

# COVID-19

## SURVIVAL GUIDE:

How your practice can survive and thrive in these crazy times



# SIX PRACTICAL STEPS TO SURVIVING THE COVID CRISIS



**Dr. Michele Drake**  
Owner, The Drake Center  
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# 1. "I" THINK INDEPENDENTLY

***YOU are responsible for your practice. YOU are in control.***

- We are medical professionals – we know more about viruses than the media
- Avoid non-credible media sources
- Industry associations have their place, but YOU need to make the decisions for your practice
- Think about the needs of your community, your staff, your clients, as well as yourself and your family
- Yes these are tough times, but what YOU do today will determine the future of your **business**

# 2. DO THE BASICS CONSISTENTLY

*You've heard this 100 times already, but just make sure you do it.*

- **Dr. David Price video, critical care pulmonologist – watch and share**
- **Keep in mind not all our staff understand aseptic technique - need to educate them**
- **Staff with any symptoms should stay home**
- **Vulnerable staff should stay home (immune compromised or over 65)**
  - *Tip:* Look for ways to use these staff (if not ill) to continue contributing. e.g. remote receptionists, puppy talks, client communications
- **Social distancing**
- **Hand washing**
- **No human clients in the hospital (parking lot drop-offs or other safe solutions)**



# 3. CONTROL YOUR FINANCES

*You need to stay in business – for your family, your staff and your community. Some short-term pain now is better than worse outcomes later.*

- **Plan ahead**
  - Even if you haven't seen a big impact, you should still be prepared
  - CARES PPP & Emergency Loan options
- **If you need to reduce staffing, start by asking who has the ability to take some time off**
- **This varies greatly from one hospital to another – look at *your* specific situation**
  - Evaluate based on your specific mix of services and revenue centers
  - For example boarding, grooming services have gone to zero in many cases
- **There will be hard choices to make; many practices will need to make layoffs**
  - It's not personal, try to avoid making it an emotional situation
  - Know that you'll do your best to re-hire when possible



# 3. CONTROL YOUR FINANCES

*You need to stay in business – for your family, your staff and your community. Some short-term pain now is better than worse outcomes later.*

- **Watch your numbers DAILY (primarily drugs / supplies & payroll)**
  - Adjust payroll daily or weekly
  - Have staff volunteer to go home if day ends up slower than expected
  - Buy small amounts of supplies to preserve cash (no hoarding!)
- **Look for more ways to generate revenue** – such as selling and shipping product



# 4. COMMUNICATE

*Communicate constantly with your team and your community.*

- **“Meet” with your team regularly:**
  - Ensure total clarity within your team on your policies and procedures
  - Leadership team daily to ensure everyone is staying positive and on the same page
  - Staff at least weekly – email to staff every couple of days with updates on process
- **If not done already, get your client communications basics done immediately:**
  - Website banner and page explaining how you’re responding
  - Update directories such as Google My Business, Yelp, Facebook, GeniusVets
- **Client communications are vital - be calm, reassuring, and authoritative**
  - We’re here for you during this difficult time
  - How we’re managing, how we’re operating differently
  - Videos, client emails, social media updates (Gabrielle will discuss further)

# 5. MAINTAIN A POSITIVE OUTLOOK

*We don't know when this will resolve, but it will. Act accordingly.*

- **Minimize your exposure to negativity**
- **Take care of yourself and your team**
  - Physical – sleep, exercise, meals – maintain your routines or increase them
  - Mental – take walks, meditate, talk to mentors or peers
- **Your team wants a confident person at the helm right now**
  - Your attitude as the owner will guide theirs
- **Get comfortable with ambiguity and be prepared to adapt**





# 6. FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

*Take steps now to prepare for when things improve.*

- We had an amazing economy going into this – no reason this shouldn't return
- Don't downsize in a way that compromises your ability to grow again
- If not doing routine care, start building future schedule ASAP
- **Build relationships in your community for the future**
  - In my area, Banfield is closed – this is an opportunity to acquire new clients!
  - The relationships we build during tough times can be the strongest
- **Treat people well in spite of the pressure (clients and staff)**
  - “People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” – Maya Angelou



# SOCIAL MEDIA SURVIVAL STRATEGIES



**Gabrielle Feldman-Seltzer**  
Social Media Manager,  
GeniusVets

# WHY YOU NEED TO BE ON SOCIAL. RIGHT NOW

## The current state of social:

- Digital attention is at an all time high
- According to Social Media Today, social media use is surging during the COVID-19 outbreak
- Many businesses are scaling back their social media efforts =  
OPPORTUNITY



# FACEBOOK ADS

- **Many of your competitors are pausing their ad campaigns**
  - Less competition for ad space is an opportunity for that attention
- **Best Type of Ad to Run Now: “Brand-Awareness”**
  - Brand-awareness ads are low cost
  - When choosing an ad objective for your campaign, there is a variance in cost to obtain that goal. Right now is a great time to run a low cost “brand-awareness” campaign to simply generate impressions, rather than trying to get someone to convert on an offer



# FACEBOOK ADS

*You have the opportunity to serve pet owners right now, and win their business in the future.*

## How to win their business now:

- Are you open while your competitor down the street is closed?
- This is the time to run an ad simply stating that you are open for business

## How to win their business in the future:

- Show up online and help educate pet owners throughout the crisis
- If they are coming to you for answers because you are showing up, you are going to gain their trust, and hopefully their business

# ORGANIC SOCIAL POST STRATEGY

3 Content "Buckets" to Focus On



**Communicate**



**Document**



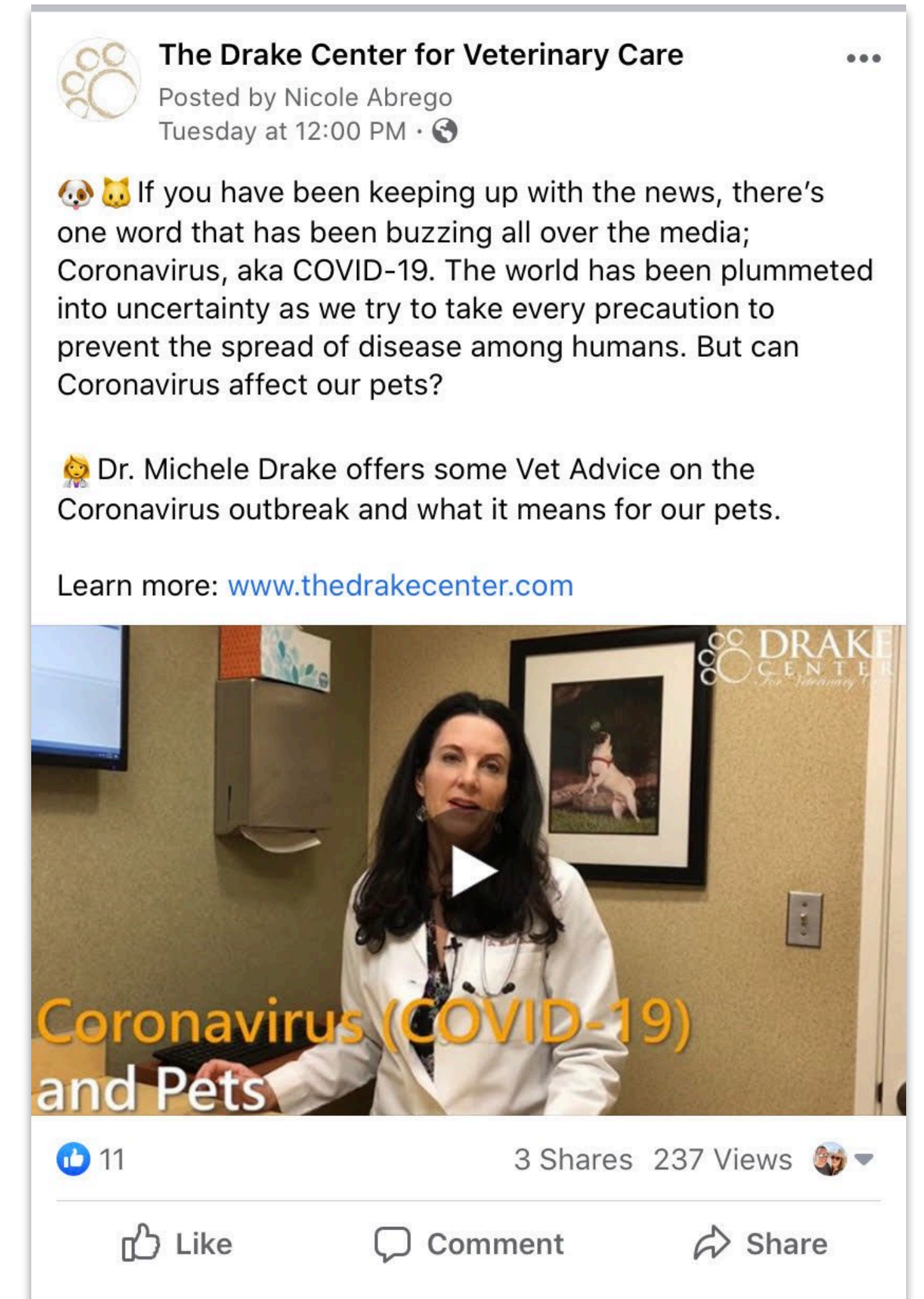
**Delight**



# ORGANIC SOCIAL POST STRATEGY

## #1 – Communicate - keep clients informed!

- Breaking news updates in your practice
- Any updates to procedures, hours, limited services, etc.
- COVID-19 updates as it relates to pet health



# ORGANIC SOCIAL POST STRATEGY

## #2 – Document

- Memos are good, but also document what you're doing!
- Showing the new safety protocols will help show clients what to expect and will also help put their mind at ease





# ORGANIC SOCIAL POST STRATEGY

- #3 – Delight

- People need a reason to smile right now and pets are the one of the best ways to do that!
- Feel good stories
- Mental health benefits of pet ownership



# ORGANIC SOCIAL POST STRATEGY

*Combine multiple content types to maximize engagement!*

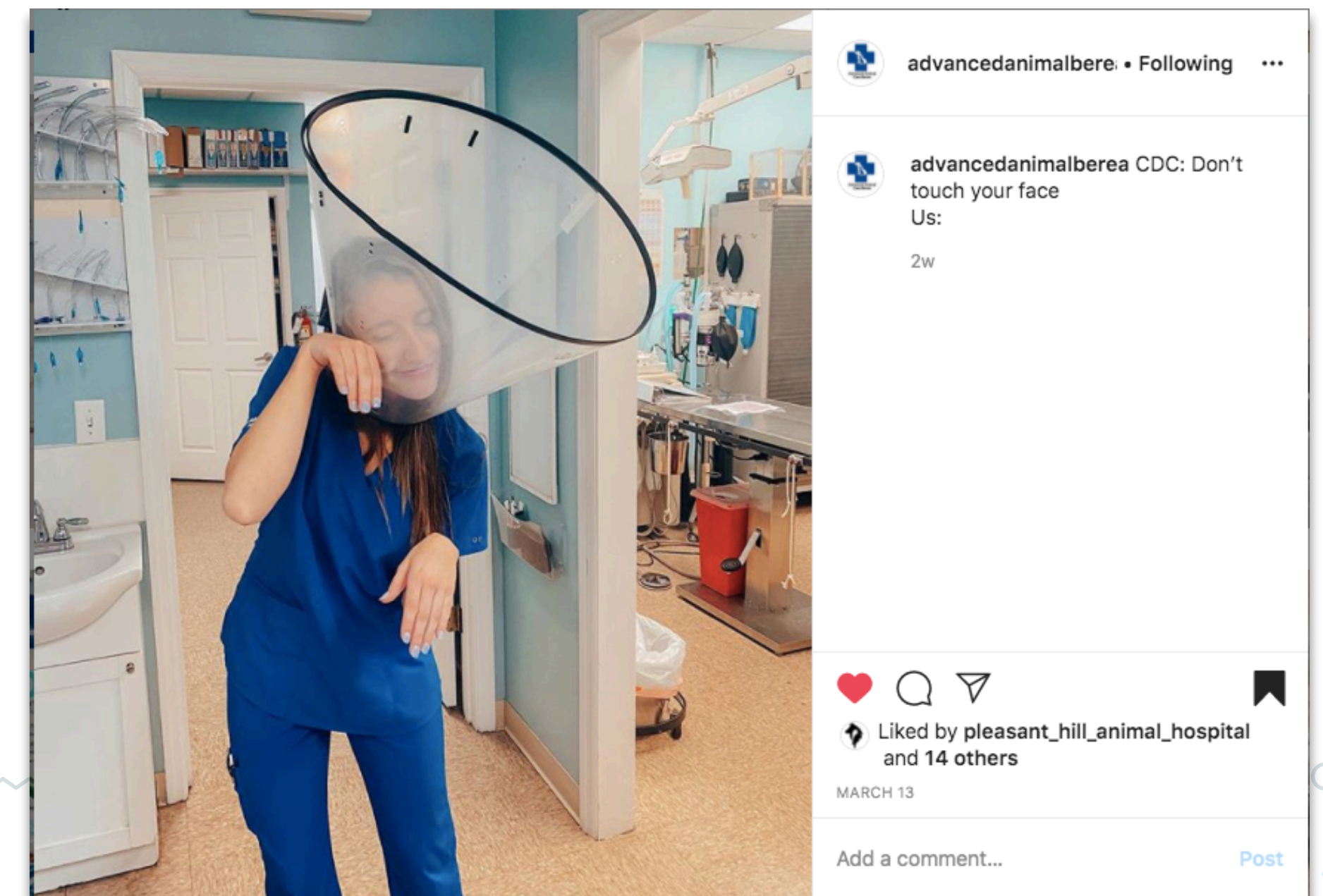
- DELIGHT + COMMUNICATE



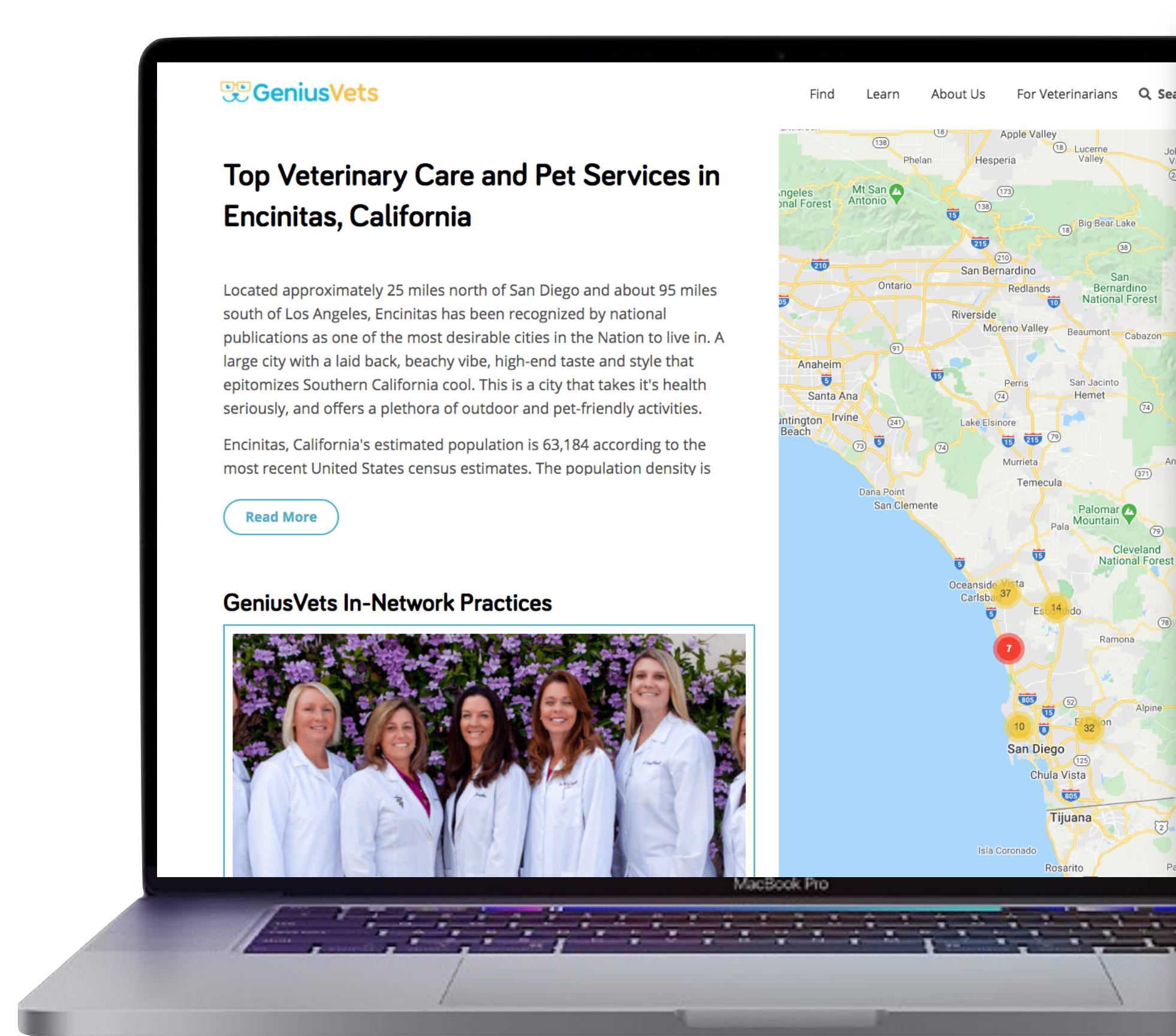
# ORGANIC SOCIAL POST STRATEGY

## Humor

- Delicate balance of making someone laugh without making light of the situation - ask clients to share pics of what it's like to work from home with their pets, relatable pet memes, etc.



# A free way to inform your community about how you are responding



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