



The Pet Food Manufacturers' Association (PFMA) launched an authoritative pet obesity campaign to highlight the widespread problem of overweight pets. The PFMA chose PR as the only marketing channel - salt PR created an impressive and diverse variety of collateral for a range of consumer touch points: the result of which was high quality coverage in a range of broadcast, online, national, regional and trade publications.

Objectives

1. To highlight the consequences of pet obesity
2. To establish industry leadership on the pet obesity issue
3. To provide owners with a tool to help them monitor their pet's weight at home

Strategy and Implementation

At salt, we pride ourselves on implementing PR strategies to establish our clients as recognised authorities in their relevant spheres.

(http://www.saltlondon.com/our_approach_establishing_authority.php). The strategy for the pet obesity campaign followed the salt ingredients; it aimed to highlight the serious nature of the pet obesity issue, establish authority and provide a solution for owners to use at home.

To reach these objectives, it was important first to focus the PR activity on attracting the target audience's attention to the issue of pet obesity and secondly to provide material that could be used in vet practices and rescue homes across the country.

To achieve cut through, salt developed a media relations campaign using a range of collateral created to give the campaign maximum impact and longevity.

The five key campaign tools were:-

1) A White Paper entitled: Pet Obesity: The Reality in 2009

salt commissioned the research of over 2100 pet owners to highlight the extent of pet owner concern surrounding the issue of pet obesity. The research highlighted shocking results; one in three pets in the UK is overweight and nine out of 10 pet owners are not that concerned about their pet's weight. The results were used as a basis for a White Paper aimed at establishing thought leadership and authoritative opinion within the industry. salt worked with experts, vets, and industry spokespeople to collate information and provide expert analysis. George Lightfoot, BA Vet MB MRCVS said, "I worked closely with the salt team and was particularly impressed by their professional approach. The White Paper is an industry leading document and the Pet Size-O-Meters will be used by vets all over the country to inform owners of the pet obesity issue."

In addition to the expert opinion, David Blunkett's foreword created a high profile starting point and set the tone for the industry leading White Paper. salt drafted a



press release detailing the key research findings and sold it into the national, regional and trade media in conjunction with the White Paper.

The campaign was timed to launch at the PFMA's AGM on 26th March 2009. salt was instrumental in briefing key spokespeople, compiling key message documents and inviting and briefing target media. The event was a great success as the resulting coverage demonstrated.

2) **PFMA Pet Size-O-Meters**

salt worked with creative agency Folk on the development of easy to use guides for owners to gauge the weight of their dogs, cats and rabbits at home. These Pet Size-O-Meters are available to download from the PFMA website and continue to be distributed to vet practices and rescue homes across the UK.

3) **A Pass-it-on pack**

salt created an easy to use pack for pet owners incorporating the Pet Size-O-Meters, family pet pledge, top tips, pet myths debunked and a pet ownership diagnostic tool.

4) **Youtube films**

salt directed and produced three short films on Youtube (For dogs, cats & rabbits) to demonstrate how to use the Pet Size-O-Meter at home. Media vet Marc Abraham presented the videos to bring the Size-O-Meter to life and encourage owners to actively participate in weight diagnosis.

5) **Kid's microsite**

salt recognised the potential of driving awareness and behaviour change amongst children. As such, we helped develop a concept for a kids focused PFMA Microsite, which was launched to give children hints and tips on how to look after their pets. We launched the site in May 2009 to key media aimed at children.

Measurement and evaluation

The authority programme delivered significant media coverage across a range of broadcast, national, online, regional and trade publications.

Press coverage was extensive. Highlights include:

- Radio 4 Today Programme
- GMTV
- The Daily Telegraph
- The Daily Mirror



- The Daily Express
- The Daily Telegraph Blog
- The Sun online
- 104 regional newspaper and radio features including LBC and BBC three counties radio
- 21 articles in trade and hobby press including Cats Monthly, Dogs Today and the Vet Journal

The coverage reached over **47,490,243** million people and generated **£314,367** in advertising equivalent value. Against a PR spend of £40,000 the PFMA received a +12% return on investment.

In addition to the media coverage, the collateral surrounding the campaign has created the following results:-

- 560 Pet Size-O-Meter posters have been downloaded from the PFMA website
- The short films on YouTube have achieved 756 hits
- 590 Kids microsite hits

The PR collateral also dovetailed into the PFMA's marketing strategy and as such:-

- 5,500 Pet Size-O-Meter posters have been placed in veterinary surgeries across the country
- 30,000 Pet Size-O-Meter posters have been ordered to place in animal shelters across the UK

As a result of taking an honest, proactive position on pet obesity the campaign helped to reinforce the Pet Food Manufacturers' Association as an authority on pet nutrition. Significantly, members of the PFMA recognised the value of the campaign – Adrian Pratt at Hills said, "salt did a marvellous job on the pet obesity campaign. We shouldn't underestimate how successful it has been. It is always difficult to sell in a story and the amount of high quality coverage achieved was very impressive. "

In addition, Michael Bellingham, Chief Executive of the PFMA said, "I was extremely impressed with salt from the start. They grasped the brief very quickly and understood our objectives went much further than creating a short term media splash. Critically, as we are a membership organisation, they were able to satisfy the ambitions of a number of very different companies without diluting the final impact of the campaign. More importantly they were instrumental in helping to create tools which are starting to impact positively in improving the feeding habits of pet owners (and thus the health of the nation's pets). Overall the campaign has provided an impressive return on our investment."

salt