



Adopt a Horse Month Communications Guide

Thank you for joining the first-ever Adopt a Horse Month! This communications guide is designed to help your organization promote equines available for adoption to your community and local media and includes:

- Tips to increase social media exposure for your organization
- Tips for using social media to promote adoption
- Social media overlays
- Community engagement tips
- A press release template, tips for engaging local media, and media talking points
- FAQs

Get started by trying 1-2 ideas per week and enlisting social media savvy volunteers to help manage the promotion efforts.

Date: April 26th – May 31th

Dedicated Hashtag: #AdoptAHorse

Accounts for Tagging: @ASPCA and @TheRightHorse

How to get maximum social media exposure during the campaign

- Do a promotional social media post on Help a Horse Day (April 26) letting your community know that you will be participating.
 - **Sample post 1:** *We're thrilled to be participating in the first-ever @ASPCA's #AdoptAHorse campaign from April 26-May 31. Visit [insert platform you'll be using (i.e., Facebook Live, Instagram Stories, website etc.)] to meet all the horses currently available for adoption, and find your #RightHorse!*
 - **Sample post 2:** In honor of May being the first annual #AdoptAHorse Month, meet some of our equines available for adoption! @ASPCA @TheRightHorse [insert various photos of adoptable horses as an album/carousel]
- @ASPCA, @ASPCapro, @TheRightHorse and @HorseIllustrated will be re-sharing adoptable equines on social media. For a chance to have your equines featured, make sure to use the hashtag #AdoptAHorse and tag @aspcas in your static posts and stories.

Tips for using social media to help promote equine adoption

- **Use Instagram/Facebook Stories:** Adding photos and videos to your story is a great way to give your followers a behind-the-scenes look at your everyday work and allows you to share more casual and temporary content. Below are some quick tips to help you get started:
 - Share a photo of each animal with a quick bio, including basic stats like name, age, height in hands, and breed.
 - Include a clear call to action with next steps for interested adopters. You can do this by adding a swipe-up link where potential adopters can apply or adding the URL to your Instagram bio and driving people there.
 - Tag the @ASPCA and @TheRightHorse and use hashtag #AdoptAHorse for a chance to be shared on our social media channels and by our media partners.
 - Check out [this article](#) for more tips and inspiration.



- **Go Live:** Give your supporters a behind-the-scenes look at your lifesaving work with Facebook or Instagram Live! When you go live on Facebook, your followers will automatically receive a push notification to tune into your video. Live videos see 3 times the engagement of traditional video shares on the platform, and your followers can engage with your content in real-time through questions, comments, and shares. Get more [tips for going live](#).
- **Share a compelling story:** Supporters love hearing about the amazing work your rescue is doing, so be sure to show them how important their impact is! Sharing before and after photos of a horse you've rescued, photos with a compelling backstory of a horse in need of a home, photos of a new adoption, or shots of a horse in their happy new home are just a few ways to make your followers feel great about supporting your organization.
- **Use video content:** Videos perform especially well on social media, as they help your audience visualize the important work that your organization does to find homes for horses. Below are some tips to make the most of your videos:
 - Create a compelling video and share it on social media to tell your story and rally your supporters!
 - Use video to highlight adoptable horses with compelling backstories and/or personalities.
 - You can try a simple and free editing tool like [Adobe Spark](#) to add text and bring your story to life, provide a call to action at the end or include your organization's name.
 - Make sure that you post the video directly on your Facebook or Instagram page (versus linking to it on YouTube) – you'll have more reach that way!
 - Consider uploading a Facebook video as a "Premiere" to increase your reach and visibility. When you schedule a Premiere video, fans will get notified that you're planning to launch a video, which will create more excitement and anticipation.
 - Use a lapel microphone on anyone who's speaking to capture clear, crisp audio.
- **Advertise everywhere:** In your communications (email, website, events), encourage your supporters to follow you on your social media channels and spread the word by sharing horse listings on their own channels.
- **Join the Horse Adoption Resources for Shelters and Rescues Facebook group:** Check in with the official [Horse Adoption Resources for Shelters and Rescues Facebook group](#) for ideas and inspiration from other participating groups and experts at the ASPCA.
- Get [more social media tips and tricks](#), plus ideas from your colleagues.

Tips for using the social media overlay graphics

- To add one of the overlays to a photo of a horse available for adoption, use a simple editing tool like [canva.com](#) or [photogrid](#).
 - Select an image of horse available for adoption.
 - Upload one of the overlays and apply over image.
 - Share on social media and make sure to use the hashtag #AdoptAHorse for increased visibility.

Community Engagement

Tap into your networks to find local influencers, businesses, and organizations in your community that support your cause and can help raise awareness. One way to engage your community is asking them to share a horse available for adoption on their social media. Provide them with language to use when sharing and ask them to tag your rescue. You can also invite local influencers to your stable to meet with horses and use their own social media channels to help get them adopted.



Engaging with traditional media contacts in your local community

1. [Template press release](#)
2. [Suggested Media Talking Points & Pitching Tips](#)

FAQ:

Q: How do we encourage social sharing and participation?

A: The most important thing to keep in mind is to make sure your content is *meaningful*. Your audience is much more likely to comment on something that really resonates with them or their community, which in turn, will help boost your content in people's newsfeeds.

Secondly, get engaged with your audience! Jump into any social conversation around the campaign, and try to be a resource to answer questions from the community. Be sure to share, retweet, and regram any photos taken at your rescue with the #AhoptAHorse hashtag to show your appreciation!

Q: What are some attention-grabbing social media tactics?

A: At the ASPCA, we tend to see the most attention on "Live" content. When you go live on Facebook or Instagram, your followers will automatically receive a push notification to tune into your video. Live videos see 3 times the engagement of traditional video shares on the platform, and your followers can engage with your content in real-time through questions, comments, and shares!

Q: What kind of time limit should be put on video segments? Is it better to have multiple animals in a segment or just concentrate on 1 or 2?

A: This depends on your content. If you're posting a pre-recorded video, keep it short and sweet (a minute or so is ideal!) Many users quickly scroll through their newsfeeds, so try to open with some compelling imagery to hook their attention before they can scroll by.

If you're going Live, take your time! This gives your followers a better chance to tune in during the action. At the ASPCA, we love setting up puppy playtimes for live video – these usually last 20 minutes or so, and make for great engagement. Try out a stable tour to introduce adoptable horses or follow a volunteer through their daily care routine – there's always a great opportunity to go live!

Q: How do you make social media effective for gaining not only new audiences but getting them to come in the door?

A: An easy way to bring an online campaign to life is by setting up a Facebook event. If you're hosting an adoption event, be sure to create the event as soon as possible so that you can start spreading the word throughout the month. Invite all of your friends and followers, and ask them to share the event to their networks as well!

Most importantly: show, don't tell. Use social media as a platform to bring your organization to your followers through imagery, video, and frequent updates - keep them in the loop whenever you have new adoptable horses, events, or volunteering opportunities. The more you can stay front-of-mind for your community, the better!

Q: What type of photos draw the most attention?

A: Absolutely anything animal-related! Try to always include an animal in photos, even if the focus is on a staff member or volunteer. Videos are even better – get those cameras rolling!

Q: I don't have time to manage social media full-time. Can I schedule my posts?

A: Use [Creator Studio](#) to schedule posts on Facebook and Instagram in advance and save yourself time!