



# Sightings



The Longview Group, LLC

INSIGHTS...IN SIGHT

January 2009 Vol. 7, No. 1

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Mabel



Kate

## The marketing savvy of dogs

by Dennis Schrag

A Longview Group classic article. Previously published in 2003.

Meet Mabel and Kate! Kate is my 12-year-old Australian Sheppard mix dog. We bought her as a puppy – she was marked-down from her original price. Her \$10-farm-dog-black-Labrador-mix-sister is Mabel. My vet told me that a lab's kidneys develop first and then a long, long, long time later, its brain begins to develop. So it is. These two mutts own and operate my house.

### Dogs made us their pets

In *The Truth About Dogs* by Stephen Budiansky, we learn all kinds of scientific and physiological facts about canines. If you are as crazy about dogs as I am, you might enjoy the book. It's a little dry. Okay, it is very dry. But it does explain a lot about canine behavior. About 15,000 years ago,

dogs figured out that becoming friends with people was in their best interest. People would share food and shelter in exchange for a tail wag and a longing look. Dogs made us their pets.

Dogs sense when people like them. So do clients. Here is the first great lesson from dogs: Clients like people who like them. Dogs understood that lesson a long time ago. Some of us are just now figuring it out.

### Dogs sniff out leads and do it all the time

Dogs also realize that working smarter, not harder, pays off. They sniff out all the right spots that might yield a reward. They do their homework, and then they hang around

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until the timing is just right. Great marketers know how to sniff out projects, and position themselves. They manage to be in the right place at the right time.

Dogs really know how to focus. They use their big ears and bright eyes to find forsaken potato chips in the sofa. My dogs can hear the UPS truck three miles away. They hate UPS! Oh, if all marketers had such great ability to perk up their ears and focus their eyes. A good friend, who is a remarkable seller, tells me the more he listens and the less he talks, the more he sells. The power of hearing what clients want is a true advantage. Better than lost snack food.

### **Brand your territory all the time. Keep the big dogs away.**

Another great lesson from Kate and Mabel: brand yourself all over your territory, all the time. It just takes a drop or two, frequently, to let the big dogs know who has staked the area. Great sellers brand their territory. They don't let the big dogs near their clients.

In tough times, there is a tendency to shotgun marketing efforts using untrained puppies – we call them rookie technical staff. Big mistake! Dogs sense when people fear them – so do clients and prospects. Use the older dogs to build relationships and win work.



Being a member of a pack has great advantages for dogs. They can better guard their territory, and they balance their natural talents. Collaborate with non-competing firms; run with a pack – join a lead finding group – other non-competing professional service providers who sell to your markets.

My dogs love visitors. Anytime they can make a face-to-face contact, they are happy. They are excellent at shaking hands and sometimes do a little dance for a new acquaintance. In the vaudeville business they called it “a dog and pony show.” Organize your principals and doer-sellers like never before. Show your prospects and past clients you know how to shake hands! Rehearse your presentations. Alpha dogs get in the door first.

### **Never play dead**

Plan, plan, plan – be proactive. Wag your tail, roll over, slobber a little, fetch but never play dead.

- 🐾 Find ways to keep your best talent.
- 🐾 Rank order sales and marketing expenditures. What can you do for less?
- 🐾 Have a contingency plan in case you lose a key seller.

Dogs are such smart creatures. We can learn a lot from them everyday. They get up each morning and have a zest for the day. They love unconditionally, no matter what. They are always hungry – much like great sellers. They get plenty of sleep and love exercise. Mostly, they crave a little recognition and a lot of praise. That's all good activity for sellers of any kind.

Glad you could meet Mabel and Kate. Got a cookie?

## **WHAT IS THE LONGVIEW GROUP, LLC?**

Seeking more efficiency and effectiveness in your professional service business? The Longview Group, LLC provides you INSIGHTS through training, on-the-job coaching, expert counsel, and extra-hands services.



A publication of

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