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RECLAIMING THE FEED

A guide for vet professionals to building trust & tackling misinformation on social media

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Why expert voices matter in the feed

61%

of pet owners say their vet practice is still their most common source for pet-health advice.[1]

Trusted expertise already exists. The opportunity is to bring it to the places pet owners are looking.

Social media has become part of how pet owners find information, ask questions and make sense of their pet's health. From nutrition and behaviour to symptoms and treatment, there's more advice than ever outside veterinary practices. But more information doesn't always mean better information.

Alongside credible advice, pet owners are exposed to personal opinion, conflicting claims and misinformation, often presented with the same confidence as expert guidance. From claims that "grain-free is better" to myths about kibble being full of "fillers", pet owners are constantly exposed to confident claims about what they should feed their pets.

This means it's more important than ever to ensure that expert voices have a place on social media. 61% of pet owners say their vet practice is still their most common source for pet health advice[1]. Vet practices therefore have a real opportunity to bring trusted expertise to social media, where pet owners are already looking.

This guide will help your practice share its expertise with confidence, create credible and engaging content, challenge misinformation and build stronger connections with pet owners online. For over 55 years, Royal Canin has worked side by side with the veterinary community to champion a science-led, evidence-based approach to pet health.

Six practical principles

1. **Know your role**
2. **Listen to your audience**
3. **Make it simple**
4. **Show your expertise**
5. **Answer, don't amplify**
6. **Keep the conversation going**

> **Together, they will help make trusted veterinary expertise a stronger presence in the feed."**
>
> — Hillary Pearce, Royal Canin DVM, DACAW, MRCVS Health Affairs Lead

[1] RSPCA Animal Kindness Report, via Vet Times.

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Why social media matters for your veterinary practice

Social media isn't just about posting. It's an opportunity for your practice to be present where pet owners are already looking for information, advice and reassurance.

Used thoughtfully, social media can help your practice:

01

Build stronger connections

Create an approachable, two-way relationship with your pet-owner community and make your practice feel more accessible beyond the consulting room.

02

Make expertise more visible

Turn veterinary knowledge into useful, relevant content that helps pet owners understand their pets' health and make more informed decisions.

03

Become a trusted voice

Move beyond practice updates to credible advice that earns attention, encourages engagement and gives pet owners a reason to keep coming back.

04

Create value, not noise

Answer real questions, tackle common misconceptions and give people something genuinely useful to save, share or discuss.



A few things to consider

Social media also comes with responsibilities. Keep content accurate, avoid oversimplifying complex health topics, protect client confidentiality and be clear about when pet owners should seek professional advice.

Find RCVS guidance here

Meeting pet owners where they are

When pet owners are worried about their animal's health, many are increasingly looking online before speaking to a professional. Social media is a big part of that picture and depending on people's algorithms, pet-health content can appear even when owners are not actively looking for it.

88%

of UK pet owners turn to the internet for advice when concerned about their pet[2]

10%

use AI tools such as ChatGPT and Gemini for pet-care advice[3]

14%

of UK pet owners use social media for pet-care advice - the highest level recorded by the RSPCA[4]

Depending on people's algorithms, social media can put pet-health content in front of owners even when they aren't actively looking for it. More ways to find answers can mean greater access to useful information. But it also means more opportunities for inaccurate or misleading advice to influence what owners think and do.



Nutrition is a good example. Feeds can turn complex questions about ingredients, diets and feeding into simple claims that are easy to understand, but harder to challenge.

More ways to find answers

Greater access to useful information

Algorithms shape the feed

Pet-health content appears without an active search

Simple claims travel fast

Complex nutrition questions become easy-to-share statements

2 www.thenational.scot/news/national/uk-today/25177231.vet-vs-google-pet-owners-turning-google-diagnose-pet-health/
3 www.vettimes.com/news/business/digital/time-bomb-warning-issued-over-pet-owners-ai-use
4 www.vettimes.com/news/business/finance/owners-vet-bill-worries-still-high-rspcas-animal-kindness-report

Why misleading content gets traction

Good advice doesn't always win the attention battle. Social media rewards content that is quick to understand, emotionally engaging and easy to share. Veterinary advice can be more nuanced. It may need context, caveats or an explanation of why something is true. However, we all know the content that feels easiest to understand isn't always the content that is most accurate.

What makes misleading content so appealing?

The examples below show some of the common types of misinformation pet owners may encounter online, and why this content can often feel so convincing and appealing.

SIMPLE

"Grains are fillers and cause allergies."

A clear-cut answer is easy to process, remember and repeat. "Do this" or "never do that" can feel more satisfying than a nuanced explanation.

PERSONAL

"I switched my dog to raw food and it completely changed their health."

People naturally connect with stories and experiences. One owner saying "this worked for my dog" can feel more relatable than evidence drawn from a wider population.

CONFIDENCE

"Kibble is basically burnt, ultra-processed food."

Certainty can sound convincing. A creator who speaks with complete confidence may appear more authoritative than an expert who appropriately acknowledges uncertainty.

EMOTIONAL

"You are poisoning your pet with processed food."

Content that creates surprise, fear, excitement or outrage is more likely to stop the scroll and prompt a reaction.

The result?

A simple, confident nutrition claim can feel convincing before someone has had a chance to ask whether it is actually credible.

The answer is not to make veterinary advice less accurate. It is to make trusted advice easier to find, understand and engage with.

That's where your practice can make a difference.

So, what can veterinary professionals do?

The answer isn't to make veterinary advice less accurate. It's to make credible advice easier to find, understand and engage with. Your expertise is valuable, but social media changes how that expertise needs to be communicated.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY

Pet owners are already encountering advice online. Your practice can help make sure credible veterinary expertise is part of that conversation.

Be the voice that makes the right information easier to understand.



Make trusted advice work harder

1

Lead with the point

Start with the question, problem or misconception your audience already cares about. Rather than opening with "Grain-free diets are not better", start with "Is grain-free actually better for your pet?"

2

Keep it clear

Use straightforward language and explain the important context without overwhelming people.

3

Bring expertise to life

Use everyday questions and real examples to explain what actually matters when assessing a pet's nutritional needs, rather than focusing on one ingredient or trend.

4

Show personality

A human, approachable voice can make professional advice feel more relatable without compromising credibility. Introduce yourself and your credentials, share appropriate experiences, or bring your own pet into your content.

5

Give people a reason to engage

Create content that answers a question, challenges a common misconception or gives pet owners something genuinely useful to save, share or discuss. For example: "Should dogs eat like wolves?" can provide an engaging starting point for explaining how dogs' nutritional needs differ from common perceptions about their ancestry.

Turning veterinary trust into social influence

61%

of pet owners say their vet practice is their most common source of pet-health advice.

Veterinary professionals already have something social media can't manufacture: professional trust. In fact, 61% of pet owners say their vet practice is their most common source of pet-health advice. The opportunity is to take that trusted expertise beyond the consultation room and into the feed.

Why vets have a head start

Professional knowledge, experience and direct relationships with pet owners provide a strong foundation for credible online content.

But trust needs translating

Expertise alone does not guarantee attention. Social content needs to be clear, relevant and easy to understand while still reflecting the evidence and nuance behind veterinary advice.



3 tips from Cat the Vet

Cat Henstridge, aka Cat the Vet, is a UK small animal veterinary surgeon and content creator with over 40k followers on Instagram. She has built an engaged social media presence by making evidence-based veterinary advice accessible and engaging for pet owners. Here are three of her tips for communicating with your audience online:

1 **Include nutrition naturally in your posts**
Weave nutrition into everyday content, like patient stories, to show it is important and you are knowledgeable and approachable on the subject.

2 **Always frame nutrition posts positively**
Focus on the benefits of appropriate ingredients, nutrients and diets to educate in an engaging and positive way.

3 **Be prepared to engage and share resources**
Respond constructively to comments and questions, and have reliable resources from reputable organisations, ready to support your advice.

The opportunity

Instead of simply telling pet owners that grain-free diets aren't necessarily better, answer the question behind the claim and explain what they should consider when choosing a diet.

By showing up consistently with credible, useful content, veterinary professionals can help pet owners recognise reliable information and challenge misinformation in the places they are already consuming it.

From broadcasting to building a community

Social media works best when it feels like a two-way conversation, not a noticeboard. For veterinary practices, that means creating content that pet owners can understand, trust and respond to, while making professional expertise feel more accessible.

Five building blocks of trustworthy content

1. **EVIDENCE**
   Base advice on reliable veterinary knowledge and established guidance.

2. **TRANSPARENCY**
   Be open about what is known, what is uncertain and when further advice is needed.

3. **CLARITY**
   Swap jargon for simple language without losing the important message.

4. **EMPATHY**
   Recognise the concerns, emotions and real-life challenges behind a pet-owner question.

5. **EXPERTISE**
   Make your professional knowledge visible and explain the "why" behind your advice.

Example

A trustworthy post doesn't have to be complicated. Start with one clear question, explain the key point simply, support it with evidence and give the audience a useful next step.

"Why does my pet food contain "fillers" like grains?"

Do not dismiss the question.

Explain what the ingredient contributes and why looking at the overall nutritional profile matters.

Think:

"Would a pet owner save this, share this or feel more confident after reading it?"

That is the difference between broadcasting information and building a community around trusted expertise.



Tackling misinformation head on

Misinformation can travel quickly, but veterinary professionals have an opportunity to slow it down with clear, credible advice.

PAUSE BEFORE YOU POST
Check the claim and consider whether responding could genuinely help the audience.

LEAD WITH THE FACTS
Explain what the evidence tells us in simple, accessible language. Avoid repeating a misleading claim unnecessarily or giving it more visibility.

EXPLAIN, DO NOT JUST CORRECT
Help pet owners understand why the advice is misleading and what they should consider instead. Keep the tone approachable and helpful rather than preachy, so your expertise invites people into the conversation rather than shutting it down.

Hillary's tips



1 Avoid the "Over-Defending" trap
Never get dragged into heated comment battles. State the scientific facts clearly once, then politely step away.

2 Lead with empathy, no just science
Pet owners want the best for their pets.

3 Own your authority
Your professional experience is your superpower. Sharing real outcomes you've seen can bring the facts to life.

Nutrition is a great example.

Pet owners regularly encounter simple, confident claims about what they should feed their pets. Here's how to add the context social media often leaves out:

CLAIM YOU MIGHT SEE ONLINE	HOW TO ADD CONTEXT
"Grain-free diets are better."	Grain-free does not automatically mean healthier. What matters is whether the diet provides the right nutrients for the individual pet.
"Kibble is full of fillers."	Avoid reducing nutrition to individual ingredients. Ingredients each have a purpose and can contribute valuable nutrients to a complete diet.
"The first ingredient tells you how nutritious the food is."	Ingredient lists alone do not tell the whole nutritional story. Focus on the overall nutrient profile and whether the food is complete and balanced.
"Dogs are wolves, so they need a raw diet."	Dogs have evolved alongside humans and have nutritional needs that differ from wild wolves. Raw feeding also comes with food-safety considerations.

These claims can sound convincing because they reduce a complex nutritional question to a simple answer. Veterinary professionals can add the context that short-form social content often leaves out.

Watch out for...

arguments, absolute statements, anecdotes presented as evidence, judgemental language, and engaging with content that could amplify harmful claims.

Turn misinformation into education

A misleading claim does not always need to become a confrontation.
It can become a useful piece of content that answers the question behind it.

Turn a claim into a teaching moment

01
SPOT THE QUESTION

Identify the claim or concern behind what a pet owner has seen or heard, and turn it into a question you can address.

For example: "Is grain-free actually better for my pet?"

02
ADD THE CONTEXT

Removing grains does not automatically make a diet healthier.

The nutritional suitability of a diet cannot be judged by one ingredient or trend alone.

03
GIVE A USEFUL TAKEAWAY

Explain what actually matters when choosing a complete diet.

Encourage owners to consider the individual needs of their pet rather than focusing on a single ingredient.

The strongest responses help pet owners recognise the difference between a confident claim and credible advice.

Keep in mind...

Consider the potential impact, avoid unnecessary amplification, and stay within your professional scope. Where an individual pet's health is concerned, signpost to appropriate veterinary advice.



Think like a content creator

You don't need to become a content creator to create great veterinary content.
You already have something valuable: expertise, experience and a constant stream of real questions from pet owners.

The challenge is often not knowing what to say, but feeling confident enough to share it.

01 **Drop the creator mindset**

You don't need perfect lighting, trending sounds or a huge following. Useful, authentic content can be as simple as answering a common question or explaining something pet owners often misunderstand.

02 **Let your personality show**

Being professional doesn't mean being formal. A warm tone, relatable language, humour or a glimpse of the people behind the practice can make expert advice feel more approachable without compromising credibility. For example, a vet explaining why "grain-free" or "human-grade" doesn't automatically mean "better" can be both informative and conversational.

03 **Don't wait for the perfect post**

Think useful over polished. Start with one thing you know that could help a pet owner today.

By combining your expertise, personality and genuinely useful content, you'll naturally create content people want to follow.



Never run out of things to post

The easiest place to find content ideas is often your own practice. Every day brings questions, misconceptions, useful tips, interesting cases and moments that could help a wider audience.

Turn everyday knowledge into simple content

A QUESTION YOU HEAR OFTEN

"What should I feed my puppy?"

Create a short Q&A or saveable carousel.

A COMMON MISCONCEPTION

"Grain-free food is better."

Create a Myth vs Fact post.

SOMETHING OWNERS GET WRONG

"Cats need milk."

Create a Myth vs Fact Story/Reel.

A CONFUSING LABEL

"Why does my pet food contain corn?"

Create a simple explainer carousel.

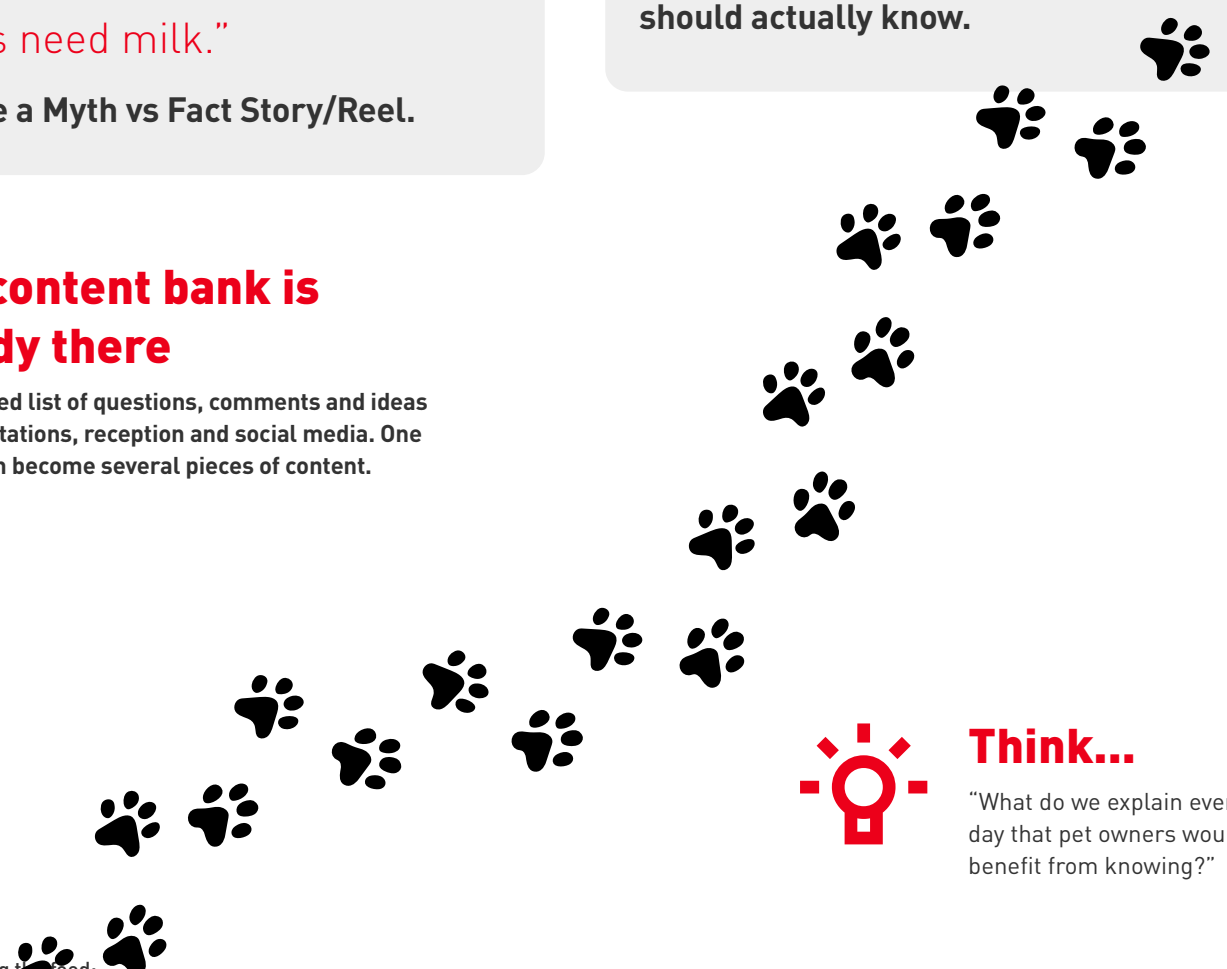
A VIRAL CLAIM

"Kibble is ultra-processed and basically burnt."

Create a myth-busting Reel explaining what owners should actually know.

Your content bank is already there

Start a shared list of questions, comments and ideas from consultations, reception and social media. One question can become several pieces of content.



Think...

"What do we explain every day that pet owners would benefit from knowing?"



Turning good ideas into great social content

Top 3 tips from Rebecca

1 Create for a reaction, not a reach
Before you make anything, decide what you want someone to think, feel or do after seeing it. The strongest social content has a job beyond simply getting views.

2 Earn attention quickly, then earn the right to keep it
Getting someone to stop is only the first step. Every second, slide or sentence should give them a reason to stay. If something isn't adding value, cut it.

3 Don't mistake performance for insight
A high-performing post tells you something worked, not necessarily what. Look beyond likes and views to the comments, saves, shares and questions. That's where you learn what your audience genuinely values, and what to create next.



How to make great content

Good veterinary advice is only useful on social media if people stop, understand it and remember it. Great content combines a strong idea with an execution that works for the platform and the audience.



STOP THE SCROLL

Start with a hook: e.g Does the first ingredient really tell you how good a pet food is?" or "Is grain-free food actually better for your pet?"

Lead with the question, problem or misconception that will make a pet owner want to keep watching.

TELL A STORY

Give information context. A quick scenario, real-life example or "you might be doing this without realising..." can make expert advice more engaging.

MAKE IT VISUAL

Use clear visuals, movement, on-screen text and relevant footage to help communicate the message. You don't need highly produced content. You need content that is easy to follow.

Before posting, ask...
Would I stop scrolling for this?

Choose the right format

The same veterinary idea can work in different ways. Choosing the right format helps you communicate the message in the way people are most likely to consume it.

Reels

Best for quick explanations, myth-busting, demonstrations, FAQs and common pet-nutrition questions.

Carousels

Great for breaking down a topic step by step, sharing lists, explaining labels or creating useful content people can save and revisit.

Stories

Ideal for quick updates, polls, questions, behind-the-scenes content and starting conversations with your community.

Comments & DMs

Sometimes the best content idea is already in your audience's questions. Use recurring questions or themes to shape future posts.



One idea, multiple formats

A single FAQ could become a Reel, a carousel, a Story poll and a follow-up Q&A.

Don't create more. Create smarter.

Never run out of things to post

You do not need endless new ideas. You need a few strong content pillars that you can return to consistently.

Build your content around themes such as:

EDUCATE

Simple explanations of pet health, nutrition and preventative care. Example: What does "complete and balanced" actually mean?

ANSWER

Frequently asked questions from consultations, reception, comments and DMs.

DEBUNK

Common myths, misleading claims and viral pet advice. Example: Is grain-free food actually better?

SHOW

Behind the scenes: your practice, equipment and day-to-day expertise.

MEET THE TEAM

Introduce the people behind the practice and let their personalities come through.

SEASONAL

Relevant advice linked to holidays, weather, life stages and seasonal risks.

CREATE A CONTENT BANK

Keep a shared list of questions, ideas and topics as they come up. Planning ahead means you are not starting from a blank page every time.

Consistency beats perfection...

Choose a realistic posting rhythm your team can maintain rather than trying to post every day.

Create with confidence and keep the conversation going

Great social content does not require a professional studio. A phone, good light and clear audio can take you a long way.

A simple starter kit

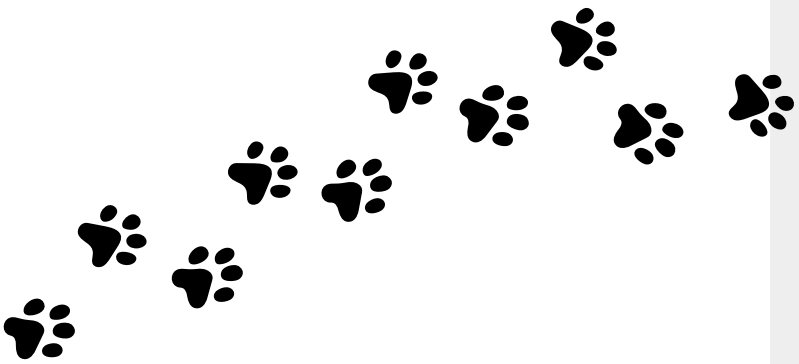
- **SMARTPHONE**
- **CLIP-ON MIC**
- **LED/ WINDOW LIGHT**
- **TRIPOD/STAND**

Quick tips when filming

- Clean your camera lens
- Record vertically
- Face a light source
- Choose a quiet space
- Keep background relevant

Remember
Social is a conversation. Respond to genuine questions, acknowledge concerns and use comments to understand what your audience wants to know next. When criticism or misinformation appears, stay professional, factual and constructive rather than getting drawn into an argument.

The goal isn't to make every post perfect.
It's to create useful content consistently, learn what resonates and build a community that knows where to turn for trusted veterinary advice.



LINKS:

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https://canva.link/s3dr3bgfypjlpel

Social media best-practice checklist

KNOW YOUR ROLE

Use your professional expertise to provide credible, responsible guidance.

LISTEN TO YOUR AUDIENCE

Start with the questions, concerns and misconceptions pet owners are already talking about.

MAKE IT SIMPLE

Translate complex veterinary knowledge into clear, accessible language without losing the important detail.

SHOW YOUR EXPERTISE

Explain the evidence behind your advice, make your professional perspective visible and add context behind common health and nutrition claims.

ANSWER, DON'T AMPLIFY

Correct misleading information without unnecessarily repeating or giving harmful claims more reach.

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Respond constructively to questions and comments, and use them to identify future content opportunities.



When featuring Royal Canin organically, keep content authentic to your own voice and useful to your audience.

If your practice stocks Royal Canin

If you're unsure about any Royal Canin nutritional information, product details or claims before posting, speak to your Royal Canin Veterinary Business Manager, who can help.

Remember...
You do not need to sound like a brand. Use your voice, share your expertise and keep the focus on better outcomes for pets.

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THANK YOU

Keep trusted veterinary expertise in the feed.

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