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Vetstoria's time-saving guide for busy practices

Your practice is always going to be busy.

With an increase in pet ownership, you also need to ensure your practice can cater to the growing demand.
How can you manage time and meet pet owner expectations with a clear shortage of veterinary professionals and lockdown measures?

Vetstoria is built to ensure that your practice can gain control over your schedule and provide 24/7 online appointment scheduling to pet owners.

Here are some features of Vetstoria that can help you save time and manage staff shortages.

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Time-saving features

● **Offer Smart triage with appointment screening**

How can you speed up the process of identifying which appointment needs immediate attention and which ones can wait? With appointment screening, you can set up keywords on Vetstoria so that it triggers an action for pet owners.

For example, you can add words like "vomiting", "bleeding" etc, in settings and add a system message. So pet owners see something like "This looks like a potential emergency, please call the practice on xxx-xxx-xxx. With an automated process, it saves your staff time to prioritize appointments based on the level of criticality.

● **Set up payments to reduce no shows and ease admin work**

One way to address pesky no-shows is to offer payments for specific appointment types so you can be sure of pet owner arrival. Additionally, processing payments online reduces any admin work and frees front desk staff. You can offer payment options such as full payment or a deposit and specify based on the client type (new or existing) and apply it based on the appointment type too.
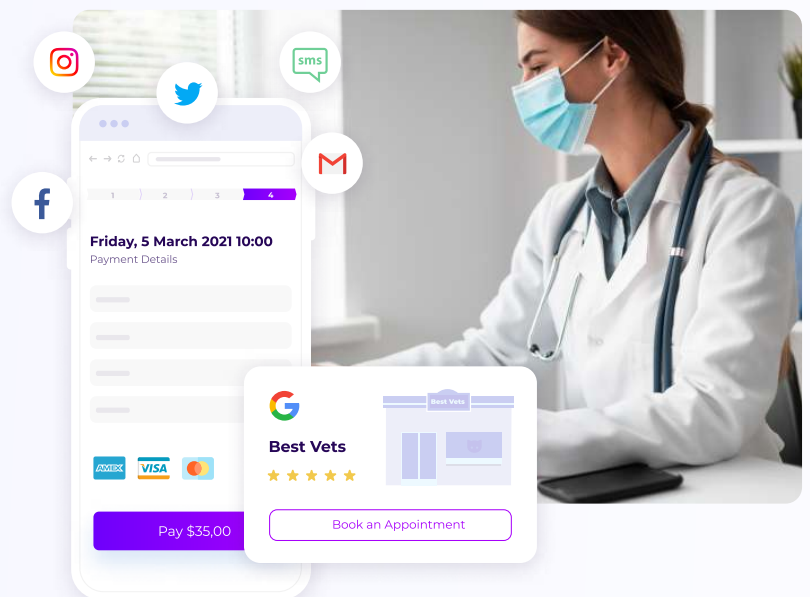
Seadown Veterinary Services has done this effectively and has noticed that pet owners are increasingly comfortable paying online.

● **Manage your vaccination backlog with SmartLink reminders**

Vaccinations are not easy to forgo even in this difficult time. With our integration with iRecall, practices can offer appointments based on their availability and send reminders to pet owners to book vaccinations. These reminders can be set based on the due date for the vaccination with the booking link to make an appointment. Get more info about SmartLink reminders over here.

● Enable the new client form for easy information

With Vetstoria's new client form, your admin can rest easy during the appointment booking process. The new pet owner can fill in their details at the end of the booking without your admin team having to call them for more information or share a 3rd party tool or form. The information will be emailed to the practice so you can update your PIMS later.
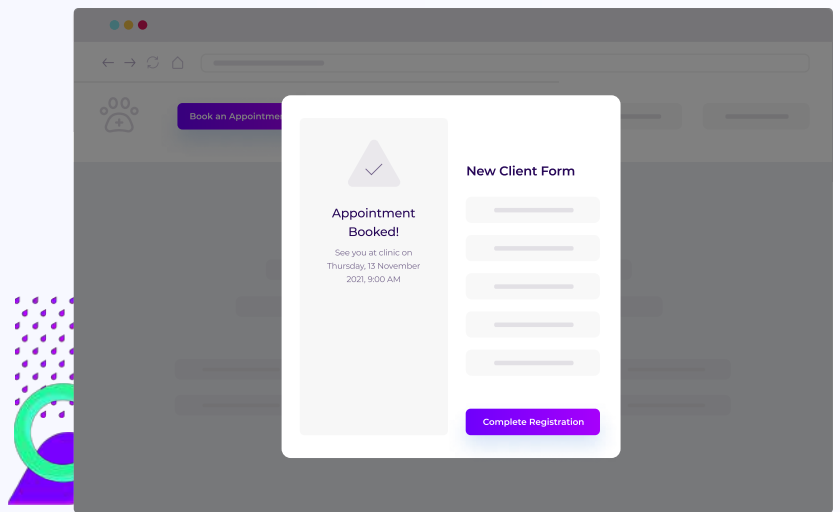
## ● Repeat prescription or refill requests

Automated prescription refills save a lot of time for your team as well as pet owners. By using our digital marketing feature, pet owners can place repeat prescription orders via your website or via a link sent in communications from the clinic. You can choose the time slots available for collection and provide owners with specific instructions.

Alternatively, you can also set up prescription orders as an "appointment type". This can include a custom message so it says to "leave details of the request".

Do ensure to leave enough time and have stocks of the medication ready for pick up.

● Reminders and confirmations

Vetstoria offers a range of email templates so you can add them to your booking workflow. Email confirmations can be automated so that pet owners receive them as soon as they make an appointment and automatic reminders closer to the date. The confirmation email also has a link so pet owners can reschedule or cancel the appointment. This reduces any manual work for the staff and helps reduce no-shows.
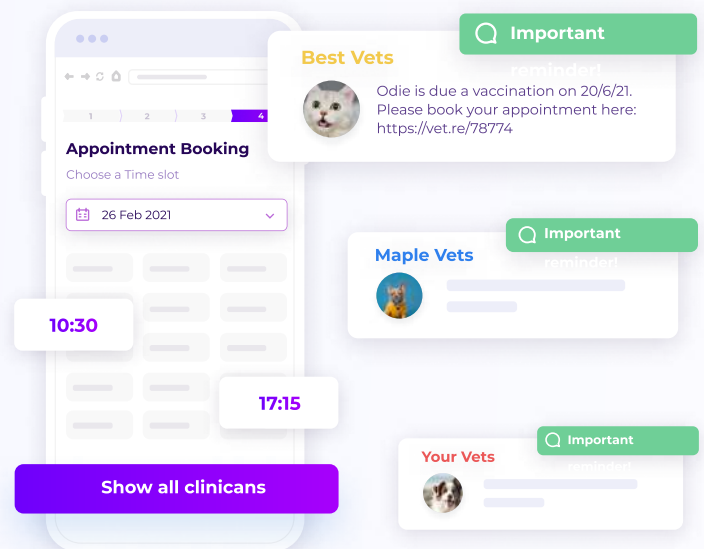
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Managing staff shortages

● **Add holiday block-offs to your schedule**

If your practice is overwhelmed, short-staffed, or closed for a few days, you can add holiday block-offs within Vetstoria. This turns off the ability for pet owners to book appointments through your website on dates chosen by you. By specifying re-opening days, pet owners then can book appointments for future dates.

Advanced Settings

Details Display Slot Availability **Holidays** Defaults Reminders Testing Blocklist Email Payment

Holidays
Add any upcoming days during which the clinic will be closed. The system, will not allow clients to book appointments on such dates

Import holidays

Day   Description

Add new holiday

Reset   Save

● **Add slot exclusions to manage your availability**

A key advantage of Vetstoria is its immense customization. You can sync your calendar (PMS) with Vetstoria and block the times based on your workload with slot exclusions. Here you can block the times you want so pet owners cannot book appointments during that time. These excluded slots can be used for walk-ins or even for surgeries.

Slot exclusions

Exclusion	Week	Day	Time	Appointment types	Applicable Calendars	Status
Rule 1	≡	Mon	08:00 - 14 00	All	All	Off
Rule 2	≡	Mon. Tue. Thu. Sat	08:00 - 14 00	0 sick/Trauma	Rabbit. Reptile	Off
Rule 3	≡	Mon. Tue	08:00 - 14 00	All	Goat. Sheep	Off
Rule 4	≡	Friday	08:00 - 14 00	0 sick/Trauma	Dairy Cow	Off
Rule 1	≡	Mon	08:00 - 14 00	All	Rat	Off
Rule 2	≡	Mon. Tue. Thu. Sat	08:00 - 14 00	0 sick/Trauma	Pig. Cow	Off

● **Add a gap to the earliest slot to prioritize appointments**

By adding a gap to the earliest slot, you can leave enough time for pet owners to arrive for their appointments. This also helps to prioritize which appointments and/or clients you can see today vs those who can wait (eg: take the appointment for a sick pet today and new client vaccination next week).

You can do the same by adding clinician availability or specify the types of species you can treat, which gives you further control.
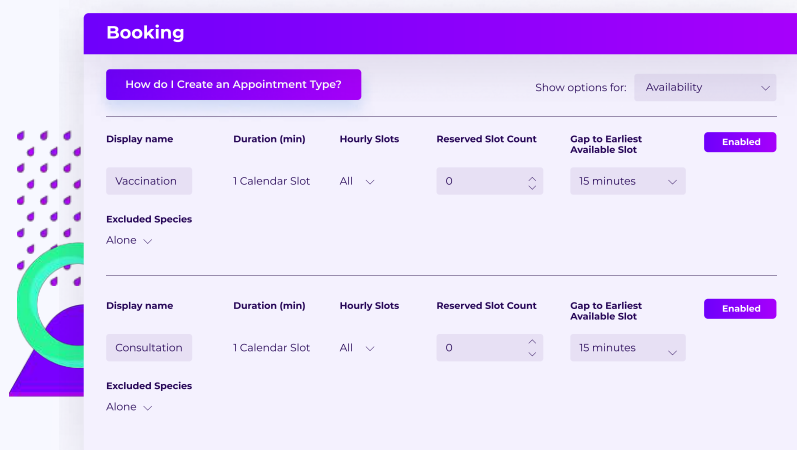
One of Vetstoria's customers, AniCura Varde in Denmark, has set up 20-minute vaccination slots and only allows pet owners to book appointments for Monday and Friday afternoons to offer flexibility for emergencies.

Read the entire case study here.

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● Disable non-urgent appointment types

With the enable/disable toggle, you can disable non-urgent appointment types and prioritize important ones like sick or injured pet.

By prioritizing similar vital appointments, you can temporarily halt others until you have caught up or have more staff on board. However, it's always best to offer at least two popular appointment types so pet owners can visit during an urgency.

Booking

How do I Create an Appointment Type?   Show options for: Availability ▾

Display name	Duration (min)	Hourly Slots	Reserved Slot Count	Gap to Earliest Available Slot	Enabled
Vaccination	1 Calendar Slot	All ▾	0	15 minutes ▾	

Excluded Species
Alone ▾

Display name	Duration (min)	Hourly Slots	Reserved Slot Count	Gap to Earliest Available Slot	Enabled
Consultation	1 Calendar Slot	All ▾	0	15 minutes ▾	

Excluded Species
Alone ▾

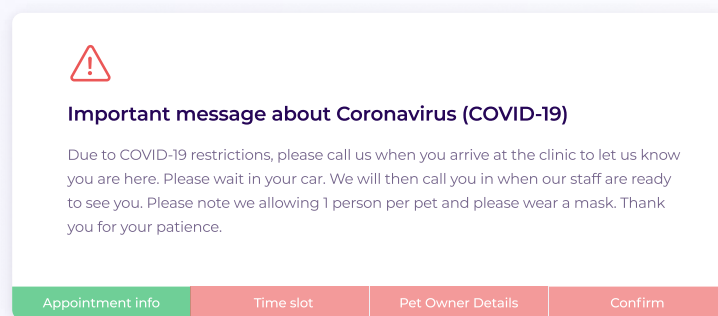# During COVID19 or lockdown

● Add disclaimers to provide guidance

Want to provide pet owners with specific information or instructions before they book their appointment? With Vetstoria, you can set up a custom disclaimer that has to be accepted by clients to book appointments.

⚠

Important message about Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, please call us when you arrive at the clinic to let us know you are here. Please wait in your car. We will then call you in when our staff are ready to see you. Please note we allowing 1 person per pet and please wear a mask. Thank you for your patience.

Appointment info	Time slot	Pet Owner Details	Confirm

Messages can include COVID-19 protocols (e.g., the max number of people that should arrive at the practice, wearing a mask, or what social distance they should maintain). This helps you to screen pet owners prior to the arrival and let them know the protocols of your practice.

APC Veterinary Clinic uses Vetstoria disclaimers to significant effect during the height of the COVID-19 crisis. **Read their story here.**

● Disabling certain appointments for new pet owners

It's not the most ideal solution but it helps you manage the traffic when you have a staff shortage. There are two ways you can do this.

One is to inform that certain appointments are going to be limited for new pet owners through disclaimers.

You can also specify this via appointments types. In settings, go to appointments types and you can click "availability". Choose which appointment types can cater to new clients to manage your team's workload.

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● **Offer remote consultations or virtual care**

With COVID still lurking, you can take advantage of Vetstoria's telemedicine feature, enabling pet owners to schedule video consultations for pets that need a quick diagnosis or a surgery follow-up.

It's a great way to control in-practice traffic, and pet owners also feel safe attending the consultation from the comfort of their homes. **Emerson's Green Vets** discovered that pet owners lean towards Vetstoria telemedicine, with or without COVID due to its convenience.
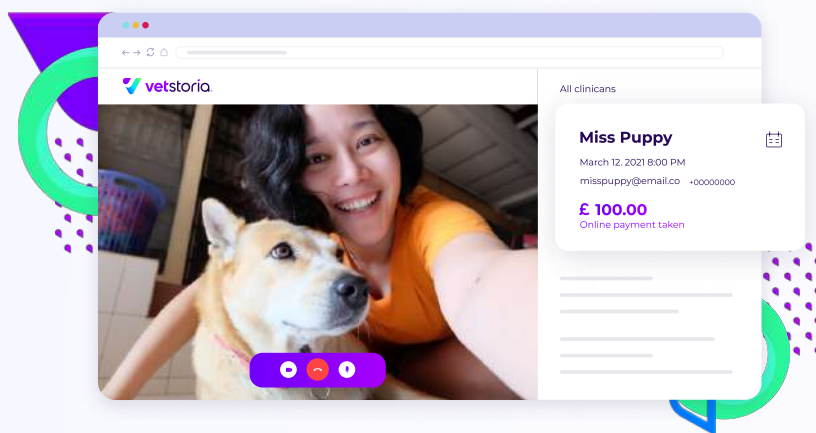
Need any help adding any features? Get in touch with our support team.

Log a support ticket

Request a call back

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