

# New York City Businesses bank on America 's Love Affair with Pets and Social Networking



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**Sonoma, California. - February 8, 2009** - What do Midwest Airlines, Loews Regency Hotel, Paws Pet Resort, Pet Express Pet Taxi, Wagwear, and Gavroche French Restaurant all have in common?



Well they are all New York City Pet Friendly Businesses that are banking on America's love affair with pets and social networking to promote their services to the 71.4 millions homes that own pets throughout the US. And, YapStar has given them a creative way to get their message in front of the people that will listen through the YapStar Pet Holiday Contest at <http://www.yapstar.com>.

Red Magic won the YapStar Contest with 17012 Votes received from social networking activity and public voting from pet lovers in almost every state in the USA and from England, Germany, Australia, Canada, Norway, Portugal, and Mexico. With Magic's sweet face and beautiful red coat it's no wonder why he had fans cheering him on to be crowned "The YapStar".

As sponsors of the Pet Holiday in New York City, these pet friendly businesses have put together a magical weekend of pampering for the YapStar Winner, Red Magic and Diana Dunigan.

Red Magic and his owner Diana Dunigan from Brunswick, GA, will be flying into NYC on Midwest Airlines through their Premier Pet Program which offers special pampering for "Red Magic". To make sure they fly in style, Red Magic will be toting along his new "Bag on Wheels" from Sherpa Pet Products. Waiting at the curb on their arrival, Pet Express Taxi will whisk



them away in their very own pet specialty cab to Loews Regency Hotel in Midtown Manhattan where they will be waited on hand and paw in first-class comfort.



Then off to the Happy Paws Pet Resort; where Magic will enjoy a "spa session" in order to look his best when they go out on the town for a shopping spree at Wagwear, a favorite among preppy pups and their fashion-minded owners. And what better way to end the day then at Pet Friendly Gavroche Restaurant, enjoying Camelia Cassin's traditional specialties of the French country side under the stars in a garden out back where "Red Magic" is welcome. And, that's not all! Red Magic will come home from his pampered holiday to a stunning pet portrait painted by Suzanne Berry.

Red Magic's owner, Diana Dunigan, has this to say about Magic and how he won the contest. "

I am just amazed that in less than a year, Magic went from a starved and homeless rescue dog to the "YAPSTAR". Everyone from my family and friends to my doctors, surgeons, and nurses, to local and state law enforcement, to government agents helped Magic get the votes he needed to win. On YapStar I can connect with Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace friends which started an avalanche of voting. Even delivery people, USPS, and UPS drivers would cast a vote for him once they met him and saw how friendly and lovable he was! I sent out "Magic's Daily Vote Reminder" every day to a huge email list. Then, just about everyone on the list forwarded it to everyone on their list and so on. It was wild how votes came from all over the world!"

Laurie Martin, YapStar CEO says, "Red Magic's owner gave us a lesson in the power of social networks and word of mouth marketing. Diana's love for Red Magic spurred her on to reach marketing heights corporate execs would envy."

Word-of-mouth and social media marketing are becoming essential in reaching pet lovers and the \$45.4 billion in services and products they spend yearly. And businesses are paying attention.

According to Forrester Research, over 80% of Americans use social media monthly while the 2008 Cone Business in Social Media Study says 93 percent of social media users believe a company should have a presence in social media, and an overwhelming 85 percent believe a company should not only be present but also interact with its consumers via social media. In fact, 56 percent of users feel both a stronger connection with and better served by companies when they can interact with them in a social media environment.

YapStar's new Pet Holiday Contest will start in March 2010.

## **About**

## **YapStar.com**

YapStar.com at <http://www.yapstar.com> is a local search and review, social shopping and social networking community designed by pet lovers, for pet lovers and the pet businesses that serve them. Recently awarded the 2009 WebAward for Outstanding Achievement by the Web Marketing Association, its free and unique service is a place for all pet lovers to share, exchange ideas, locate and review pet services in their hometown, and find and rate the coolest pet products. Found online at Yapstar.com the company provides marketing tools to enable pet businesses to leverage the power of the Internet to attract new local customers.

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To download images of Red Magic and her owner Diana, the winner of the YapStar Contest, go to: <http://www.yapstar.com/media/media.php>

To view details of what Red Magic won go to:

[http://www.yapstar.com/content/pet\\_contest\\_prizes.php](http://www.yapstar.com/content/pet_contest_prizes.php)

To find out more about Red Magic, go to:

[http://www.yapstar.com/view\\_pets/profile/pet\\_webpage.php?pet\\_id=1517](http://www.yapstar.com/view_pets/profile/pet_webpage.php?pet_id=1517)

To view all YapStar Winners, go to:

[http://www.yapstar.com/content/pet\\_contest\\_winners2.php](http://www.yapstar.com/content/pet_contest_winners2.php)

To download the media kit, go to:

[http://www.yapstar.com/media/yapstar\\_mediapress\\_0909.pdf](http://www.yapstar.com/media/yapstar_mediapress_0909.pdf)

To download an image of the YapStar logo, go to:

[http://www.yapstar.com/media/logo\\_yapstar.jpg](http://www.yapstar.com/media/logo_yapstar.jpg)

For a tour of YapStar.com, go to:

<http://www.yapstar.com/prelaunch/tour/tourhome.php>

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