



## SAPA! Foster Marketing

In this guide, we'll show you how you can be your foster pet's best advocate, marketing them to a wider range of potential adopters so they can find a great match as quickly as possible—and you can open your home to another pet in need of your care!

Our approach is known as “lifesaving marketing.” Compared to traditional marketing, lifesaving marketing is more inclusive, more dynamic and easier on shelter staff! Take a look at some of the differences between the two:

Traditional Marketing	Lifesaving Marketing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the “rules”</li> <li>• Pet marketing via biography</li> <li>• Stop signs in text:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “NO CATS”</li> <li>○ “Must be the only dog”</li> <li>○ “Needs a home with no children under 12”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• General animal care social media posts, funny pet videos, foods to avoid at Thanksgiving, etc., with no specific tie-in to the organization’s mission of adoption</li> <li>• All social media and other communications created by shelter staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thoughtful rule-breaking</li> <li>• Highlighting a specific pet’s adorable quirk, or a story about an interaction with other dogs or people</li> <li>• Biographies are also used, but not exclusively</li> <li>• Leave the adoption counseling to the pet’s foster and adoption counselors</li> <li>• Community-creating language: <i>you, us, we</i></li> <li>• Use only messages that are fun and engaging and at the same time relevant to your mission</li> <li>• Volunteer- and foster-driven messaging for innovative content</li> </ul>

### Don’t use “STOP language.”

“Stop language” is essentially a disclaimer (e.g, “not potty trained”, “chews furniture”, etc.). This type of information is for adoption counseling, not marketing.

### Be accessible.

The more accessible you are, the more likely a potential adopter is to remain engaged.



**Be creative.**

Don't be afraid to try new things! You may strike gold. The more sites, digital and physical, that display your foster's face, the closer you are to the right match.

DON'T	DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet Fido!</li> <li>• My name is Kitty!</li> <li>• Rover is our Pet of the Day.</li> <li>• We don't know why Coco hasn't been adopted yet!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who's the squishiest, cutest dog on the block? Roscoe!</li> <li>• Balloon-bouncing, swing-pushing, life-loving Coco is our longest-term doggie resident.</li> <li>• In a foster home full of brothers, what's a girl to do? Take the lead, of course!</li> </ul>

**Photographs**

A good photo is... **Bright. Clear. Happy.**

Photographs can be the key to your foster dog's adoption. Getting photos that are well-lit, in focus and that give the viewer a window into a pet's personality can be tricky, but we have some ideas that can make this much easier for you.

**Take Photos With People and/or Other Animals**

Photographs taken with people and/or other animals are great because they not only feature the pet, they give information as well. A photo of two dogs together looking happy tells potential adopters, "This dog is good with (at least some) other dogs." A photo of a cat and a small child implies that the cat is safe with children. Keep this in mind when creating marketing material for your foster pet.

**Marketing vs. Adoption Counseling**

DON'T focus on restrictions. Restrictions are articulated either as a directive statement, as in "no kids" or as a passive statement such as, "would do best in a home with no kids." Even if you are firm about the restriction and will not adopt the dog to a home with kids or cats, you can save that conversation for the in-person adoption counseling process. This is when you will explain the dog's full history and why you are going to use the restriction. Your adopters will appreciate your transparency and information and trust in your adoption process.