

SUCCESS STORY

Merrick Pet Care



How Merrick increases brand consideration among passionate pet parents

Pet parents treat their dogs and cats like family and often give as much thought to the foods they feed their pets as the food they feed their children.

Savvy brands like Merrick Pet Care understand the high level of consideration pet food buyers put into their decision-making process and use the strong opinions and preferences of other pet owners to give others considering their food influential information and the confidence to choose Merrick products.

"Though we have a decent level of awareness, consideration is really the name of the game. Consumer-generated content like reviews on our products provides the kind of invaluable information needed by those considering the right foods and treats," says Pete Brace, VP Communications and Pet Parent Relations at Merrick Pet Care.

CONSUMER-GENERATED CONTENT AS AN ADVOCACY TOOL

Merrick strives to ensure that the relationship customers have with the brand emulates the relationship they have with their pets.

"We know people have many choices, and having a good relationship and experience with a brand makes a difference."

Merrick uses Bazaarvoice Ratings & Reviews as one means for utilizing its community of loyalists. "We don't take advocacy lightly," says Brace. "Having pet parents share their experiences with our products validates their purchase and also helps those considering Merrick."

AT A GLANCE

Challenge

Increase brand consideration

Solution

Collect and display UGC on the brand's site and retail sites

Benefit

Increase in review volume and coverage at retail sites

Featured Solutions



**Bazaarvoice
Ratings & Reviews**



**Bazaarvoice
Sampling**

10,000

REVIEWS OF MERRICK
PRODUCTS ACROSS THE
BAZAARVOICE NETWORK
OF RETAIL SITES



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Pete Brace

VP Communications and Pet Parent Relations
Merrick Pet Care

Advocates not only include pet parents, but also the associates who in-store shoppers turn to for advice.

"The retail associate is a key influencer. Showing in-store associates what pet parents are saying about the food is some of the best and most authentic evidence they can use to spread the word about the quality of our products."

Feedback from brand advocates can even help in clearing up misconceptions. For example, Merrick sells a dog food product that contains a safe chicken bone. Those familiar with the product know the bone is supposed to be there and is safe for dogs to ingest. Many new shoppers express concern over the bone, but Merrick's advocates proactively address the comments.

Our loyal customers responded on our behalf and said 'It's supposed to be there. I feed it to my dogs all the time, and they love it'," said Brace. "When other customers are moderating the discussion and responding on your behalf, that's true advocacy."



SAMPLING SUPPORTS PRODUCT LAUNCHES AND IMPROVEMENTS

Using Bazaarvoice Sampling, Merrick provides products to loyal customers to ensure the products reflect Merrick's high quality and surface any possible changes that need to be made.

For example, Merrick recently provided samples to advocates to solicit feedback on a new dog treat. In doing so, the company identified a need to develop additional sizes of the treats, as those with large dogs often considered the treats as too small.

Merrick also actively gathers reviews on its products and recipes by tapping into its social media community, CRM and by leveraging the pet parent relations team, which provides a link asking for reviews to customers who provide positive feedback in various social channels.

The reviews collected from Sampling and other volume-driving efforts have resulted in more than 10,000 reviews syndicated to retail sites across the Bazaarvoice Network. Currently, 88% of all reviews on retail sites came via syndication of reviews collected by Merrick.

EXTENDING THE VALUE OF CGC

Merrick shares the positive reviews in a variety of channels, including across the brand's website, in emails and in stores. Showcasing what satisfied customers say about their products has proven highly effective, especially in social media.

"Some of our most successful social posts were those that featured customer reviews. The third-party testimonial in social media provides a more authentic viewpoint that's relevant to the person considering the purchase," says Brace.

In understanding the relationship between pet parent and pet, Merrick's omnichannel and comprehensive use of consumer-generated content influences consumers throughout the consideration process.

"We know how important ratings and reviews are from a foundational level, but the real power is in how you activate that content. We've received more value out of the investment because of how we've activated it."



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Pete Brace

VP Communications and Pet Parent Relations
Merrick Pet Care



COMPANY PROFILE

Pet food brand

CLIENT SINCE

2013

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Merrick is a leader in natural and organic pet food, offering a wide variety of foods and treats sold at independent pet specialty stores and major retailers.

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