

PetSmart Charities Aids Animal Welfare through \$118M Strategic Investment

Supporting Animal Welfare

Across North America, PetSmart Charities has established itself as a leader of animal health and welfare. Since its beginning in 1994, PetSmart Charities has contributed millions of dollars to trailblazing organizations, aiding in transforming the lives of pets and those who cherish them. Collaborating with approximately 4,000 non-profits, the organization has supported communities through pets, with 9,350 grant recipients benefitting from the \$500 million-plus funds awarded.

Improving Practice Outcomes

A key objective by PetSmart Charities was the creation of an international Accelerator program. Targeted at economically challenged areas, the program was aimed at bolstering the operational efficiency of veterinary clinics, thereby ensuring their viability and profitability. More than just a funding agency, PetSmart Charities is invested in the success of these clinics, as evidenced by the \$118 million committed to the Accelerator program.

The Accelerator needed a strong emphasis on training, 1 on 1 coaching, and business consulting designed to focus on the back-office operations (spanning Sales, Marketing, Technology, Customer Service, etc.) while helping clinics address challenges including staffing, pricing policies, inventory management, and scalability.

Understanding the enormity of the task at hand, MSS Business Transformation Advisory (MSSBTA) was the go-to partner for PetSmart Charities. MSSBTA's expertise proved invaluable in analyzing the program objective, writing a coaching program and timeline, and executing a structure that would guarantee success for the Accelerator and the veterinary practices.

"PetSmart Charities chose MSSBTA to help develop the Accelerator program because they understood our mission 'to make the world a better place for pets by investing in community partners that advocate and care for the well-being of pets and all who love them'," shared Aimee Gilbreath, PetSmart Charities president. "They brought business knowledge and coaching expertise that we needed in order to help clinics as risk."

Launching the Accelerator

MSSBTA's approach was to utilize a highly skilled C-suite executive as an advisory consultant who would spearhead the Accelerator program. MSSBTA's advisory consultant and a staff member from PetSmart Charities took charge of the implementation, management, and compliance of the clinics within the Accelerator program. Critical factors for success were identified, planned, and executed, ranging from complete documentation of business requirements, team accountability, risk and data gap identification, to the creation of a dynamic workbook.

In the first year of the Accelerator program, 17 non-profit clinics from across the United States and Canada signed on. PetSmart Charities was kept in the loop through regular updates, allowing them to monitor the growth of the clinics and extend their support. Each participating clinic team received a project work plan, risks and issues log, decision log, and weekly status updates, along with extensive training and business coaching. MSSBTA's advisory model facilitated leadership, governance, and accountability, ensuring that the clinics successfully completed their 'homework' assignments.

Pamela Barnhill, MSSBTA's advisory consultant shared how transformative it has been to the clinics and veterinarians that participated in the Accelerator program, saying "We've seen clinics that were on the verge of closing their doors work through the program. Their practices have stabilized and grown, and their employees have flourished. It's been really fun to watch."

Building on Best Practices

Feedback about MSSBTA was overwhelmingly positive, with the collaboration extending into continued support roles after the completion of the project. PetSmart Charities recognized and acknowledged their limitations in terms of resource allocation, inexperience managing innovative processes, technology integration, and internal resource optimization and welcomed MSSBTA's leadership and guidance.

Chase Miller, Director of Operations and Outreach Founder of The Bridge Clinic in Philadelphia, acknowledged the success of the Accelerator program, saying, "We are beyond thankful. [The Accelerator] has indeed accelerated our progress far beyond any timeline we could have achieved without the support. In just a year's time, we have been able to build a new veterinary clinic from the ground-up in Philly. We look forward to the thousands of pets and pet parents that will benefit from TBC Philly in the years to come!"