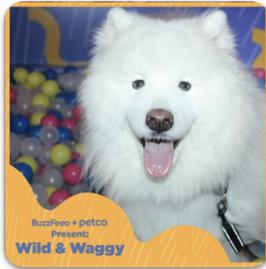


ARF DAVID OGILVY AWARDS 2020

Award Designation and Category: Retail & Restaurants
Campaign Title: BuzzFeed + Petco Nutrition
Year the campaign took place: 2019



Brand: Petco
Creative Agency: BuzzFeed, Anomaly, CRONY
Media Company/Agency: Horizon Media
Research Company: comScore, Kantar, Placed Powered by Foursquare
Additional Affiliated Companies: BuzzFeed

Summary of the marketing challenge, methodology, insight discovered, creative execution and business impact.

BuzzFeed and Petco educated pet parents on the crucial role nutrition plays in helping maintain their furry friends' health and wellness. Together we demonstrated Petco's commitment to better pet nutrition standards via high-impact custom video, quiz content and an experiential pop-up. The campaign led to increased intent among pet parents to purchase nutritious brands offered at Petco and elevated foot traffic to Petco stores.

Consumer Insight

Pet parents prioritize their pets' overall happiness and health, splurging on their pets above themselves.

Marketing Challenge

In May 2019, Petco announced they had made good on their November 2018 promise to no longer sell food and treats containing artificial colors, flavors and preservatives* for dogs and cats. By removing dog and cat food products that do not meet their nutrition standards and potentially impacting more than \$100 million in annual sales, Petco reaffirmed the company's commitment to overall pet health and wellness.

With this change came the ultimate question – How can we connect deeply with pet parents on our nutrition purpose so that they re-appraise Petco as the go-to destination for their pets' food?

Petco was eager to position itself as pet parents' most trusted partner in caring for their pets' overall health and wellness, starting with pet nutrition. In order to do this, Petco sought a partner that could bring that mission to life and illustrate its commitment to wellness in an authentic, compelling new way.

Methodology

BuzzFeed has a long history of creating content around pets, becoming a beacon for pet parents. We wanted to uncover the insights that would help better understand the pet-loving audience to show pet parents that Petco is the destination for nutritionally rich food for their furry friends.

To inform consumer insight and campaign strategy, BuzzFeed conducted a psychographic audience analysis through comScore Plan Metrix along with proprietary, survey-based Buzzkeepers panel research to understand pet parents' priorities. Broadly, we were able to identify emerging pet parent behaviors across the category that were happening in the U.S.

What we found is that BuzzFeed reaches 30% of pet parents across the online population. There are 97.6M video views per month to our pet related content and 12K+ pieces of content on BuzzFeed.com with dogs mentioned in the headline. We realized that pet parents are not only here for the warm fuzzy feels but also to learn how to be the best pet parents they can be.

BuzzFeed reaches pet parents' basic desire to give their pets long, happy and healthy lives. We've become their trusted source for holistic pet care tips for their fur babies and provide the perfect connection point for solutions across each of Petco's pet wellness pillars.

Creative Execution

BuzzFeed was tasked with showcasing the integral role Petco plays in a dog's journey and its core value of wellness through experiential marketing to bring digital trends from URL to IRL. Together we created **Wild & Waggy**, a fully immersive joyful "pup-up" experience that connected New Yorkers and their dogs. From September 25, 2019 through September 29, 2019, the pup-up featured fun experiences like a pup-friendly ball pit, which gave dogs active play time, "scent-sational" adventures, which gave dogs and their two-legged parents the chance to enjoy irresistible smells, and an agility course with a Petco Trainer on site to guide the dogs through it. A fan-favorite activity was Downward Dog Yoga, in which a certified "Doga" instructor led classes designed to help both dogs and their parents find their zen and achieve balance, providing a new way to bond.

Petco also leveraged BuzzFeed's modern marketing operating model to create custom content that supported the pop-up with a larger digital campaign. The custom content focused on taking fun elements of web culture and putting them through BuzzFeed's unique lens to entertain, and most importantly educate on the benefits of nutrition in a succinct, original way. The campaign featured a custom co-brand video, a custom quiz, BuzzCuts, and original social assets (OSAs) distributed across BuzzFeed's O&O, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube from 8/22/19 - 11/27/19.

The hero **video** of the campaign was The Ultimate Dog ASMR, which tapped into the trend of ASMR, the relaxing, tingly sensation that is triggered by placid sights and sounds. Talking softly into a mic, the video dramatically voiced over the products and their descriptors, interspersed with dogs crackling and crunching through the food to give a double dosing of ASMR. That's exactly the kind of feel-good emotion we want pet parents to associate with Petco's bold new nutritional message!

In classic BuzzFeed style, the campaign featured a **post** "You're A Dog's Best Friend If You Can Get 7/9 On This Quiz" which served to entertain our engaged audience while educating them about proper pet diets and encouraging them to shop at Petco for the nutrition their pets need to live healthy, happy lives.

The campaign was rounded out by more snackable media to grab attention, drive engagement and create quick-win opportunities to position Petco as the leader in pet nutrition. **BuzzCuts**, client creatives adapted and optimized across the BuzzFeed Audience Network, provided a turnkey solution to raise awareness for Petco's messaging with massive cross-platform reach. **OSAs**, 15s social videos designed to surprise and delight Petco's audience by boldly jumping out of the feed, expressed the Petco nutrition narrative in an engaging fashion, with each focused on a particular brand to help pet parents choose one that aligns with their values.

Business Results/Lessons Learned

Partnering with the world's leading digital media publisher provided a meaningful advantage for Petco.

The Wild & Waggy event was extremely well received by those who attended and received much attention online. By leveraging BuzzFeed's massive brands and a deep relationship with the platform's audiences, Petco tapped into a powerful digital audience that reached an organically engaged and responsive public, which successfully drove traffic to the event landing page (12K total page views) for local guest RSVPs. Over 20 influencers attended Wild & Waggy, generating further promotion to their engaged followers. Together, Petco and BuzzFeed were able to collect 1,450 opt-in data captures, growing our respective data pools and extending the value of the event.

The media campaign was successful in achieving its goals of communicating Petco's commitment to nutrition and converting views from BuzzFeed's mass audience into purchase behaviors.

Attitudinal control/exposed upper funnel survey research via Kantar Millward Brown measuring the media found that **the ads garnered intent among pet parents within BuzzFeed's audience to shop for the featured nutritious food brands at Petco.** Owing to the softly spoken voiceover of the products and their descriptors, the custom video was most impactful in communicating to viewers that Petco offers nutritious pet food without artificial ingredients and produced the highest intent levels.

In addition to an increase in consideration, lower funnel control/exposed foot traffic analysis via Foursquare Placed showed how multiple assets drove a **lift in actual traffic to Petco stores.** Ads led to 356K+ incremental visits to Petco locations following exposure to campaign media, showing how BuzzFeed's unique communication of the nutrition purpose messaging led pet parents to see Petco as the go-to destination for their pets' food.

Featured Contributors

Shari Sternbach, BuzzFeed, Manager, Ad Effectiveness
Sundy He, BuzzFeed, Ad Optimization Lead
Chelsea Cantrell, BuzzFeed, Sr. Brand Planning Manager
Mia Alicata, BuzzFeed, Strategic Insights & Analytics
Oscar Diaz, BuzzFeed, Experiential Manager
Alison Flood, BuzzFeed, VP Experiential
Jamie Pace, BuzzFeed, Sr. Account Executive
Claire Shriver, BuzzFeed, Sr. Account Manager
Kelly Leach, Horizon Media, SVP, Brand Strategy
Laura Reilly, Horizon Media, VP, Brand Strategy
Elise Fisher, Horizon Media, Associate Director, Brand Strategy
Sarah Koch, Horizon Media, Supervisor, Brand Strategy
Sidney Stephens, Horizon Media, Brand Strategist
Aidan Hickey, Horizon Media, Asst. Brand Strategist
Candice Bixler, Petco, Director, Media
Ashlin Prol, Petco, Manager, Media
Megan Oxford, Petco, Manager, PR
Kristen Simpson, Petco, Manager, Marketing Strategy
Alysa Frost, Petco, Director, Marketing Strategy
Marco Lopez, Petco, Director, Experiential Marketing