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Dogs In The Cartoons

By Kirsten Hawkins

America loves dogs in films and on television. We also seem to love dogs in the pages of the

Sunday funnies and in animation. To list all of the cartoon dogs that have made some kind of impact on American pop culture could fill an entire book. Here, however, is a small who's who list of dogs that have been popular in cartoons over the years.

1924 - Sandy

Fans of Harold Gray's comic strip Little Orphan Annie fondly remember Annie's dog Sandy. Although Sandy never had much to say except the occasional panel-ending "ARF!" she was loved nonetheless and often was able to help Annie out of tough scrapes when fighting Nazis or investigating haunted houses.

1950 - Snoopy

Easily the most recognizable cartoon dog in American history, Snoopy - the real star of Charles Schultz's Peanuts - is an American icon. Snoopy stole the show in every Peanuts strip he appeared in. He fought the Red Baron from the top of his dog house, was the proud owner of original paintings by both Vincent Van Gogh and an Andrew Wyeth (the Van Gogh was sadly destroyed by fire), never quite finished his novel but typed the opening line "it was a dark and stormy night" countless times, and had a twin brother named Spike who lived in the desert outside Needles, California. Not bad for a Beagle.

1980's - Odie

It is nearly impossible not to love Odie, the relatively stupid, completely mute (he doesn't even think in words), and incessantly slobbering canine companion of Garfield the cat in the Jim Davis strip Garfield. Odie was there simply to be abused by Garfield, no doubt about it, but there are plenty of times in the history of the comic that we get to see just how important the little dog is to the titular chubby cat.

1990 - Santa's Little Helper

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What better pet for the misfit Simpson family than Santa's Little Helper, a weary greyhound that couldn't win a race if his life depended on it? From the Christmas themed pilot episode of The Simpsons to the episodes airing today (as of this writing the show is in its 16th season), SLH has been a fixture in the constantly expanding Simpsons universe. Who can forget SLH destroying Homer's prized giant cookie, learning to talk in an effort to distract the family's attention away from their "new" dog Laddie, and being trained as an attack hound by Mr. Burns and the not quite in the closet Waylon Smithers? Santa's Little Helper is everything the Simpson family dog should be and more. Watch for his Snoopy imitation at the end of one of the series' famous Treehouse of Horror Halloween episodes.

Kirsten Hawkins is a dog lover and animal expert from Nashville, TN. Visit

<http://www.doghealth411.com/>

for more information on dog health, the care of dogs, and dog travel.

Business Cartoons Mean Business

By Mark Anderson

Let's face it, unless you're Donald Trump, business can be pretty dull most of the time. Maybe that's why so many people decorate their cubicles and offices with cartoons. A good laugh can really perk up your day! So why don't more businesses use business cartoons?

It's interesting that so few companies make the connection between cartoons and business. Are they afraid of not being taken seriously? Are cartoons just funny little drawings that no one really pays attention to? Publications like the Wall Street Journal, Barron's, Forbes and Harvard Business Review all publish business cartoons regularly. What's going on here?!

Maybe we're so buried in spreadsheets, reports and memos that it's hard to see where business cartoons might be able to help out. Here are some examples of how business cartoons used correctly can be a boon to both your morale and your bottom line:

Company Newsletters

Newsletters are a great place to use business cartoons! Corporate newsletters are usually filled with all sorts of company information, important information to be sure, but pretty dry reading nonetheless.

If you want your employees to really read your newsletters, give them something fun! Good business cartoons get discussed at the coffee machine, hung up in cubicles and faxed to business contacts. They're a great way to not only get your people to actually open the company newsletter, but explore and discuss it!

Business Presentations

You're sitting there in the conference room wishing you had a cappuccino IV to keep your eyes open

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while some guy drones on and on and on. Graphs, pie charts, more graphs, some bullet points, etc... Let's face it, it's hard to keep a dark room of sleep deprived people engaged.

Why not pep up your presentations with some good business cartoons! Not only are they a good way to get a presentation going (similar to starting a speech with a joke), but they're a great way to make your point throughout in a memorable way.

Websites & Intranets

Business cartoons are a wonderful way to get business prospects and customers visiting you online day after day. Years in sales taught me that people buy from people they like, and what better way to foster a good business relationship than by offering not only your products and/or services, but also a good laugh!

Of course you want your staff visiting your website and intranet often as well. Adding business

cartoons will give your employees a great reason to check in on all your company information too!

Advertising & Email Campaigns

Looking for more customers? Nothing succeeds like business cartoons!

Many Fortune 1000 companies use business cartoons in their email campaigns. Some report astronomical email open rates, and click-thru rates in double digits! According to

MarketingSherpa.com

, companies are usually opposed to using business cartoons initially because they don't see the value in a 'cute' little cartoon. The website also notes, however, that when the business cartoons become the most clicked on portion of the email, companies quickly change their minds.

Business cartoons are a great way to advertise as well! They're quick, fun, and they grab your attention – wonderful attributes for potential customers to associate with your business!

Training Manuals & Fax Cover Sheets

Want to keep your trainees engaged in their training? Business cartoons are a fun way to break up the often lengthy training sessions and help your new employees relax.

And fax cover sheets just about beg for good business cartoons! Make sure your fax is well received not only by the person you intend to read it, but by the couple of other people who'll get a good laugh as they pass it along.

Business Cartoons are Good Business

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As you can see, business cartoons simply make good business sense. Whether you use them in newsletters, powerpoints, websites, advertising, or manuals, business cartoons enliven your projects and promote interaction with both customers and employees.

Mark Anderson is a professional cartoonist in the Chicago area. His business cartoons appear in publications including the Wall Street Journal, Forbes, Barron's and Harvard Business Review. Browse his business cartoons at

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How to Use Humor to Increase Sales
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