pooches and Pets" exhibit at the well-attended New York Public Library to show how pet ownership has been an integral part of the lives of our nation's Presidents and First families. The exhibit was strategically relevant because: 1) the American public essentially is the President's extended family, and 2) the benefits of pet ownership (reduced stress, emotional reward, etc.) apply to all of us today more than ever. The Presidential Pooches and Pets exhibit celebrated pets through photos, video clips, letters, documents, books and other memorabilia. Prior to the grand opening of the exhibit Jericho arranged an exclusive press preview party in the Trustee's Room of the library. Remarks were made in hearty support of pets by Funda Alp (APPMA's Director of Communications) and Dr. Ron Elmore (Associate Dean at the College of Veterinary Medicine and expert on Presidential pets). Press materials drove home APPMA's pet ownership message: a press release, media alert, Presidential Pets Fact Sheet and Presidential Pets Quiz. The Nexus Contemporary Art Center in Atlanta, Georgia, was so impressed with the Presidential Pooches and Pets exhibit that the museum's curator requested to use it as a traveling exhibit.

"Pets Make People Happy and Healthy" contest – An APPMA-sponsored "Pets Make People Happy and Healthy" contest inspired elementary school students throughout the tri-state area to tell their stories about how pets make their lives better. More than 100 children eagerly submitted posters, essays, photos or poems. The top three winners were honored at the New York Public Library preview press party, where their entries were displayed as part of the Presidential Pooches and Pets exhibit. To top that off, the first prize winner was awarded two tickets to the long-running and ever-popular Broadway show "Cats." Jericho also created the APPMA "Presidential Pooches and Pets Making History" booklet to serve as a complementary educational component to the exhibit. Designed for teachers and parents to use as an instructional tool, the free guidebook included interesting facts, photos and a quiz about Presidents and their pets. Jericho extended awareness for the booklet by broadly distributing a press release announcing its availability and requests for the booklet poured in from around the country.

Pet Fete Fundraiser Luncheon – A Pet Fete Fundraising luncheon, held at New York City's renowned Tavern on the Green, continued to attract the media's attention during National Pet Month. Celebrity guests and pet lovers Mary Tyler Moore and comedian Elayne Boosler were on-hand to show their support. Jericho arranged a silent auction for attendees and APPMA donated \$10,000 to the Best Friends Animal Sanctuary to support the organization's pet adoption efforts. The event was a success from top to bottom.

People and Pets Check-Ups/Cinema-Rama – New York was alive with pets on May 22, 1999, when Jericho created one more opportunity for people and their pets to celebrate National Pet Month together . APPMA hosted a People and Pets Check-Ups event at the popular Pier 25 in Tribeca where a veterinarian and registered nurse conducted free examinations. Goodie bags filled with APPMA members' products were distributed to all. To top off the evening people and their pets gathered for a free showing of the hit movies Dr. Doolittle and The Adventures of Milo and Otis. Some would say that it was the perfect evening out --including a movie, popcorn, doggie bones and a little "groping."

#### EVALUATION:

Awareness Rising. Throughout the APPMA National Pet Month campaign, nearly 33 million people heard, saw or read about the health benefits of pet ownership. Americans learned how pets can contribute to their lives through stories in the: NEW YORK TIMES, NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, NEW YORK POST, ASSOCIATED PRESS, CNN, and local television/radio broadcast affiliates of CBS, ABC, FOX, UPN and AP. In addition, over 150 people experienced the heart-warming and healing influence of pets first-hand at the Presidential Pooches and Pets exhibit, Pet Fete Luncheon and Pet Cinema-Rama. Finally, more than 100 elementary school students eagerly participated in the Pets Make People Happy and Healthy contest.

More Pets Get Loved. During National Pet Month this year, people across America opened their hearts to pets -- and took a step closer to creating a society where every household has pets that are treated responsibly and with care. According to APPMA, Jericho's ongoing publicity efforts are working: APPMA's annual survey showed that pet ownership is up by four percent percent over last year.