

## **What You Need to Know: Introducing New Services to Clients**

Call it a tired cliché, but it's true: It's a dog-eat-dog world. And veterinarians just may know this better than anyone.

Staying competitive in the animal health field depends on you and your hospital team's ability and success in remaining on the cutting-edge of veterinary medicine. Besides routinely investing in continuing education and seeking specialized training, another way to stay ahead of the pack is to continually invest in technology. Having the latest, greatest technical tools available in the animal health field will boost your hospital's medical capabilities and, in turn, increase client compliance for advanced care.

But here's the deal: shelling out thousands of dollars for a fancy new ultrasound, digital X-ray or another piece of high-tech equipment isn't the simple solution to this challenge. No, you'll first need to "sell" that new toy to your hospital team so that they can in turn "sell" clients on the new advanced services that you have to offer.

How do you do this? By coaching, teaching and getting buy-in from your hospital team.

To help you succeed, keep this phrase in mind: everything is local. This means that every member of your team must be committed to educating your clients. While some veterinarians are prone to throwing up their hands in a "I'm a veterinarian, not a salesman!" manner, it's the wrong attitude to adopt. It's absolutely critical that you get your team on board and learn to educate. Besides ensuring their ability to sell additional services to clients, it will also boost overall team morale and help them feel empowered.

For example, if a team member questions your \$40,000 outlay for a new ultrasound rather than giving staff raises, you can show her how additional revenue from these services affects the practice's bottom line — and, in turn, her paycheck. Plus, providing advanced patient care will help bond clients further to your practice, ensuring long-term loyalty and compliance — another key factor which will impact your team's profit potential.

Not sure you can communicate the nitty-gritty numbers to get your team on board? Don't worry. It's amazing what better communication, the correct talking points and excitement can do. The way you approach your team, the language you use and the energy you devote to this endeavor plays a major role in your success.

After twenty one years of managing in the veterinary field, Louise S. Dunn founded Snowgoose Veterinary Management Consulting, which provides technical assistance to practice teams to meet their strategic plans. Ms. Dunn has held practice management workshops at numerous veterinary schools, is widely published, and speaks internationally and nationally. She serves as an officer of VetPartners is a member of the AAHA Leadership Advisory Committee, the VHMA, VESPA, and AVMLA. In 2007 Ms. Dunn was named WVC Practice Management Educator of the year. Ms. Dunn can be reached at [snogoose@infionline.net](mailto:snogoose@infionline.net).

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"Together we will make your practice team soar."

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