

# Animal Rescue Fund



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## Executive Summary

Approximately 7.6 million companion animals enter shelters each year nationwide. Each year, 2.7 million animals are euthanized. Only about 29% of pets in America (out of about 80 million) are adopted from shelters and rescues. Our nation's rescue shelters are getting crowded and if an animal isn't "cute enough," they have no chance of living a long, happy life.

ARF was founded in 1998 by an x-ray technician named Terri Panszi. She was an animal activist so spent most of her paycheck to pay the rent on an apartment that housed 20-30 animals at any given point in time.

Though ARF started as a sanctuary but now offers so many more services. They hold events and offer services that help support the establishment that treat and care for the animals.

Pets that aren't as attractive and visually appealing to people are not being adopted as much as attractive/desirable pets. People also associate pets in a shelter as being "second-hand" purchases. People tend to think adopting a dog who may be older or a cat with three legs is like buying a used car or going to a thrift shop. Why are we comparing man's best friend to a second-hand purchase? These animals are just as capable as giving a family just as much unconditional love as any other pet. These animals need homes, and the less visually appealing animals in these shelters need our help the most.

We've teamed up with ARF to develop a way for these "unadoptable" pets to have a chance at becoming a part of a loving family. Our ultimate goal through this

campaign is to increase adoption rates through local shelters and to raise awareness for unadoptable pets. We want people to know just how much of a difference it makes for an animal living in a shelter to find a home. They are just as important as bred animals except if they do not find a home, they are often times euthanized due to overcrowded shelters.

## **Situation Analysis**

### **History**

ARF was founded in 1998 by an x ray technician named Terri Panszi. She was an animal activist so spent most of her paycheck to pay the rent on an apartment that house 20-30 animals and any given point and time.

Though ARF started as a sanctuary but now offers so many more services. They hold events and offers services that help support the establishment that treat and care for the animals.

### **Problem**

Pets that aren't as attractive and visually appealing to people are not being adopted as much as attractive/desirable pets.

### **Program Goal**

Our ultimate goal through this campaign is to increase adoption rates through local shelters and to raise awareness for unadoptable pets. We want people to know just how much of a difference it makes for an animal living in a shelter to

find a home. They are just as important as breded animals except if they do not find a home, they are often times euthanized due to overcrowded shelters.

### **Audience Objectives:**

Millennials 23-30 college graduates are done with school and are ready to take on the undertaking of pet owner.

Empty nesters have just sent their baby away to school and are looking for something new to take care of while they are waiting for grandchildren

### **Product Evaluation**

Animal Rescue Fund (ARF) is a 501 (c) 3 no-kill animal rescue. Animals are not euthanized due to lack of space, age, or manageable illness. The purpose of ARF is to provide shelter, medical care and love to abused, abandoned and neglected animals until permanent homes for these animals can be found. ARF strives to relieve animal suffering in the community. ARF aims to prevent cruelty, abuse and neglect, as well as to eliminate overpopulation and euthanasia as a means of animal control.

### **Consumer Evaluation**

The consumers we are going to mainly focus on targeting include primarily millennials 23-30 or recent college graduates. Our secondary target market are empty nesters looking for companionship ages 50-65. What we have concluded about these consumers is that they are not necessarily aware of the benefits of adopting from a shelter or don't know that they have this option. We need to

make them aware of the animals that are faced with a life of living in a cage or euthanization if they are not adopted.

### **Competitive Analysis**

There is only one local competitor for ARF in Muncie. The Muncie Animal Shelter offers the same services. Their adoption process is a lot easier at the Muncie Animal Shelter.

### **SWOT**

#### Strengths

- ARF is able to stay on the property rent free. ARF still pays all utility and maintenance bills associated with the property
- No-kill shelter that allows animals to receive care, food and shelter
- ARF on a national level has major corporate sponsors such as AT&T, Purina and Chevron
- ARF has many educational programs that they use alongside with their animals

#### Weaknesses:

- People don't find animals in a shelter desirable
- it will be difficult to change peoples' mind that these animals will make better pets than one from a breeder
- People want puppies when they look for dogs. There are not a lot of puppies in shelters

- it will be difficult to change peoples' mind that older animals will still be great pets

#### Opportunities:

- The main opportunity that Muncie ARF has is the proximity to Ball State University. This allows for an entire target market to be utilized.
- A huge opportunity for ARF is the ability to use social media at no cost. They can share posts with it followers to advertise the unadopted animals.
- ARF has the opportunities to play on the feelings people have towards animals. Many people have a “soft spot” for animals and are willing to help in any way.

#### Threats

- They are a non for profit making it hard for them to compete against larger shelters
- Budget cuts
- Other shelters are easier to adopt from
- Don't offer anything special

## Research Strategies

### Primary Research:

By doing an interview with Nikki Kirby of ARF we were able to conclude specific information of the adoption rates at ARF. Nikki provided us with the information that the following characteristics of animals that are less likely to be adopted:

- Old animals
- Animals with black fur
- Animals with physical disabilities and physically altered appearances

### Secondary Research:

Secondary research on ARF showed that not only is there a general problem with funding and adoption for animals with the above mentioned characteristics, but these animals generally have a longer stay at the ARF facility and animals with disabilities sometimes require more attention.

Research on ARF's social media was also conducted to see whether or not they were producing content that was informative and interactive. The Facebook page for ARF has 29,864 like as well as 4.9 stars on their page. Their Facebook is pretty interactive and posts everyday about missing animals as well as adoptable animals.

ARF's Pinterest has 294 followers and posts adoptable dogs along with their stories. ARF's Twitter is very in line with their Facebook due to the fact it is very interactive and posts everyday. However the Twitter account only has 3,727 followers which is an area that could use improvement.



## Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Tactics

### Goals with Objectives

- to increase adoption rates
  - Increase adoption rates of unadoptable pets by 10% by the end of December 2105
- to raise awareness in Muncie for unadoptable pets
  - Increase awareness of unadoptable pets by 15% by the end of December 2016
  - Increase social media presence by 30% by the end of December 2016

Our two main goals are to increase the shelter adoption rates and to raise awareness about adoption for “unadoptable” pets. We want to raise overall adoption rates for the shelter as well as adoption rates for unadoptable pets. We recognize that ARF has a challenge adopting out certain animals. Unadoptable pets tend to either be older, disabled, black or a combination of those. By raising awareness for these pets, we hope that people will adopt unadoptable pets.

We plan to increase adoption rates by 10% by the end of December 2016. This plan will run from June to December, which includes the peak time of shelter crowding. We also want to raise awareness of unadoptable pets by 15% at the

end of December. By doing this we hope to see an increase of adoption rates for unadoptable pets. Our third objective is to increase social media presence by 30%, with an increased social media presence we hope adoption rates will increase.

### **Strategies**

- **Social media-** Facebook and twitter posts highlighting shelter animals for adoption
- **Billboard-** Have a billboard sign in Muncie with “did you know...” slogan
- **Events-** Tails and Ales and Dog Days at the Park
- **Radio-** PSA about unadoptable pets

Our strategy is to use social media, TV, print, events and radio to promote the adoption of pets and raise awareness for unadoptable pets. We chose social media because it is free for ARF. Because this organization does not have the ability to make high-quality PSA’s, social media is the easiest. It is also the best way to reach college students, the secondary target market (See appendix figure 3).

We have several events that will be held to increase awareness of unadoptable pets in hopes to raise adoption rates. These events will be promoted via social media, radio and print.

Along with the PSA, ARF will make a voice-only PSA for radio use. This will attract local listeners in the muncie area to ARF.

## Tactics

- Social Media
  - **Twitter**- Post 4 tweets daily highlighting events, animals and current happenings at ARF
  - **Facebook**- Post unadoptable animal feature daily, promote event when needed and keep followers current on happenings at ARF.
- Print
  - Hang flyers in local businesses to promote events
  - “Did you Know...” billboards along highways surrounding ARF shelter (Appendix Figure 1)
- Events
  - “Discount days”= discounts on pets who need good homes who are otherwise unadoptable
  - Tails and Ales
  - Host Dog Days at the Park once a month during warmer months
  - Have event during finals week to bring ARF animals to campus
- Radio
  - Use radio to promote our social media accounts and events

## Social Media

Our tactics include using twitter and facebook to post about our shelter animals. We will have a dog of the week and a cat of the week post as well as daily posts highlighting our animals for adoption. They will be showing the unadoptable animals and the length of time they have been in the shelter. By doing this we hope people will see these animals and have a place in their heart for them.

We will also have special contests to give away various pet related items. An example would be a year pass to the local dog park. By doing this we hope that the community will become more involved with ARF. With more community involvement, people will chose ARF when looking to adopt their next pet.

We will also be using unofficial holidays to promote our shelter animals on social media. These events include October being “Adopt a Dog Month.” For this month we will be increasing our Facebook posts and using #AdoptADogMonth on twitter. April 11th is National Pet Day. For this holiday we will be posting pictures of all the animals up for adoption. April 30th is National Adopt a Shelter Pet day. We will be promoting this on social media and offering a discount on the adoption fee. June 7-13th is Pet Appreciation Week. We will be asking our followers to post pictures of their ARF adopted pets. November is ASPCA Adopt a Senior Pet Month. We will be posting daily the older animals that are still in the shelter. November 1-7 is animal shelter appreciation week. For this week we will be asking our followers for monetary or tangible donations for our animals.

### **EXAMPLE TWEETS:**

- “Join us Saturday for our first ever #TailsAndAles event at Minnetrista! Starts at 5pm. What’s better than dogs and beer?”
- “It’s National Adopt a Senior Pet Month! Check out Sparky and Tiger, they are still looking for their forever homes #ARF”

**EXAMPLE FACEBOOK POSTS:**

- “Princess Lucy is our cat of the week. She loves to play and is a great cuddler. Help her find her forever home!” [picture included]
- Check out our dog of the week! Spot is a three-year-old black lab mix. He loves to play fetch and is great with other dogs. Help Spot find his furever home!” [picture included]

**Events**

We will be having local events to promote adoption in Muncie. These events will include “dog days,” where we bring shelter dogs to the local dog park off of Beechwood. Students and the Muncie community can bring their pets to the park to meet some of the other animals up for adoption. This will allows for pet interaction. The dog park will be free of charge on these days. This event will happen on saturday of each month during the warmer months of our campaign.

We will also have a “Tails and Ales” event. ARF will pair up with local bars to host a dog friendly event. The event will take place downtown in Muncie at an outside venue where local bars can sell beer and the community can bring their pets. We will do this event in June as weather permits. This will allow people to socialize while meeting some of the shelter dogs up for adoption.

ARF will also be bringing some of the animals to Ball State's Campus to reach the student market. We will be doing this during finals week at Ball State. We will set up in the university green outside of the business building. Passing students can come play with some of the animals.

Our last event will be our "Discount Days." On these days we will lower the adoption fee in order to clear our our animals. This event is already done at the Muncie Animal Shelter. We will lower the adoption price to \$10, however, applicants will still have to go through the approval process. This event will happen in November.

### **Print**

Another tactic was to have a billboard down McGalliard with the slogan, "Did you know...?" It will have facts about unadoptable pets, raising awareness for what is considered an unadoptable pet.

### **Radio**

We will also be using radio to promote our contests, events and social media accounts. We will have one commercial during the lunch hour one week before each event.

## **Target Publics**

Our primary target is Empty Nesters. These are adults aged 50-65 who have older kids that no longer live with them. This audience is now looking to fill the spot in their home that their children once held. This is the third largest age group in the muncie area, making them the best secondary target market. This group is mostly high school

educated and makes an average income of \$30,000/ year. They are homeowners with a mix of all races, but mostly white. They have jobs in the service industry and shop at stores like Walmart and Lowes. These people are not social media savvy but may have Facebook.

We chose this group as the target market because they have stable homes that are ideal for raising pets. They do not have any children, which allows them to adopt pets that need extra attention or do not play well with children. They are able to devote most of their time to their new pet, as some empty nesters are retired. This age group is also less likely to care about aesthetics of the animal and may choose to adopt older animals. While this is not the largest age group in Muncie that are a very responsible group, allowing for the best possible life for their pet.

Our secondary target audience for the Muncie area is college students/graduates ages 20-30. Due to the large percentage of Ball State University and Ivy Tech College students in the area, this makes Muncie the perfect location for this target audience. Ball State University alone has around 21,000 students. The largest age segment for Muncie Indiana is the 21-30 year old age range. Making this the best option for our primary target market. According to PRIZM, these are people with an education, low income and without kids. They have mixed ethnicities but are mostly white. They watch the FX channel, shop at target and are good with social media. This group is mostly renters or first home owners. They are young enough to now have children but old enough to accept the responsibility of owning an animal.

We chose this group as our secondary audience because they are a large majority in Muncie. These students are easily reached through social media and have compassion for unadoptable pets. We specifically chose older students because they are more responsible and are starting their professional life. They may have a higher income than lower undergraduate students and are more likely to not choose a pet based on aesthetics.

## **Channels of Communication**

For the channels of communication, a mix of traditional and non-traditional strategies will be used to implement our strategies. These were chosen for their ability to reach our target audience and have the desired effect and tone for the messages. each will be used as described below.

### **Traditional**

- **News Releases** - These will be sent to out different media outlets outlines above in order to raise awareness for pet adoptions using our tag line
- **Guest Commentaries** - commentaries from adoptive pet parents will be handed out at our events and in our various locations.
- **Radio** - radio ads will be used for promoting events and to get our messages out about unadoptable pets.
- **Advertising** - these will be placed in magazines, on billboards and other simple places consistent with our target audience.



## Non-Traditional

- **Events** - Tales and Ales along with a Puppy Pit will be a couple of the events we hold throughout the year. Each will feature pets for destressing during finals or getting out for a night on the town with your furry friend.
- **Philanthropy** - ARF is always looking for new ways to give back to the community, especially those with four legs. They are partnering with a local car dealership to raise money. ARF is paying the adoption fee for anyone who is approved at the dealership in order to get all these pets a home for the winter.
- **Marketing** - Things like hats, brochures will be handed out at the events. A direct mail piece will be sent to areas where the population is saturated with our target market such as colleges and universities.

## Implementation and Logistics

Events for ARF will be spread apart in a six month period between June 2016 to December 2016. During this period social media will be closely monitored as we post the pet of the week, posts to gain awareness about events, contests and holidays.

### Tails and Ales

During the warmer months we will start advertising, posting and creating radio ads for Tales and Ales. Tales and Ales will be held on Saturday, June 27th. The whole month of June before the event will be dedicated to publicizing the events with radio, ads and social media.

## **Discount Day**

Black Friday will be a discount day in order to compete with the humane societies in Indianapolis. The event will be on social media and flyers throughout Muncie.

## **Contest:**

The contest for the free dog park pass will be after the Tails and Ales event between July 16-23. During that week there will be social media posts about the contest as well as a little flyer handed out to people who adopt an animal during that week.

## **Pit of Puppies**

Pit of Puppies will be during Ball State University's finals week in December. During the week between December 12-16, students can come destress with cute furry friends. The event will include social media posts a week before the event and during, a radio spot on WCRD on Dec. 12, 2016, and a story in the Daily News featuring the event's details.

## **Holidays**

The Fourth of July is the next big holiday and will feature posts with all the animals wearing cute themed scarves. Other posts will also include how to keep animals safe and calm during fireworks.

Halloween will include a post on social media with the ARF family dressed up in their best costumes. The animals that we will focus on will be the black animals due to the Halloween theme. We want to make the black animals look cute and adoptable in adorable halloween costumes.

Thanksgiving will feature a post with dogs getting ready to feast as well as continuing the tradition of having the ARF Thanksgiving where locals donate their leftovers. ARF Thanksgiving will be promoted more than it has in the past with social media, as well as a news release to the star press in order to promote the event. Christmas is the next big holiday and will include social media posts, themed picture posts and discounts.

(See Appendix Figure 2)

## **Evaluation**

Our evaluation will be based whether or not we reached our our goals and objectives. If adoption rates increase by 10%, we know we will have successfully completed that goal. We will look at past adoption rates from the same period to compare growth. We hope through our strategies and tactics that we will be able to successfully complete this objective

The second objective is to raise awareness of unadoptable pets by 15%. To evaluate if we have completed this objective we will do research to see how many muncie area citizens are aware of unadoptable pets. This can be done with focus groups and surveys. Though our media strategies we hope to achieve this goal and see an increase of 15%.

We can use social media analytics to see how many people have viewed our social media. This will give us an idea of how successful our campaign was. Since social media is our primary media strategy this will be crucial to evaluate. This will help

us determine if we have reached our third objective, to increase social media presence by 30%. Currently ARF does not have a very strong social media presence, so this will not be hard to achieve.

ARF will post several times a day, showcasing the unadoptable pets that are still in the shelter. We can evaluate this by the amount of views we have on each post. Many people often share ARF posts, which can also be evaluated to determine success. For twitter we can look at the amount of retweets and favorites that our tweets receive.

We can also evaluate our events as a measure of success. We plan to have several events to increase shelter adoption. The first event will be a discount day. We will have days where shelter animals will be offered at a lower adoption fee. If many people in our target publics attend our events, we can consider the event a success.

We will also have dog days at the park. Shelter dogs will be taken to dog parks where people can play with the dogs up for adoption. It is our hope that when people come play with the animals, they will adopt them. We can also evaluate the success of this event by the amount of individuals that attend.

Overall the success of our campaign depends on the amount of unadoptable pets that are adopted by the end of december. If we see an increase in adoption and more space available in the shelter, we know that our campaign worked.

## Summary

We developed a campaign that highlights the importance of adopting unadoptable pets. We hit our target audience by advertising on social media, tv, print, events and on the radio to reach the most amount of people. Our reach was done primarily through PSA's. We also did interactive contests through social media where we highlighted a "pet of the week" to get people involved. We had events such as a discount pet day, Tails and Ales, campus visits and more.

Through our campaign we hope to bring awareness to the value that "unadoptable" pets bring to people. We want to help give these animals a fighting chance at having a happy life and encourage people to stop judging the book by its cover.

## Appendix

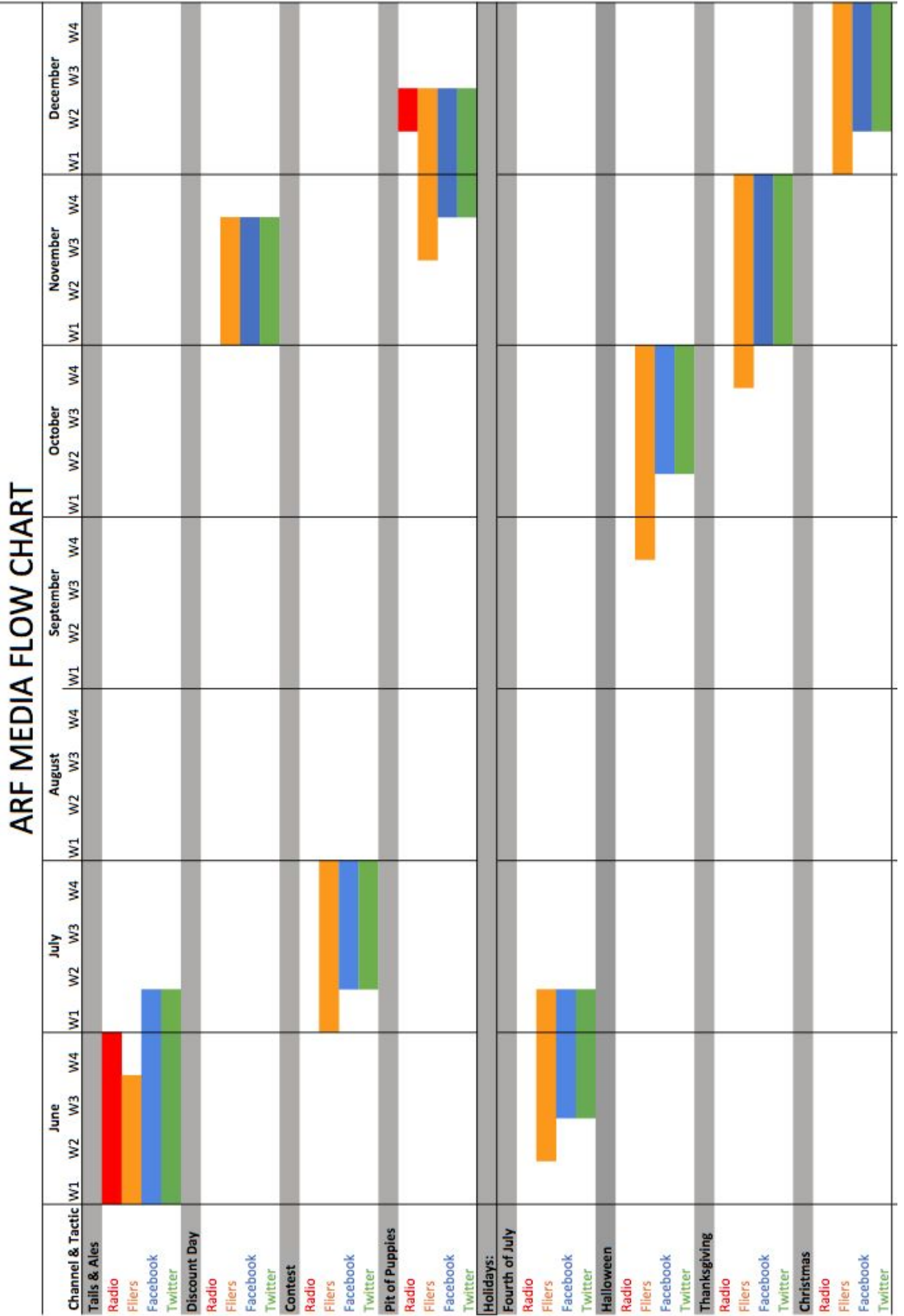
Figure 1



**Did you know....** 2.7 million pets are killed  
each year due to over crowding

**Adopt Today**

Figure 2



**Figure 3**

<p><b>Adopt a Senior Pet Month ARF Date: November 1, 2015</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u><b>Video</b></u></p> <p><b>DISCLAIMER: The following material is offered for your free and unrestricted use by the Animal Rescue Fund of Muncie Indiana.</b></p> <p>B-roll: images of animals of ARF in Muncie, Indiana</p> <p>images of elderly animals highlighting their skills ie. being potty trained, playing with children etc.</p>	<p><b>Total Running Time: 1:30 Producer: Leyanne Burgans</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u><b>Audio</b></u></p> <p>SOT #1: According to the ASPCA, approximately 7.6 million animals enter animal shelters nationwide every year. Only about 2.7 million of these animals are adopted each year and 2.7 million of these animals are euthanized every year.</p> <p>As you can see, the chances of getting adopted are slim, especially if you are perceived as “unadoptable.” An “unadoptable” animal might be elderly, have a handicap, might not appear to have luscious fur or in some cases, might have black fur which has been perceived as undesirable.</p> <p>Although these animals might be looked at as the second choice, or an animal you’ll come back to if there aren’t any other options, I want you to stop and think about why you want an animal in the first place.</p> <p>These elderly and unadoptable animals are just as qualified, if not more, to be the perfect companion for you as the puppy down the row. They are just as capable and deserving of love and with your help, you can make their lives just as worthwhile and they will make yours.</p>
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<p>Images of happy elderly animals with their families.</p> <p>Slate #1: Contact information and social media hashtag for Adopt a Senior Pet Month.</p>	<p>The ASPCA has named November “adopt a senior pet month.” Throughout the month of November, the ASPCA has dedicated their time and energy to highlight the importance of not overlooking our senior companions. We challenge you to give these animals a chance at having a loving, fulfilled life that can be lived out in the comfort of you and your family’s home.</p> <p>These animals have never given up the hopes of finding a place where they belong. Please don’t give up on them.</p> <p>Please contact your local animal shelters for more information on adopting an elderly animal or contact the ASPCA at 1-800-354-5848.</p> <p>follow our stories on social media by searching the hashtag #adoptaseniorpetmonth.</p>
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