

# BUILDING YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

The Pet Food Manufacturers' Association shares tech-savvy tips to boost sales

**T**he Office of National Statistics (ONS) has published figures that reveal over three-quarters (77 percent) of households now have internet access and nearly half (45 percent) of all online activity in the UK is made through a mobile device. It's impossible to deny that all companies – even small businesses – need to ensure they have an online presence and their websites are optimised for mobile use.

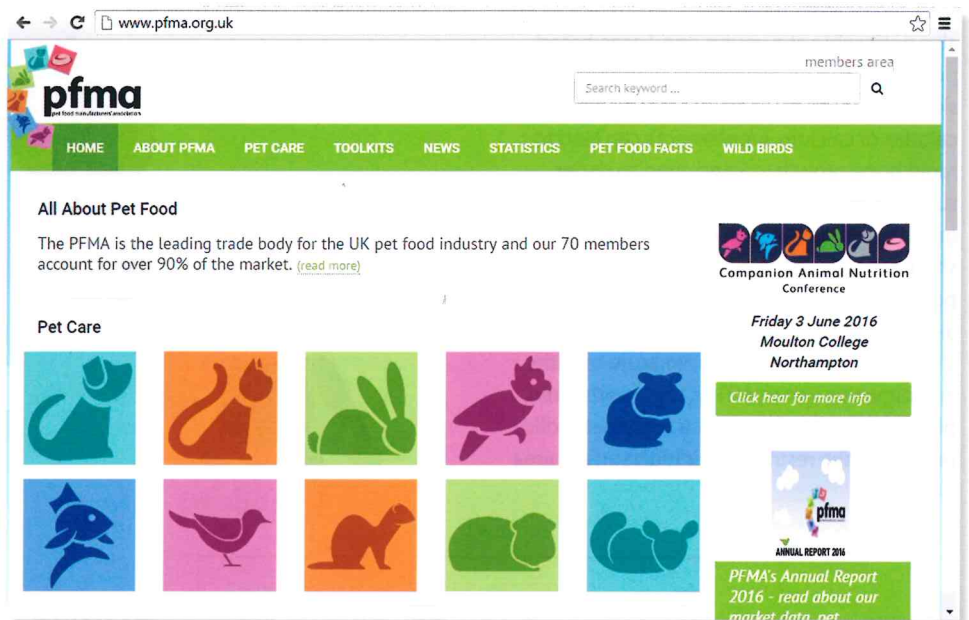
Recently shortlisted for the 'Digital Campaign of the Year Award' (results unknown!) at the Trade Association Forum Annual Awards, we thought it would be relevant to share our top tips for making the very best of your website.

## BUILDING FROM SCRATCH

For small organisations, it is often felt that a website will take too much time to develop or maintain. However, it's worth it! With a little help, you will soon be up and running. At PFMA we work with Daniel Scott at Carbon IT who has developed our website. He created a tailored content management system (so that we can easily make changes) and has trained our in house team to make ongoing changes. However, there are online packages, which are user friendly and there are options for all budgets.

## KEEPING IT FRESH

At PFMA, we conduct an annual survey of members and stakeholders. So, even if we think our website is looking good, we ask for more input and how we can improve further. We strongly recommend this type of research. Are your customers able to access your site on the go? Is it mobile friendly? Does it offer them all the information they need? You may also discover that you can add value to your site by adding extra sections. In addition to purchasing pet food, you may discover they also want advice on feeding. If this is the case, a few links to helpful websites or a blog may be worth introducing. Feel free to link to our nutritional advice at [pfma.org.uk](http://pfma.org.uk).



## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION (SEO)

We know that content is key for customers and it helps with SEO. We have recently expanded our toolkit section to include an extensive range of fact sheets on subjects from puppy nutrition to bird care and vegetarian diets. This content and the publicity of the new range, has driven more traffic to our site.

## KNOWING YOUR AUDIENCE

Bear in mind that your audience may evolve with time and it's worth keeping a track on where your visitors come from. Google Analytics is a fantastic place to start your investigatory work and see who your fans really are.

## MONITORING TRAFFIC AND POPULAR PAGES

Google Analytics will also help you understand which pages are attracting – and keeping – visitors (new and returning). You can review visitor traffic and see how they navigate your site. On the PFMA site we can see that our Toolkits, Pet Size-O-Meters and

Statistics areas continue to be in the top ten pages. We have therefore focused on making these more attractive whilst containing easy signposts to other areas of the site.

## CAMPAIGNS TO DRIVE TRAFFIC

Communication to your target audience is invaluable in driving traffic to your website. This can be achieved via publicity on local digital forums and local newspapers (plus online presence), the local vet practice's facebook page or simply put up posters promoting your website and its content. Customers like to be incentivised so competitions are worth considering.

## SUMMING UP

Keeping up to date with online trends is tricky as things evolve fast! Although you can research and do a lot yourselves, it's worth getting expert advice. So, our top tip is to ask your customers whether your website is giving them what they want. If not, increase your content by working with experts in topics (PFMA for nutrition of course!) and master Google Analytics to see whether your updates are successful. 🐾