

# NEWS RELEASE



## First ever community animal chatbot launch

**Singapore, 4 August 2017** – The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) together with Germs Digital Pte Ltd, a multi-award winning digital agency, has launched the first of its kind ‘chatbot’, with the aim of raising awareness about community animals.

Also known as strays or street animals, they are often misunderstood. The SPCA regularly receives feedback from members of the public asking to remove them, while others are concerned that the animals have to fend for themselves, unaware that there are dedicated caregivers looking after their needs.

Designed by Germs Digital, the chatbot features cats and dogs in the community, interacting and engaging users in entertaining, yet educational conversations. (Appendix one attached for how to get started on the chatbot and appendix two, for screen shots of some of these conversations).

“We realised that community dogs and cats are generally perceived as pests, and are mostly misunderstood. Hence, we decided to partner SPCA to give these animals a voice to raise awareness about them. And what better way to do so than by using chatbot technology, so people can ‘communicate’ with our community animals while learning about them,” said James Chua, Managing Director, Germs Digital.

In light of the National Day celebrations, the chatbot’s developers have also injected local flavor into its conversation algorithm. Users will experience interactive animals chatbots, well versed in local slang, as well as lyrics from our iconic National Day songs.

Besides the novelty of being engaged in this light hearted way, users will also be filled in on how they can interact with, and help these four-legged friends. Information will be provided on responsible feeding, the importance of sterilisation, and how to report welfare and abuse cases.

Dr Jaipal Singh Gill, Executive Director of the SPCA said, “The SPCA is always looking for new ways to spread our animal welfare messages using innovative methods, so we are thrilled to partner with Germs Digital, who had the expertise to develop this creative product. Our hope is for the chatbot to raise the profile of the cats and dogs who share our environment, and inspire the public to help them.”

Community feeder, Ms Jermaine Chua shares that in Singapore’s densely built up areas, conflicts are bound to happen, and she hopes that with this chatbot, members of the public will gain a better understanding of the animals, and be gracious enough to share some of the common space with them, instead of chasing them away or making complaints to the authorities.

Ms Sharon Nonis feels that behind every community animal, is a story, most of the time, a sad one. Life can be a daily struggle for them. What carers ask for, is tolerance and respect for their existence.



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**About *Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)***

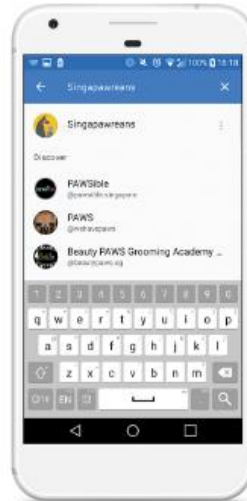
The SPCA is a registered animal welfare charity and its two main objectives are to promote kindness to animals and to prevent cruelty to animals. Relying mainly on donations from the public and fundraising, the Society provides various animal welfare services including a 24-hour emergency service, cruelty investigation, an adoption programme, an education programme for schools and organisations, a sterilisation programme for community animals, running an animal shelter and supporting quarantine for unwanted, abused and abandoned animals. For more information, visit <http://www.spca.org.sg>

## Appendix one

### Step-by-step guide on how to use the chatbot



Make sure you have the latest version of Facebook Messenger - Messenger 2.0 installed in your device.



Search for our "Singapawreans" chat bot in your search bar.



Alternatively, visit the "Singapawreans" Facebook page and tap on "Send Message" to connect with our chat bot.



Tap on "Get Started" to start a conversations.

## Appendix two

### Interacting with “Singapawreans” chatbot



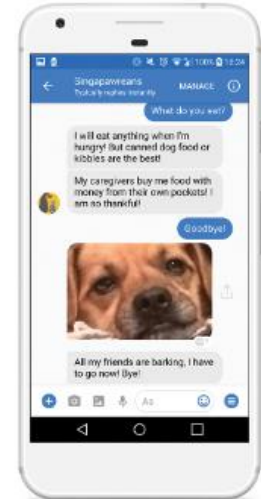
Click on “Chat” in the suggested menu options.



Select the type of animal you wish to talk to.



Click on quick reply buttons. Learn more about community animals in a fun and interactive way!



When you're done, don't forget to say bye!