Marketing In The Pet Food Industry

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Okay, so let's go into our next section. Here we go. Share, here and concurrent? That's what I did last time. Okay. I'm learning. All right. So first we go over the history, then we go over. All right, well,

how do we read a pet food bag? Now let's go into a little bit of the marketing aspect of things. Because I think this is really important to know as well, because I think we're starting to kind of see a pattern here. And the regard that they've done a great job with marketing, and having us think that we have to have our pets on this food. And that people food is a really bad thing. And I get it, I get it, because I get asked all the time will, what do you feed your own dog. And what I feed my own dogs is raw. And then on Raw, since I've had this crew since since Max and Chloe paths passed away. And, you know, that's just my personal choice. That's what I'm comfortable feeding my pets. There are times where I may do more of a kibble just because of, you know what I've got going on that day. Or it's easier if I go out of town to leave that with the pet sitter. But because of the fact that I know how to look it to a pet food. And I'm aware of the quality and the ingredients, I do tend to go on the pricier side when it comes to having to do that and having to do a kibble. And I'm also aware that because of the fact that it's all life stage type of food, that is not going to necessarily follow the feeding guidelines might feed just a little bit less, because of the fact that it's an all life stages. And so therefore, what they're recommending for my specific dog might be a little bit too much, I have to know what my dog's lifestyle is. But I'm able to take that into account. Because I know the information, you don't know what you don't know. But hopefully, with this series, we're kind of helping you along, to start to know some of that. So you can also make those same type of decisions if you choose to. All right. So let's take a look at marketing. Because when it comes to pet foods, as we saw, in the very beginning, it was all about you. It wasn't about our pets, especially in the 19 per 1860s, early 1900s. It wasn't about them, they had absolutely no scientific evidence to back any of their claims. It was more about appealing to you. It was more about appealing for the convenience for the pet owner. So has this changed? Well, let's go and take a look at how this has come about. So I have to ask you, what do you look for when you're looking for a dog food? And I want you to be honest, because I've had clients that have said to me, Well, I just looked at the bag and the bag looked pretty good. I just looked at the bag and you know, showed me a steak on there. They don't know what they don't know. And so I think you know what I talked to a lot of people about this topic. It's it's hard for people to take that in because of the fact that we associate food with love. And so like this picture, you know, that's talking to my emotional side of things. Look at you know, this guy really cares about his dog. He's Brad his dog to work with him and they're sitting side by side reading a newspaper and so therefore, whatever this dog food is, was really care about my dog and must be a good quality food. And that's what they're hoping that you associate it with. And you don't know you don't know. And that's okay. That's why we're here. That's why we're putting education out there. So what do you look for in a dog food now that and hopefully now that you know what to look for in a dog food, that may change how you actually view some of these advertisements or how you view how you pick a food. So, um, this was I just have to move my box here. So this was a campaign that was for Caesar dog food that specifically went for the emotional aspect of it. So here we are, we're laying in bed with our dog. And we say I promise I will always be there when you're awake. So you can't see her and tell me if you if you know anything about color therapy. And you look at this picture, and is specifically targeting that fact that you have this emotional love for your dog. So pink, you know, if we're looking at color therapy that is associated with love. So here, this whole campaign is expressing how much I love you and that I promised that I'm going to be there when you wake up. It's brilliant. It's brilliant. And then up at the top, oh, by the way, we'd Caesars right? So they're appealing to the emotional aspect of things. So 32nd ad was a follow up to the award winning journey ad, which was voted the most emotional advert ever in 2014 by campaign magazine.

So it's a tricky process, right? So this Caesars, senior brand manager said our new sees your campaign is a celebration of the incredible bond that exists between owners and their pet dogs, right, we wanted to bring life in a touching and heartwarming way, the unique and special companionships that we share with our dogs, we're confident that this ad will resonate strongly with the many people who have the privilege of enjoying such a friendship. Now, I think that that's brilliant. As a marketer. I think that's absolutely brilliant. As a parent, I'm like, you're kind of like, not my emotions here. And I don't think that that's fair. Because if I turn around and I look at what you're offering, and when I'm actually feeding my dog, well, you're kind of playing on my love for that dog. And I don't think that that's right. So we got to take a look at some of these ads, let's take a look at how they're advertising to us because because of the fact that it is freedom of speech. So Mars is one of the bigger companies in the pet food industry. Whether I think a lot of people don't understand that. And we're going to tap that at the very, very end. Okay, so a couple years ago, I went to super Zoo, and I love going to super Zoo. For those of you that don't know, super zoo, it's a pet industry, bendy and show that vendors can come out and promote their product. And what I like about it, and it's huge. I mean, it's absolutely huge. And it's in Nevada. And what I love about it is the fact that they have this whole section of new products. So you get to go and see what's going to be coming out. And I always like going and checking that out. And it's interesting because you get to see the fads, and you get to see what's going to be marketed and how they're triggering certain emotional components with that. So was it three years ago, maybe four years ago, now that I went out there wait for this to catch up with me. So four years ago that or so that I went out there. And this natural dog food was the thing, like everybody was advertising their natural dog food, and the pet food labels had started changing, right. So now we started seeing more of this type of picture on the bag and we saw a Fido running on the farm. And like all of these natural looking pictures to advertise their natural dog food. It was brilliant. And still to this day is right. Let's look to see what exactly that means though. Right? So I Africa defines natural as a food or ingredient derived solely from plant animal or mined sources either from its unprocessed state or having been subjected to physical processing, heat processing, rendering, purification, extraction hydrolysis, enzyme Allah my Mole lejos enzyme meiosis are fermentation, but not having been produced by or subjected to a chemically synthetic process and not containing any additives, or processing aids that are chemically synthetic except in amounts as might occur unavoidably in good manufacturing practices. So, let's take all of that kind of put it in layman's terms, you know, layman's terms are usually the words that I can pronounce the best.

So in layman's terms, that means any ingredient or nutrient other than those that are wholly synthetic produced artificially, are allowed and maybe labeled is not true. So if an ingredient that is being processed, is treated with sick additive, that is considered to be part of the standard manufacturing process, that is acceptable. So according to ethical rules, when vitamins are added, for which all other ingredients fit the natural definition, and may be labeled as natural with added vitamins, even know it's not natural, it's synthetic. So what does naturally actually mean in the end? Well, there's supposed to be No artificial preservatives, such as the HA BHT, or Ethoxyquin. But remember, it has to be added by the pet food manufacturer. So if you thought sequin is being used or BHA BHT by the ingredient supplier, it doesn't have to be labeled on the bag. So therefore, it could still be labeled as natural. And you're thinking you're not getting any of these synthetic preservatives, it at the same time, you may actually be getting that. And so all of this natural products, natural food, need to look like it's healthy for you. Still has some tricks in the back. So I pulled up some of these, because I think these are great examples. As far as you know how it makes it look like it's a phenomenal food. Right. So here to the left, we have the dog holding the carrots. And that's what we think when we think well, this is all natural food, hey, I'm paying a quality price for an all natural food. Now we learned that it doesn't really mean much. So here we have organic chicken dinner. And as to all life stages dog formula, what do we know about the word dinner? It means that it only has to contain 25% Eat. And when it comes to organic, there's different stipulations when it comes to organic as well. Organic is a little bit better than the natural as far as the definition with it. But there still doesn't have to be it still doesn't have to be 100% organic, it can be 30% 70% and some of the verbiage. Another one that I think is popular that I've seen a lot is the one middle there. And this one, I always, I mean, for years, I would see this first come out and it was like Oh, come on, guys, you know a holistic formula. What does this mean? Actually, does that mean? Like that doesn't there's even no definition for that. So this is holistic. What exactly does that mean? And then you're saying that it's a primitive natural, right? Which we know that natural doesn't necessarily mean much. And you know, made in the USA and I'm trying to look through my boy bifocals here, but made in the USA. Well, is it though, because where did the ingredient supplier come from? We they don't have to tell us that. I'm trying to see. So there we go with vitamins, minerals, and amino acids. And so now let's take a look at the third one here. Now this one I really love this one because here we see all their fresh apples or we see the carrots and it's holistic as well. Which I'm not exactly sure what that means, but it must be really good. And it's a natural canine formula. So we know with formula that you know, that tells us how much protein is actually in that, which is not a lot. And it has added vitamins and minerals, because it's natural. So they can start add synthetic vitamins and minerals, and to say that it's with added vitamins. So we know now that this isn't necessarily the quality product that they're projecting out here, right, holistic does it mean anything, they can put any picture that they want on there, they've already told us that it's a formula. And they're telling us that it's natural, with added some vitamins and minerals, which means it's synthetic.

So once you learn to read, how this bag is, is marketed to you, then you can really start to see through what I'm actually feeding. So, how did these claims even come about? Right? I found this to be really interesting myself, to be honest with you. So we have all these claims, you know, Joint Formula, or I'm gonna pull up my notes here. Sure that I'm processing everything correctly. But we see, you know, Joint Formula, all these different claims on these bags. So how did this even come about? Well, prior to 1990, North health claims were allowed at all. So we didn't see anything st Joint Formula, or, you know, good for skinning coat, we didn't see any of that stuff prior to 1990. And the nutrition labeling and Education Act was passed in 1990. And then the dietary supplement Health and Education Act of 1999. Before was passed. And so these introduced nutrition facts that had to be labeled on human foods. So these two acts were passed for the human food side of things. All right. And that was basically saying, Hey, you guys need to put nutritional facts on people's foods. And that caused a big uproar, right, so the human food companies complained because it made their food look bad, since it was high in fat, simple sugars and calories. So the company is then started pressuring the FDA. And they're like, hey, you need to let us make expansive health claims on this packaging. So it counterbalances the negative labels that we now have to put on there. And they actually went as far as filing lawsuits against the FDA prohibiting and label claims saying that infringed on their freedom of speech right. Now, there is there is nothing that is to the pet food industry, when it comes to this, by the pet food industry typically will follow the human industry, even if there's not specific rules and regulations to do so. So 1994 restricted the FDA regulatory oversight of dietary supplements, not food, but supplements, which included no requirements for producers to supplements to prove the effectiveness or safety of their supplements. So I want you guys to think about that. Because how many of us go into the supplement store? And we're supplementing our own vitamins and minerals, or omega threes, or whatever else? Yeah, I know, it took this for me to realize like, Hey, I knew that it was a loose industry. I didn't realize it was this loose as far as what kind of claims they can make? All right, and have absolutely no proof behind their effectiveness. So food producers are starting to man to demand those same rules. Hey, if the supplements could sit here and not have any backup to their claims, we want the same thing. So the FDA Modernization Act eliminated the requirements for FDA pre market approval of packaging claims. So the FDA has regulatory power over human food label claims was weakened. It's really kind of a scary thing when we start thinking about not just the pet food side of things, but now this is starting to trickle into the education on the human food side of things, and can be really bothersome. Because I know it took really looking into this to realize the regulations on people side of things like we were just automatically thinking that, hey, the FDA got us covered, not realizing that the regulatory power has been weak. So not only should we start paying more attention to pet food, especially pet food, because they really have a lot of leeway with what they can do within the industry. But now I'm starting to see it's just as much in our food as well.

So this cause nutrient structure function and health claims to absolutely explode. And now we see them on everything. So, n L E, A N D, S, H, EA, do not apply to pet foods, right. But like I said, usually pet foods will follow the human foods without having to have specific regulations. Currently, there are no laws addressing nutrient and health claims on pet foods. Okay, so no scientific report support is required. And Africa does not have authority or procedures over misleading claims. So let's take a look at that very first. Very first seminar that we did, where we saw that pedigree bag, and we saw how it stated it was Meteor. And yet it had the word flavor on it. So it didn't have to contain any any meat at all. Right. And then it said that it was good for healthy joints, right that it supported healthy joints? Well, there's absolutely no scientific requirement for them to be able to put that on their bag. So here we have a very high carbohydrate corn based food that can make the claim because they have the word flavor on it, that it's needier and that it's good for joints. Well, I can tell you from personal experience, that simple sugars and carbohydrates aren't necessarily good for joints. But there's nothing there's no authority or procedures for them to be able to stop that. So what are some of the most common health claims that we see? So we see skin coat health? There's a lot of that. We see joint health and mobility. There's a lot of that. We see gi health, especially nowadays, right? immunity and oral dental health. Okay, so we see all these claims, and there's no rules to regulate that they can put that on there so I can make a food tomorrow and put on bed is for skinning code issues. First healthy skinning code. I'm allowed claims without requirement for evidence of claims includes if they use the word support. You know, this supports healthy skinning code. This promotes joint health and mobility. This helps gi health. They put those words on there than there's absolutely no requirement. What's not allowed are claims which fall under the definition of a drug. So this is to treat this is to manage this is to prevent this is to reduce the risk of disease or this improves a certain health ailment. If that's listed on there, now the FDA steps in and the FDA shuts them down and says that falls under a drug claim you cannot do that you can see here and all day long say that it supports promotes or helps the you cannot say here I say that it treats manages prevents or reduces risk of disease. So let's take a look at the example we have on to the side here to do this if we free oh this is doing a good job haircut because this is healthy food. Well, there's no definition to say what healthy food actually means. And it's healthy and natural. We know a natural doesn't mean anything, especially because it says that it's with added vitamins and minerals. So now we know that that A can be in a synthetic vitamin and mineral. And of course, it's got a healthy joint formula. Well, we don't really know what that exactly means. And they don't have to sit here and show me proof that it really is good for my dog's joint health. So if I didn't know any better, I would go into the store, I would take a look at this. And I would go, Oh, man, this looks like a really good food. Like it's all natural. It says that it's healthy. And it supports my dog's joints. But that's it. There's no way for us to answer that question. Because I don't have to prove it.

Right. So this is where looking at the ingredient list. This is where looking at the guaranteed analysis is really going to help you judge because we have no rules. So one of the things that I usually like to point out Now, mind you, this is a chart that is from I think it's 2019. And yes, there's definitely been more exchange of hands here since 2019, because there's exchange of hands all the time. But what do I mean by that? Well, this chart I like, because what people don't realize is we go into a pet food store. And we have aisles and aisles of different foods to choose from. And we can walk in there and be like, Oh my God, there's so many choices. I don't even know what's good. What should I see? Let's take a look here. And I've got a, b and c. This one looks pretty good. It's got vegetables on it, it's got fresh apples. Look, it says that it's natural. This one well, this one says that, you know it's appoints supports joint health, and my dad was starting to get a little older. So maybe I want that there's all these different foods for us to choose from. But what we don't realize is that they're owned by basically a handful of companies. Right? So this is a chart. Like I said, that I think is from 2019. So some of this has changed because some companies have bought out other companies. But we look and when we look at this, we see like most of these choices fall under one parent brand. So hills, right hills, prescription diets, Hill's science, diet, healthy advantage, all of that is all by Colgate Palmolive. So your toothpaste company owns them. Mars, like I said, Mars is huge now in the pet industry, even on the veterinary side of things. But they've got pedigree, they've got ions, they've got nutro, they've got real Chanan. They've got Caesar they've got wild frontier. Again, all the other ones that they have to they even have greys. So they have Banfield hospitals, they have VCA hospitals, they have blue pearl hospitals, they have pet partner hospitals, they're becoming huge in the pet industry. Who would have ever thought that my candy bar company would own. So much of the pet industry, right? Diamond brand foods. This one I thought was interesting. This is the one that I had originally started feeding my dog and I thought that I was feeding a very premium food. And then I found out that they used a toxic when as a preservative. So taste of the wild. But if we look down further on the list, we see solid gold. We see Kirkland Kirkland Signature, right. We see new trickled on and these are from the same parent company. So this is why when we see recalls, we see a ton of recalls across different brands like this, because they're not different brands. They're all from the same mother company. They're all from the same manufacturing plant. So what really is different from taste of the wild versus Kirkland Signature, because guaranteed they all use the same ingredient supplier, so therefore, all have the same co Packer ingredients. So if there's recall, all of these brands will probably get recalled. Right? Same thing with Nestle. Look at Nestle. They've got Purina Beneful cream Chow. They've got elbow. They've got Merrick now. They've got Castor and Pollux. They've got, I think a couple of more Procter and Gamble's sold to Mars. So if you just take a look at this list, this is why I like putting this out there. Because it will explain why when we see certain recalls that it goes across the board to so many different brands, because you don't realize that they're coming from the same manufacturer. So they're using the same ingredients. Whether it's taste the wild or Kirkland, they're using the same ingredients, whether it's Rachael Ray, or kibbles, and bits.

So I'm just to make you aware, we, the I think it was sunshine mills that we just saw the 2020 aflatoxin recall with that. So now when did we see it with one of the brands but we saw across the whole manufacturing plant. Okay, so with that being said, I hope that this portion has really kind of sparked some interest has opened up your eyes, to how the industry actually works, how it's really important to know this information, how as a pet professional, you know what, it doesn't matter if I'm a groomer, or if I'm a pet food retail marketer, then it's important to let other pet parents know this information. Because I know one of the things that really bothered me when I first started was number one, not the Coulda, Woulda, Shoulda, uh, if I only knew then what I know now, would my dogs have gotten sick? Did me feeding this contribute to all the health ailments that lead up to death? I don't know. I can't, I'll never be able to answer that question. What I can do is just learn from that. And say, Thank you, Max, and Chloe, for being able to open my eyes to be able to now present this information and spread this information along. So maybe there is a dog that's out there that I can say, hey, if you don't want me ask, What do you feel? So I could help that one dog. And maybe that one dog is going to live until he's 18 years old and never have or not have as many health ailments, right? That's what it's about. That's why it's important to communicate this information. If I groomer, and I see scanning coat issues, or if I see, you know, this dog is overly itchy. And I can say if you don't want to ask him, but what do you feel? It's not because I want to sit here and place judgment and say, You need to be very raw, it's because of the fact that I can educate them. And maybe, instead of fearing XY and Z, maybe just changing a protein base will will help that maybe just looking at what's actually in that food. So we can see, maybe it has other allergens that could be in there. You know, here you think something that's got a lot of meat in it, but it's got the word flavor in it and has no meat in it at all. So there's a lot that we can do with this information, to not just help our clients but to help ourselves. So I hope that this has answered a lot of your questions. I hope that either it provokes more thought processes, or that it provokes some more questions. And if you guys do have questions, always feel free to reach out to me. And you can reach me at balanced paws, the number four@gmail.com. You can reach me at 602-529-8279. Those are really the two main ways to be able to reach me if you have any questions in regards to this. And I hope that the rest of the series, Dr. Jodi is able to continue answering your questions. And hopefully we'll be able to contact each other soon and kind of go over things and continue your education. All right. With that I want to say thank you and we will see you again soon.