

# Healthy **PETS** HAPPY Clients



\$2.1 billion in sales
700+ hospitals
12,700 employees
8.6 million pet visits per year



## Helping Clients Feel Valued, Connected, and Affirmed

Advantage helped us develop a client experience strategy that includes messaging, communication, and ongoing discovery-based training programs. To launch the strategy, Advantage created a visual, experiential workshop that helped participants explore the reasons VCA embarked on this mission and what the client experience should be at each of the various touch points along the client journey. Through small-group activities, participants explored the client's emotional response to each touch point as well as the control that each employee has over the client experience. By understanding those experiences, participants could see their role in ensuring that each client felt valued, connected, and affirmed at every touch point. We cascaded the workshop out to all of our 12,700 employees across North America and even translated the program into French for parts of Canada.

Due to the logistical difficulties related to delivering training in a break room or lobby, Advantage developed follow-up training in a variety of easy-to-conduct formats, including a graphic, "comic book"-based program that uses a superhero story to present client situations and reinforce skills related to service recovery. The follow-up training has been popular with technicians, kennel staff, and administrative workers, and it provides key communications and reinforcement without the need to hold formal group sessions. Since the rollout, Advantage has worked with us to create and present several additional programs that help us communicate initiatives and build on the learning.

## Measurable Gains in Scores and Revenues

Since launching the program four years ago, we've documented a notable increase in client satisfaction scores across the organization, with spikes coming right after each major effort and improved scores overall. Immediately after the first training, scores (measured on a scale of 1 to 7) went from 6.13 to 6.49, a substantial increase, and we continue to experience incremental increases. As clients continue to have a better experience, we have measured a significant increase in revenue per client, as well as an increase in return visits.

We've also been able to measure what our clients say about us to others and see similar gains in our social media reviews. Based on reputation.com's aggregate data from various sites, our score has improved from a 3.4 in 2012 to a 4.3 currently. Given the great success of the program, we have asked Advantage Performance to assist us in developing a program to improve the employee experience. There are more great things in store for VCA as we continue to grow.



## Embarking on a Mission to Improve the Veterinary Client Experience

More than 8.6 million times per year, VCA employees interact with clients who bring their beloved pets into a VCA hospital for care – educating them on the animal's health, options for care, and products and services to enhance the life of the animal. As the vice president of client experience at VCA, I'm keenly aware that the dozens of touch points related to each of these 8.6 million interactions are critical to building a base of loyal clients.

## Opportunities for Retention and Satisfaction

Four years ago, we began a journey to reimagine our relationship with our clients – the "pet parents" who entrust us with the care of their pets. As the leader in veterinary medicine, our rapid growth had been driven through acquisitions. We excelled in quality medicine and revenue generation, taking a hands-off approach regarding the client service aspects of our acquired hospitals. When we realized that data on return visits and client satisfaction was not meeting expectations, we embarked on a mission to become leaders in client experience, assembling a team of experts internally and from the client experience field. As part of this effort, Advantage Performance helped us reinvent the client experience across all of our hospitals.

“The client experience program developed for us by Advantage Performance has resulted in measurable gains in client satisfaction, revenue per client, and return visits. We will continue to partner with Advantage as we cascade this success into other parts of the business.”

Aaron Frazier, VP of Client Experience