Austin Pets Alive!
Helping People Help Pets

# Dog Marketing Manual:

## Photography
## &
## Videography

# Table of Contents

# Dog Marketing Photos & Videos Matter!

Great photographs and videos can mean the difference between an animal that gets noticed and one that gets passed on by. We've had animals on our website for weeks with no inquiries that have gotten interest as soon as a great photo and/or video was posted!

You are the key to making sure that dogs find their forever homes. Never discount the power of videos and photographs in increasing adoptions!

Ready to get started? Read on!

# Finding Dogs that Need Photos

All of our dogs are either in the main adoption program or individual foster homes (recovering from medical issues, too young for adoption, etc).

Dogs in the main adoption program go to different adoption sites each day of the week. Austin Pets Alive! pulls new dogs from area shelters into the main adoption program every week, so we always have new dogs that are in need of photographs!

Use the following steps to find dogs that are in need of photos:

**Check The Spreadsheet**
- Access the Bio/Photo/Video Needs spreadsheet.
- Check the Photo Status column to see who needs what. Dogs marked "Incomplete" don't have any photos, while dogs marked "Update Needed" need either more or new photos.
- After reviewing the list, determine which adoption site you are planning to visit and which dogs you are planning to target.

**Or Check the Website**
- If for some reason you can't access the Bio/Photo/Video Needs spreadsheet, check the website for a list of available dogs.
- Select dogs that are in obvious need of updated photos.

If you ever have any questions about whether a dog needs photos or videos, please send an email to dog.marketing@[your domain] and we'll be happy to help.

# Taking Dog Photos

**Step 1: Find a Handler**

Once you have decided which dogs you want to photograph, you will need to find a handler that has the proper behavior clearance to handle the dogs.

You can find a handler a couple of different ways:
- Post a request for a handler on the volunteer Facebook page.
- Email dog.marketing@[your domain] and we can help you find someone.

**Step 2: Take Photos**

We like to have a variety of pictures to choose from, so the more you are able to take, the better!

Ideally, we would like each dog to have one clear picture in each of the following categories:
1. <u>Close-up Head Shots</u> - Shots with the dog looking straight into the camera are perfect lead photos for the website.
2. <u>Full-body Shots</u> – This allows people to get an idea of the dog's size.
3. <u>Action Shots</u> – This lets us show off the dog's personality (playing with a toy, lounging, showing off a goofy smile – whatever they do best).

We can never have too many pictures of the dogs, so while those without a complete profile are the priority, feel free to take pictures of any dogs at site that you have time for!

*We typically don't use photos of dogs wearing a Gentle Leader (GL), as they can be mistaken for a muzzle.*

# Dog Photo Tips

**The Art:**
- The most emotional pictures are the ones where the animal is looking right at you.
- Try to get some pictures at eye level with the dog. Don't be afraid to get down low to their level. (ie, on the floor, etc)
- If the animal has some funny, beautiful or unusual aspect, try to get a shot of that. For example, if their tail is really unusual, get it in the picture!
- If the dog wants to come too close to you (or runs away from you), use a leash to tie them to something. Often the dog will sit down and look at you funny.
- Be patient – just follow them around for a while and let them relax.  Eventually you will be able to get a good shot.

**The Science:**
- If the animal is very active, put your camera on 'action' mode.
- Outdoors around 10 a.m. or 3 p.m. has the best lighting.
- Try not to take pictures outdoors in direct sunlight.
- You can still use sunlight while inside by taking pictures near a window or in the garage.
- Use a treat or a squeaker toy to get their attention.

Sometimes it helps to have someone stand right behind you or over your shoulder with either a toy or a treat.  For the best pictures, make sure they are looking at you and not at the other person!

**Shots to capture:**
1. Close-up headshots with the dog looking at the camera.
2. Full body shots that show the animal's overall size.
3. Action/emotion shots that show the animal's unique personality - a lounger, a player, a cuddler, etc.

# Finding Dogs that Need Videos

All of our dogs are either in the main adoption program or individual foster homes (recovering from medical issues, too young for adoption, etc).

Dogs in the main adoption program go to different adoption sites each day of the week. Austin Pets Alive! pulls new dogs from area shelters into the main adoption program every week, so we always have new dogs that are in need of videos! Use the following steps to find dogs that are in need of videos:

**Check The Spreadsheet**
- Access the [Bio/Photo/Video Needs spreadsheet](#).
- Check the Video Status column to see who needs what. Dogs marked "Incomplete" don't have a video.

**Or Sign-up to Video a Long-Stay Dog**
- Access the [Long Stay Dog Video Sign-up spreadsheet](#).
- Find a dog that does not a videographer signed up.
- If a handler has signed up, email them to schedule a date and time to shoot the video.
- If a handler has not signed up, someone will email you to schedule a time when they sign up.

If you ever have any questions about video needs please send an email to dog.marketing@[your domain] and we'll be happy to help.

# Taking Dog Videos

## Step 1: Find a Handler

Once you have decided which dog you want to video, you will need to find a handler that has the proper behavior clearance to handle the dogs.

You can find a handler a couple of different ways:
- Post a request for a handler on the volunteer Facebook page.
- Sign up to video a dog on the [Long Stay Dog Video Sign-up spreadsheet](#).
- Email dog.marketing@[your domain] and we can help you find someone.

## Step 2: Shoot Footage

We like to highlight all the things that make each dog great, so the more footage you are able to take, the better!

Ideally, we would like each dog to have footage that includes each of the following categories:
1. Close-ups - Footage with the dog looking straight into the camera are great openers or closers.
2. Full-body Footage – This allows people to get an idea of the dog's size.
3. Action/Personality Footage – This helps us show off the dog's personality (playing with a toy, lounging, showing off a goofy smile – whatever they do best).
4. Behavior/Commands – Showing off what a dog knows is a huge draw to potential adopters! See if the dog knows any commands (sit, stay, shake, etc.)?
5. Handler Interviews – If someone is there that knows the dog well, get some footage of that

person interacting with the dog while talking about the dog. This gives potential adopters a better idea of who the dog really is.

Consider working with a handler, so you can focus solely on shooting footage. We are happy to help set you up with someone – just email us!

We are always in need of videos, and you don't need a good video camera to grab good footage – your phone's camera will work too!

Not comfortable adding music and text to your video? No problem! One of our Video Coordinators will take care of it for you!

# Dog Video Tips

**The Art:**
- Let the dog get comfortable before you start shooting. Your video will be more personable, because the dog will be comfortable interacting with the camera.
- Try to get some footage at eye level with the dog. Don't be afraid to get down low to their level. (ie, on the floor, etc)
- If the animal has some funny, beautiful or unusual aspect, try to get some footage of that. Highlight their most unique features!
- Let the dog run towards the camera if they want to. Dog noses = cuteness!
- Make sure the dog has something to interact with (ie, a tennis ball, squeaky toy, swimming pool, etc).
- Show off what the dog already knows (sit, stay, shake, etc.)!

**The Science:**
- Outdoors around 10 a.m. or 3 p.m. has the best lighting.
- Use a treat or a squeaker toy to get their attention.
- Don't worry about external noises when shooting your footage. One of our video/photo coordinators will add music to your video prior to publishing it.

Sometimes it helps to have someone help you by holding the leash, throwing a toy, giving a treat, and showing off the dog's tricks. If you need help finding someone to help you handle a particular dog, email dog.marketing@[your domain] and we'll do our best to find a partner for you.

# Loading Photos & Videos to SmugMug

**Accessing SmugMug:**

1. Go to the [Your Organization's Current Adoptable Dogs] folder in SmugMug (We recommend that you save this link to your favorites for easy access).
2. Enter the username and password in the available fields and click "LOGIN" (you stay logged in by clicking "Keep me logged in").
   Username: [Email address]
   Password: [Password]

**Uploading Photos & Videos:**

1. Click the "Upload" button and select the "To this Gallery" option.
2. The "Upload to [Your Organization's Current Adoptable Dogs]" pop-up window appears. Simply drag the photos/videos you want to upload into the targeted area or click the "Click to Browse" link to add files manually.
3. When uploading is complete, click the "Done" button.

**Captioning Photos & Videos:**

1. We ask that all photos be captioned with the following: "Dog's Name – Today's Date – Your Name". Make sure that you enter it in the Caption field and not the keyword or title fields.
2. Once you're finished adding uploading your photos/videos and captions, send an email to dog.marketing@[your domain] and also attach the photos to the email so we can get them uploaded as quickly as possible.

# Photo Examples

Here is a good example of complete photo profile for the website:

# Contacting the Dog Marketing Team

The Dog Marketing team is always available as a resource to you. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns, need more information about priority dogs, etc.

You can reach all members of the Dog Marketing team by emailing dog.marketing@[your domain].