

Enhancing Efficiency to Improve Veterinary Practices in the Digital Age

More and more businesses are embracing cloud and mobile technologies in order to deliver an unrivalled service to clients, as well as to enhance efficiency in-house. From streamlining internal teams, to reducing administrative tasks, software solutions offer an array of benefits and are being implemented by many businesses across many sectors.

But how can veterinary practices adapt to an ever-changing environment and embrace the benefits that these digitised solutions offer? Recent research suggests that pet owners are more willing to spend money on their pets than ever before and will continue to do so, even if there is an economic downturn. This, combined with the current skills shortage in the sector, which saw veterinarians being put on the country's so-called Shortage Occupation List, means the sector needs to be working harder and smarter to meet customer demand as well as increasing the level of care being provided.

In light of this, we have put together a complete guide on how professionals in the veterinary and small animal sector can use digital technology to improve the care given.

Improve the Quality of Care Offered

Digital systems can streamline back-office tasks, reducing the time needed to be spent on them by automating tedious admin tasks such as timesheets, manual file-sharing or report-writing. These inescapable tasks are both time-consuming and an inefficient use of a skilled workforce. By implementing automated systems, personnel will have extra time to concentrate on more important tasks and functions. This will in turn allow veterinary specialists to improve the care given at specialist practices.

Whilst low revenues and high expenses directly affect profit potential, unproductive hours can affect the quality of care given to patients.

As technology is continually improving, the level of care veterinarians are able to provide is also enhanced. Affordability and increased accessibility have allowed more widespread integration into smaller practices. For example, diagnostic lab equipment has become easier to acquire and maintain in-house, which offers more immediate results that can seamlessly integrate into electronic patient charts.

With so many new diagnostic capabilities, veterinary practice software has evolved to integrate with laboratory and diagnostic equipment. Specialist on-site advanced imaging services means veterinary specialists can often get to the root of the problem rapidly, meaning they can work to minimise a pet's discomfort and give them the best chance of recovery. Common problems that can be identified using advanced imaging services are:

- Spinal problems
- Joint problems

- Trauma
- Nasal disease
- Ear disease
- Tumours and oncological issues

As mentioned earlier, people are more willing to allocate greater amounts of money toward pharmaceuticals and treatments for their pets. This will allow for new drug interventions that have the ability to offer higher profit potential moving forward. Biotechnology advancements in veterinary care continue to follow trends in human healthcare, including cancer vaccines and stem cell therapy.

Streamline Teams and Internal Communications

CRM systems make it easier for specialists to work closely together across departments to deliver truly extraordinary levels of care, allowing your veterinary practice to achieve the best possible outcome for each patient under your care.

If you are working within an environment that has a process in place which requires people and projects working together across multiple sites and locations, it's crucial to keep everyone working from the same information source. There are software solutions available which provide helpful tools to enable real-time collaboration and communication, making the opportunity for internal conversations easier and more efficient.

Improve Customer and Patient Relations

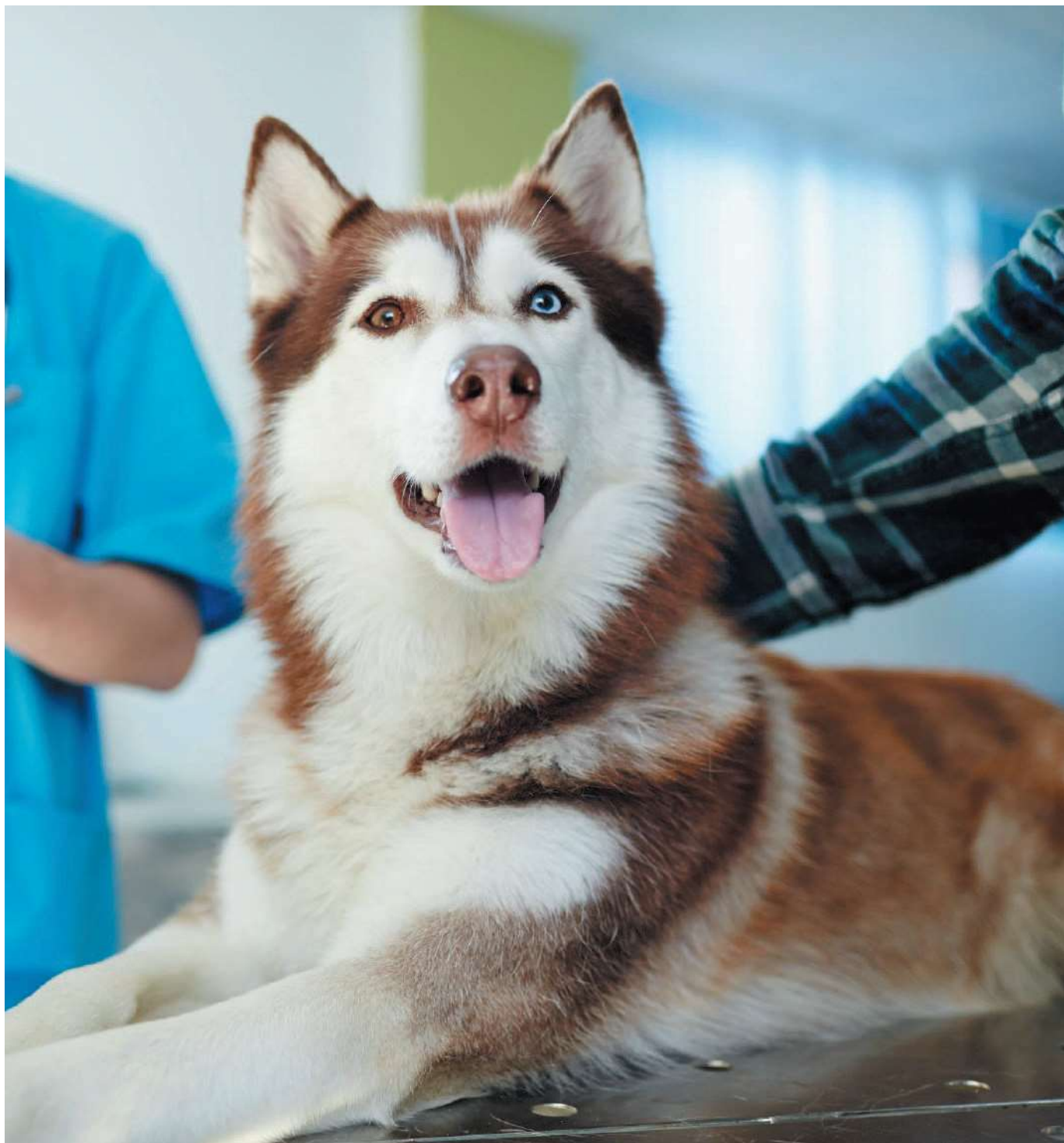
By adopting management software that allows for streamlined workflows and improved collaboration, you'll be able to focus on the needs of your clients and their poorly pets in a more efficient way and provide a first-class service. Implementing a software solution will also give admin staff the ability to pull up information about a customer or client on the phone in real time, allowing them to offer a personalised experience if relevant or necessary.

Software solutions allow your staff to engage your clients through online booking, automated SMS and emails, client apps, client reminders and client satisfaction measurement tools.

By integrating aspects such as scheduling, charting, blood work, billing and patient reminders into a single platform, you will see increased productivity and in turn, improved patient care. For smaller practices with fewer resources, outsourcing certain components such as client communications, payment and collections, data security, inventory management and staff training can reap tremendous benefits.

Monitor Stock Control and Reduce Waste

Stock management solutions allow workers to control stock levels from one place as well as produce price lists and keep track of inventory – meaning you will never over-order, reducing losses, as the medicines and feedingstuffs do not reach their expiration dates.



With stock management, inventory lists are automatically updated based on orders and usage. Accurate recording of the usage ensures stock balances are correct and up-to-date without further work.

Having greater insight into every aspect of your business means you can keep everyone on track, identify where you are least productive and make better-informed business decisions to save money in the long run.



Dr. Stuart Cooke



Stuart Cooke, Director and Founder at Swift Referrals: Dr. Stuart Cooke BVetMed CertSAS MRCVS graduated in 2002 from the Royal Veterinary College, London and completed his RCVS Certificate in Small Animal Surgery in 2007. Stuart's main interest is orthopaedic surgery, specifically joint replacement procedures such as total hip replacements.

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