

EMAIL MARKETING FOR ANIMAL SHELTERS



Why Email?

You depend on the support of others to keep your shelter running. Be it money, volunteers, supplies, adopters or foster homes, you want to know you have a group of people who care. This is where email comes in.

It's a digital age. Pew Internet Research reports 92% of U.S. adult Internet users send or read email, with 61% doing this daily. So, not surprisingly, 72% of respondents on an Econsultancy survey rated email's return on investment as excellent to good. And these aren't the only stats that support email.

Email helps develop and improve your network. You have consistent communications with your subscribers, with little work required on your part. Most email marketing services allow you to set up a series of emails that you can set to go out at certain intervals, along with messages that can be queued to send at a specific time.

And most importantly, pet lovers are online. With services like Petfinder.com, people can be easily introduced to local shelters and animals in need. In the 15 years Petfinder has been online, 17 million adoptions have taken place through the site. All of these pet families are potential readers for your email campaign.

Building Your Network

People won't know about your mailing list unless you tell them, so a big part of getting subscribers involves asking and advertising. Carol Bryant, Social Media and PR Director of FIDO Friendly Magazine, believes that most people interested in animal shelters would like to help out: "I believe many want to give back but are uncertain the best way to do so," says Bryant. She herself connects with animal shelters via email.

Here are the top five ways to get more subscribers:

- Ask on adoption applications
- Provide sign up sheet at your shelter
- Include a form on your website
- Ask on social media platforms
- Encourage others to spread the word

We'll go over each of these methods in detail.

First, a Note on Permission

While most people love to support animals, it's important you only email people who request to be added to your mailing list. Emailing anyone who doesn't request it is considered spam. If someone marks the message your message as spam in their email service, this hurts your deliverability, which makes it harder for the people who do want your emails to actually get them.

Adoption Applications

If someone chooses to adopt or sponsor one of your animals, they're already making a big commitment. They trust you, and want to support your cause. These are prime candidates for your mailing list.

Check out how this looks on an application from [Cat Tales](#):



The image shows a printed adoption application form for Cat Tales, Inc. Animal Rescue. The form is titled "ADOPTION APPLICATION" and includes a logo of a cat's head inside a circle with the text "Cat Tales, Inc. ANIMAL RESCUE". Below the logo, it states "No kill, non-profit volunteer organization working for the care and placement of animals in need." The form contains several sections for personal information, including "I wish to adopt (name)", "Age", "Full name", "Street address", "Home/Cell", "Appl or POBox", "Work phone", "City/Town", "State", and "Zip". A red circle highlights the question "Can we send you our newsletter via email? If so, please provide your email address:". Below this, there are questions about whether the applicant owns a car, if they are over 21, if they are adopting for themselves or someone else, if there are other adults in the household, if there are children living with them, and if they have applied to adopt at other shelters. The form also asks for two personal references and a veterinarian. At the bottom, there is a signature line, a date line, and a disclaimer: "THE INFORMATION THAT I HAVE PROVIDED ON THIS APPLICATION IS TRUE AND CORRECT AND I GIVE MY VETERINARIAN PERMISSION TO RELEASE THE MEDICAL HISTORY ON MY PAST OR CURRENT PETS." The footer includes the organization's address, phone number, website, and email.

Cat Tales, Inc.
ANIMAL RESCUE
No kill, non-profit volunteer organization working for the care and placement of animals in need.

ADOPTION APPLICATION

Please complete the form below to be considered for a pet from Cat Tales.

- The applications are listed to the adoption reviewers at least once a day at 215/933-6900.
- The reviewer will make at least two attempts to contact you by way of the provided phone numbers, leaving a message on non-answers. If we do not hear back from you within 48 hours, your application will lapse.
- Completion of this application does not guarantee approval. Applications are processed in order of receipt. There may be multiple applicants for a cat, including on-line applications.
- Applications are approved based on confidential guidelines in order to obtain accurate and truthful information.

I wish to adopt (name) _____ Age: _____ years/months, male ☐ female ☐

Full name _____ Street address _____

Home/Cell _____ Appl or POBox _____

Work phone _____ City/Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Can we send you our newsletter via email? If so, please provide your email address: _____

Do you own a car? If yes ☐ If no ☐ If no, what is your vehicle's plate number _____

Are you over 21? Yes ☐ No ☐ Are you adopting for yourself? ☐ Someone else ☐ Relationship _____

Are there other adults in the household? Yes ☐ No ☐ How many? _____

Are there children living with you? Yes ☐ No ☐ If "yes," ages _____

Please list any pets you currently have: _____

Please list any pets you have had in the past and what happened: _____

Have you applied to adopt at other shelters? Yes ☐ No ☐

Will the cat be kept: ONLY INDOOR ☐ ONLY OUTDOOR ☐ BOTH ☐

Please list two personal references (We must be able to contact at least one reference):

Reference name _____ Telephone _____

Reference name _____ Telephone _____

Which veterinarian do you use (or plan to use)? Hospital or Vet name _____

Are you a current customer? Yes ☐ No ☐ Telephone _____

THE INFORMATION THAT I HAVE PROVIDED ON THIS APPLICATION IS TRUE AND CORRECT AND I GIVE MY VETERINARIAN PERMISSION TO RELEASE THE MEDICAL HISTORY ON MY PAST OR CURRENT PETS.

Signature _____ Date _____

FOO, Box 165, Warminster, PA 18974 • 215-933-6900 • www.cattalesinc.org • info@cattalesinc.org

Cat Tales clearly asks for permission to stay in touch with the adopter via their newsletters.

In the Shelter

Not everyone who checks out the animals will be able to make the commitment of adopting one. That doesn't mean they don't want to help though.

Invite visitors to sign up for your mailing list. Explain that they can learn about fundraising, make donations or just share your emails with their friends.

Website

[78% of U.S. adults](#), both male and female, use the Internet. If someone can't make it to your physical location, they may be a regular at your online address.

Offer website visitors the convenience of having your shelter's news delivered right to their inbox. You can do this by installing a sign up form on the page. AWeber offers a couple animal templates:

Name:

Email:

Submit

[We respect your email privacy](#)

[Email Marketing by AWeber](#)

Name:

Email:

Submit

[We respect your email privacy](#)

Powered by [AWeber Email Marketing Tools](#)

You can also choose to have AWeber host the forms, and you'll get a URL to direct potential subscribers. This works even if you don't have your own website.

Check out the form on the Second Chance Animal Rescue Society's site:

Home | Sitemap | Contact Us

Second Chance!
animal rescue society

Adoptions | How You Can Help | About SCARS | Education | News & Events | **Donate Now!**

Home » [News & Events](#) » [Newsletters](#)

Newsletters

SCARS newsletters are mailed to members on a semi-annual basis. Past issues are available for download in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format. If you would like to become a member, please visit our [membership](#) page.

If you would like to subscribe to our monthly e-News, please complete the form below.

To view past examples of our e-Newsletter, visit our [broadcast archive](#).

Newsletter Archives

- [2006 June - Membership Newsletter](#)
- [2009 August - Membership Newsletter](#)
- [2009 December - Membership Newsletter](#)
- [2009 January - Membership Newsletter](#)
- [2010 December - Membership Newsletter](#)
- [2010 Summer - Membership Newsletter](#)
- [2011 Summer - Membership Newsletter](#)

Subscribe

Would you like to be notified of upcoming SCARS events?

Would you like to receive notice of our campaigns?

Join SCARS' email mailing list and we will send you monthly emails detailing what is new at SCARS!

Full Name:

Email Address:

Please note: we never rent, trade or sell your email address

Subscribe to SCARS eNews

Copyright © 2009 Second Chance Animal Rescue Society. All Rights Reserved. | [Contact Us](#)

Social Media

It's free and easy to set up a Facebook page for your shelter. If you aren't ready for a website, set up a page there or supplement your site by creating a social media presence.

Social media allows for easy sharing and conversations, which is great for building relationships. Ask fans to subscribe by providing a link directly to your form, or just invite them to your website where there's already a form.

Sherry Suhosky, President of the National Association of Professional Pet Sitters (NAPPS), says she both uses Facebook to spread the word about shelters she supports, and hears about other shelters. "A stronger social media presence would cause more interaction with animals shelters," says Suhosky.

Word of Mouth

Encourage subscribers, adopters, volunteers and donators to tell their friends about you. They'll know who will be interested, and they can bring your target audience right to you.

You can do this by asking them to forward your emails to a friend, passing out business cards with instructions or providing a link to an archive of what you've sent in the past in your emails.

The Delco SPCA has a link to forward the email at the bottom of their messages:



Now that you know how to get people to sign up to your list, it's time to think about what you're going to say to them.

Email Content Ideas

Sure, it's one thing to say you'll start a newsletter or email series, but what do you actually write?

Think about your audience and you'll get the answer: pet and adoption-related material.

We'll give you some more specific ideas and examples.

Tips for New Pet Owners

Adopters may not be familiar with what they should expect, and you can be the one to walk them through the early days. Talk about feeding, play time, introducing the new family member to the current residents, what to look out for and any other interesting facts.

Adoptable Animals List

Who doesn't like looking at adorable animals? You can provide a couple stories or a link to a whole page of them, and someone might be moved to adopt. They may also know a friend who is looking to adopt, and pass the email on to them.

Success Stories

It's also nice to share happy stories of pets that found homes. Give the background of the animal and how they found their forever home. The adopter will probably like to share it with their family and friends, giving you more exposure.

Fundraising

For Christmas, Cat Tales does gift wrapping and pet pictures with Santa. Throughout the year other events may come up when funds are needed. You can do other events like bake sales or 5k races, or sign up to something such as [iGive](#).

What You Need

Since not everyone will be aware of what you need and how they can help, let them know. If they're close, they can volunteer for fundraisers or cleaning. If they're busy, they can donate supplies. If they're far away, they can donate or assist with marketing efforts.

Example: Cat Tales

Cat Tales newsletters include the featured pet and tips from the volunteer veterinarian. The side bar on the right lists how people can help the shelter:

Cat Tales, Inc. ANIMAL RESCUE
Scratching Post
www.cattalesinc.org 215-933-6900

Featured pet
Do You Hear What I Hear?
"Moving? We're moving? When Emerson was a bit perplexed as he observed the boxes getting filled with household items. His person, David, was not in the habit of discussing things with Emerson, who is deaf (which can be the case in certain white cats). He and David had always been pals and both were quite content in their bachelor apartment. "OK," thought Emerson, "so we're moving. Just make sure you pack my cozy bed and my favorite toys."
"What? You want me to go outside? You know I never go outside. I am deaf and strictly an indoor cat. Oh... Now I get it... You are moving without me! How mean is that! Who will give me my supper? The least you can do is TRY to find me a new home!"
Emerson came to Cat Tales some months ago, still confused about the change in his status. He spent some time in a foster home where it became obvious that Emerson is a super interactive cat. He wants your attention. He wants to play. He wants to explore. And he "talks" to tell you all this. At 2 years old, Emerson's exuberance is reminiscent of a 2-year-old child. "What is this?" "Can I have it?" "It's time to play!"
So, Emerson is looking for a family with lots of activity and action and a family who will appreciate his chattiness. He is currently at the Warrimster Petmart on Street Road waiting for an interview with you. He does not need a script since he has plenty of things on his mind and he plans on doing ALL the talking!
At press time, an application for Emerson's adoption was approved and Emerson went home with his new family this evening. Could this be a holiday miracle?

Ask Dr. Sally
Q Is there really a link between white cats and deafness? If so, why?
A There really is a link between white coats in cats and deafness, but it's complicated and not well understood. Before we get into that though, I should point out that not all white cats are created equal. There are two reasons a

Pet tips

Issue 14 -- DECEMBER, 2011
Come see the cats!
We have cats and kittens at our adoption centers at PetSMART and PETCO in Warrimster and at Main Street Animal Hospital in Doylestown.
Follow this link for the address of any of the other locations listed.
See our cats on Petfinder too!
Want to see your cat in our newsletter?
Do you have a funny or special story about a cat you adopted from Cat Tales? Perhaps you have a picture you want to share. Send your stories and/or pictures to:
• Cat Tales, Inc, PO Box 165, Warrimster PA 18974;
• Fax to 215-933-6900; or
• E-mail to info@cattalesinc.org
Can you help?
• **Become a volunteer with Cat Tales.** We have a many opportunities to fit your interests and time schedule at any of our locations.
• **Provide financial support** to help us care for our cats while they are waiting for adoption. Funds for medical expenses are our biggest need and include spay and neuter surgery to help prevent the increase in the number of unwanted cats. Checks can be made out to Cat Tales Inc. and mailed to Cat

Example: Second Chance Animal Rescue

Second Chance includes recent success stories, upcoming events, and also has the side bar that contains how people can help by donating:

Look at us now
Cali (formerly Butterscotch) - We adopted Cali in Dec. 2010 and have been so blessed to have her in our lives. She is the most gentle, sweet and playful puppy we have ever met and spends most of her time goofing around and making us laugh. She loves her walks, rollerblading and play dates with other doggy pals but her favourite time is cuddle time!

We truly are the luckiest people and couldn't be any luckier now that we have her as part of our family. We are forever grateful to SCARS for finding her for us and look forward to experiencing her first camping trip this summer! She has brought us so much joy and I can't wait to continue to share our special family moments with her. Thank you for everything! Crystal & Gavin. Click [here](#) to see this story on our website.

Success story
family describes me as independent. I am not particularly shy, but I am happy doing my own thing. Once I warm up to you I do enjoy some attention and affection. I really enjoy playing with my buddy Heidi. If I could pick my perfect home, it would be an acreage with another dog to hang out with. Click [here](#) to meet me.

For more information on all of our adoptable animals, [click here](#).

What's needed
Please help SCARS
Please consider a one-time donation or monthly contribution to SCARS. We are a registered charity and will issue a tax receipt for donations of \$20 or more. Remember, even the smallest donations add up to saving lives! You can [donate online](#) or you can mail a cheque or money order, made out to SCARS, c/o:
Second Chance Animal Rescue Society (SCARS)
Box 3045
Athabasca, AB
T9S 2B9
Please [click here](#) for more information and other ways to help.

Upcoming adoption events
Here is a list of our upcoming adoption events:
Wacky Saturday Adoption Event - Saturday, June 4, 2011, Main Street, Westlock, Alberta, Noon to 3 p.m. More information regarding Wacky Saturday is available at this [link](#).
Tails on the Trails Pawsathon 2011 Adoption Event - Saturday, June 11, Sir Winston Churchill Square, St. Albert, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Champion Pet Foods Fun Day Adoption Event - Saturday, June 25, Noon to 3 p.m., Cardiff Park, Sturgeon County, Alberta (Outside Morinville, Alberta). This event that will feature several rescue groups!
For more information on our adoptions events (including directions to the venues), [click here](#).

Education and resources
In this section, we share information and resources we think will be of interest to SCARS supporters. Links to these resources are also available on our website [Education](#) page.

Contact Us
780-466-SCAR (7227)
scars@scarscare.org

<http://www.cattalesinc.org/Library/CTINewsletter201112.html>

http://archive.aweber.com/scars_news/Af8L/h/SCARS_Newsletter_Please.htm

Both shelters do a great job talking about their animals and communicating how the public can help out.

Offering Multiple Email Campaigns

The idea of one email campaign may sound intimidating if you're not familiar with email marketing, but you'll find yourself getting more comfortable over time. You may even want to try more advanced methods, like campaigns based on interest.

For example: Some of your subscribers may be volunteers at the shelter. You want to keep these volunteers updated with inventory, vet checks, cleaning protocols and schedule updates. Not everyone on your mailing list will be a volunteer, so you can have a separate list or segment that you send volunteer information to.

Here are three other groups that would benefit from their own campaign:

New Adopters

Earlier we talked about offering tips for new pet owners. While you may still want to include tips in your newsletters, you can set up a separate series that goes into more details about how to adjust to a new pet. If they're sponsoring an animals, talk about the care the animals receive and how sponsoring helps.

Potential Adopters

Visitors will be interested in adopting different animals. There will be the classic dog vs. cat people, people interested in specific breeds, people that want to help special needs animals and people looking for certain physical or personality traits. You can set up lists per species, per breed or per whatever other groups you think are appropriate.

Local People

Subscribers within driving distance will be able to interact with you offline. They can receive upcoming schedules for fundraisers, list of supplies needed and what you need help with.

Wait, How Do I Make All This Happen?

By now you should have plenty of ideas for getting started, but I did promise it would be easy. This is where an email marketing service provider comes in.

Automated Emails

You can set up a whole series to go out at intervals you determine. You can also create announcements or newsletters and schedule them to send out at a specific date and time.

Read about how you can [create a follow up](#) series and [broadcast newsletters](#) in AWeber!

Templates

Don't have access to a designer but you want professional looking emails? Templates are available for you to just plug in your words and pictures. You can even copy previously created messages so you have less work to do next time.

Check out the [AWeber templates](#) and [template manager](#).

List Management

Keeping track of who wants on and off the list can be hard work! An email marketing service does the management for you. Confirmation messages can be triggered as soon as a subscriber is added, and the subscriber will be removed as soon as they click the unsubscribe link automatically appended at the bottom.

Read more about the [confirmation process](#).

Segments

In order to send a message to a specific group within your list, you need to be able to create segments. Segments contain subscribers that share specific criteria, such as those who picked the same answer on a web form or have clicked on the same link in an email. This information is kept stored so you can send a message to this group when you're ready.

Check out [segmenting in AWeber](#).

What To Do Now

If you haven't already, set up your website so you can begin establishing your online presence. Remember, you can set up a free Facebook page or blog if you don't have the funds for your own site.

Set up and use your social media accounts to build and develop relationships with your audience, and invite everyone to join your email list. With email marketing, social media and your shelter itself, you can grow your supporters and increase funds to help your furry friends.

About AWeber

What do leading sites such as Social Media Examiner, Copyblogger, Which Test Won, ProBlogger and Harvard Business Review all have in common?

They rely on AWeber for easy-to-use email and social media tools to cultivate relationships with their readers. Since 1998, AWeber has been the email engine powering the growth of organizations around the world.

Today, more than 110,000 small- and midsize-businesses, entrepreneurs, agencies and nonprofits are making the most of AWeber's sophisticated segmentation and analytics capabilities, social media and testing applications, extensive template libraries, and industry-leading deliverability and live support.

For marketing advice, examples and inspiration, please join us here:

