

**Media Matters for Shelters and Rescues
Lesson Two: Share Your Dogs with the World**

Pit bulls may be world class flirts, but they still need our help when it comes to marketing. Here are some tips for getting your dogs out into the community:

1) Take beautiful photographs of your adoptable pit bulls and hang them around your shelter (see our photography handout on our Resources page for tips on capturing the perfect pit bull photo).

2) Make them into movie stars! Give your adopters a chance to see how wonderful pit bulls are by sharing playful videos of them on your website (see our movie handout on our Resources page for more).

3) Write descriptive biographies for each dog's Petfinder and website bio. Most bios focus on non-specific details, such as what vaccinations they've received. Give your adopters a peek into each dog's unique personality by creating engaging stories that cover things such as: their favorite activities, any prior or current training, and other positive, engaging qualities. Don't bog their profile down with sad stories and vague information – keep it fun, upbeat and informative, and you'll be more likely to draw adopters in for a closer look!

4) Share your fabulous photos, movies, event details, blog posts, etc. by establishing a regular presence on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. Did you know that an overwhelming number of people use Facebook as their primary search engine? Don't miss out on potential adopters by skipping on skimping on social media. Make this a priority!



5) Blog about your adoptable pit bulls. We all know that a dog can't be summed up in a paragraph long story, but that's usually all the space they get. Using blogs allows volunteers and fosters to share their experiences, photos and movies, which gives adopters a better sense of what the dog is really like. Share your blog posts on social media sites.

6) Create pit bull themed events, like Bowling for Bullies, Pit Bulls on Parade, or a meet up of adoptable and adopted pit bulls in your shelter's parking lot! Use these events as opportunities for adopters to come meet the dogs, but don't forget to let the press know about your fun activities. Invite newspapers and TV stations to join you by sending out a press release (see our handouts for working with the media). Be sure to document the event with photos and movies, so you can share it on Facebook with your fans.

7) Pick a pit bull type dog to join you the next time your shelter is on the news or in the paper, even if the focus of the story has nothing to do with pit bulls. It's vital that the public begin to see pit bulls as just dogs (since that's what they are!), so if a reporter

wants to cover the pet pantry at your shelter, or you get invited on a morning news show to talk about a microchipping clinic, have a well behaved pit bull with you.

8) Use your website to educate the public. Add links to helpful pit bull education resources like StubbyDog, Bad Rap, PBRC or the Animal Farm Foundation to your shelter's website so that adopters can learn about pit bull type dogs from the experts. If your shelter has a large number of pit bulls, pick a Pit Bull of the Week to highlight on your website.

Create a sense of community, both online and off, by connecting with the public on a regular basis. By reaching out through social media and fun local events, you'll be creating positive, dynamic connections with your adopters. They'll feel included and invested in the lives of the dogs in your care and will look for ways to support your mission!

