BLOGPAWS CONTENT GUIDELINES AND STYLE GUIDE

We embrace individuality, personality, opinions, and free expression in all blogs. We value thoughtful, well-written, informative, inspirational, and entertaining content. We include all species and look for pitches that encompass diversity. It is our goal to elevate and promote writers and bloggers who approach the craft with professionalism. These guidelines support that aim.

HOW TO PITCH

Writers will be responsible for coming up with ideas to pitch. Posts must naturally fit with the type of content that appears on the BlogPaws blog. We strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with the content we publish prior to pitching. Inappropriate pitches will be deleted.

- The topics addressed in those blog posts should align with BlogPaws' vision and mission. Additionally, the posts should adhere to the Content Guidelines (see below).
- Writers should be aware that they are responsible for any revisions or rewrites as directed by the blog editor.
- Writers should utilize social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) to help promote their content, and BlogPaws will utilize social media to help promote our contributors.
- Pitches must be submitted via email to editorial@blogpaws.com with the subject line Pitch: Topic (for example, Pitch: 25 Ways to Promote Your Content).
- Your pitch should include a brief explanation of your idea along with your background and links to writing samples (blog posts count).
- We strive to process pitches as quickly as possible. If you have adhered to the guidelines and have not gotten a response in two weeks, please feel free to follow up. Those that do not adhere to these guidelines or that contain inappropriate or irrelevant material will be deleted without response.
- Due to the quantity of pitches we receive, we cannot respond to those that are not accepted.

CONTENT GUIDELINES

Blog posts: Your post should consist of 350 – 550 words. If you suspect you'll go over, contact the blog editor in advance. Who knows? Your post might be better broken into a series.

- All posts should have a "pinnable image." The pinnable should be formatted to 1102 X 735 pixels. All images are created by the BlogPaws blog editor; however, if you think you have an appropriate image to illustrate your post, contact the blog editor.
- All sources and citations must be hyperlinked.
- BlogPaws is FTC Compliant, and we expect our contributors to follow disclosure guidelines, as necessary.

Unacceptable content:
BlogPaws declines to include blogs with unacceptable content in the BlogPaws Pet Blogger Network. We cannot hope to define "unacceptable content" in a way that will cover all situations. With that in mind, the listing here should be understood as minimum standards, treating as unacceptable any blog content or link that, for example:

- Is used to abuse, harass, stalk or threaten a person(s).

- Is libelous, defamatory, knowingly false or misrepresents another person.
- Infringes upon any intellectual property rights of any third party, including copyright, trademark, trade secret or patent. (If you quote or excerpt someone's content, it is your responsibility to provide proper attribution to the original author. For some useful guidance on proper attribution and fair use, please see The Electronic Frontier Foundation's Legal Guide for Writers at this URL: http://www.eff.org/issues/bloggers/legal/liability/IP/.)
- Violates any obligation of confidentiality.
- Violates the privacy, publicity, moral or any other right of any third party.
- Contains editorial content that has been commissioned and paid for by a third party, and/or contains paid advertising links and/or spam. Every opinion expressed must be the true opinion of the author.

This list is not comprehensive and may be revised at any time. BlogPaws' co-founders and advisors will define and determine, at our sole discretion, what is "unacceptable content" on a case-by-case basis and our decisions are not confined by this list. We reserve the right to change these standards at any time without notice.

CONTENT STYLE GUIDE

Although each blogger has his or her own writing style, certain things need to be made consistent throughout the BlogPaws web site to maintain professionalism: how you reference a date, how you write about percentages, what you do with ellipses points, and whether you capitalize headlines. These things are standardized so that the site looks polished.

Below is a brief list of some basic styles we ask you to employ when writing your blog posts:

Ampersands: Do not use an ampersand (&) unless it's a part of a proper company name (AT&T).

BlogPaws: Capitalize the "B" and the "P." There is no space in between the two words. It must read, "BlogPaws."

Capitalization: Only capitalize proper nouns (like BlogPaws or Chloe DiVita). Do not capitalize common nouns (like blog, marketing, social media).

Commas: Our editors personally love using the Oxford Comma. This might make your skin crawl, but we can't help ourselves. It helps readers' brains split up information better, since commas are supposed to be read with a slight pause. Whenever you have a list, put a comma after the penultimate item.

Dashes: Use hyphens (the little key by the 0 on your keyboard) in compound adjectives (like *blue-eyed*) and phone numbers (like *867-5309*). Em dashes are being used to replace all sorts of punctuation these days—parenthesis, commas, and colons are going the way of the dodo. If you spend any time on the internet you'll see many examples — normally like this one. Or sometimes they're more obtrusive——like this. When you want to use big dashes to break up a sentence, do it right. Use the em dash with no spaces around it—like that.

Dollar Amounts: Use the $ sign and numerals as in, $1, $100, and $1,000. Do not use the word "dollars" AND the $ sign. For dollar amounts greater than a million use this format: $1 million, $40 billion.

Dates: When referencing a date, use the abbreviation for the month, day (no "th"), year. Example: Apple is releasing its new eco-friendly iPhone holder on Nov. 15, 2010. Its last version came out on May 2, 2010.

eBook: Lowercase "e," uppercase "B." It should read, "eBook."

eCourse: Lowercase "e," uppercase "C." It should read, "eCourse."

Email: No hyphen, lowercase "e." It should read, "email."

Headlines: Capitalize the words in the headline (with the exceptions of the words a, the, but, with, and). Do not use a period at the end of the headline.

Image Credit: Posts should include images but we need to provide credit for those images if we did not create them ourselves. At the bottom of every blog post you should include an image credit that includes a link back to the image's original source.

More on images: All posts should have a pinnable image at the top. The pinnable should be formatted to 1102 X 735 pixels.

Internet: Lowercase "i," so it should be written "internet."

Links: When you mention a company, link back to the company's home page. When you mention an article, *link back to that article*. When in doubt, provide a hyperlink so readers can always figure out where you get your info.

Numbers: When a number is under 10, use the word. Example: There are nine brands of cat treats that I love, but I decided to try 12 new brands.

Percentages: Write out the word "percent." For example: I am 100 percent sure that you are correct.

Periods: Use only one space after the period at the end of a sentence.

Profanity: Don't use it.

U.S.: Use "U.S." (short for United States).

WordPress: Capitalize the "W" and the "P." There is no space in between the two words. It must read, "WordPress."

AP Style: For all other grammar and punctuation rules, reference the AP Stylebook.

END