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Publisher's Letter



Too Much To Do and Too Little Time

Global is kicking the trade show season into high gear.

It is open season for trade shows. The left bookend of the season is the Global Pet Expo, produced by the American Pet Products Association and the Pet Industry Distributors Association. Thousands of attendees and hundreds of exhibitors make preparation and organization a must for anyone planning on being at the show in Orlando March 16 through 18.

I'll repeat the usual tips for attendees here: Wear comfortable clothing, especially shoes. Make sure you have a bag that's big enough to carry samples, as well as room in your luggage for them. Bring plenty of business cards. Although there will be plenty of pens given out at the show—even at our booth, #2477—bringing a few to take notes.

Don't overlook all the available learning opportunities. Global Pet Expo Academy offers many educational sessions you can attend for free. How does one visit all the exhibitors, socialize and learn a thing or two about pet specialty retailing all in just three days? Preparation and organization.

"Thousands of profit-making products and ideas under one roof!" is this year's slogan and I don't doubt it's true. Print out your buyers' brochure ahead of the show. Review the list of training opportunities; the topics include social media, employee recruiting and what looks to be my favorite, "Be a Better Manager." Populate your calendar with the dates and times so that you can plan to visit with vendors on the show floor. Take a printed copy with you and keep it on your smart phone.

I will be visiting with many of the exhibitors and hope to run into some of you in between. Please stop by our booth and renew your magazine subscription, ask about upcoming editorial features or just say hello. If you're not headed to this year's Global Pet Expo, perhaps we'll see each other during the right side of the bookends—Super Zoo in Las Vegas, Nevada, August 2 through 4 and P3 in Chicago, August 24 and 25.

Until then,
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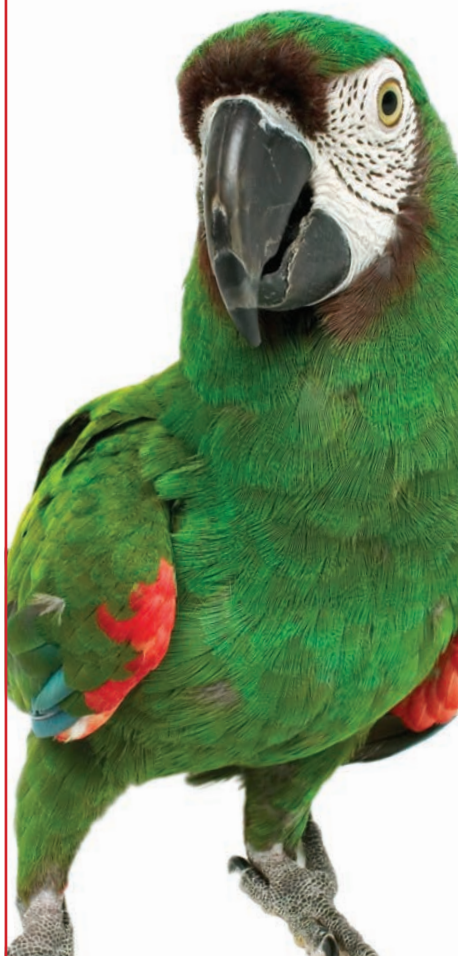
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Pet Age



Editor's Letter



Generation Gap

Millennials are poised to shake up the pet industry.

I've been thinking a lot about millennials lately.

I'm sure this is partly because Pet Age recently hired two assistant editors in that age group—between about 18 and 34 years old. But it's also because millennials are in the news more and more these days. They are the biggest supporters of a certain underdog presidential candidate. They are the driving force behind most social media platforms. And they not only outnumber us Gen Xers—they now outnumber baby boomers, too.

As their purchasing power grows in the coming years, it's crucial that pet retailers understand this cohort of pet owners. To help with that, this issue has two columns that discuss ways to appeal to this growing demographic of pet owners. Guest columnist Kerry Sutherland lays out three rules for engaging millennial customers. Regular columnist Andy Black discusses the ways in which millennial shopping habits and expectations differ from those of other generations.

One thing that everyone talks about when it comes to this generation is their love of social media and other forms of digital communication. As we've said in these pages before, retailers that are

savvy about their social media use will have an edge in reaching millennials. Having a presence on social media is a good start, but you've got to actually use that presence to drive people – of all generations – into your store.

While on the subject of social media, I encourage you to follow and like Pet Age across the various platforms. You can find us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Pinterest. Our app is available for both Apple and Android systems. You won't want to miss our Freebie Friday giveaways on Instagram. And if you want to see your pet featured in our social media, send a picture to upclosepet@gmail.com. Following us on social media also ensures you'll receive all our coverage of the new products we see on the floor of Global Pet Expo.

Two more things about millennials: You may have seen our December news story about a study conducted by Nestle Purina that indicated that more millennials favor cats over dogs. Other surveys have shown that millennials are more likely to own reptiles than other generations.

Millennials love cats and reptiles? We might have more in common than I thought.

Tom Mazorlig
Editor

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Couldn't agree more. #Pet #retailers need to embrace their role as educators for new pet owners.



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They offer very informative articles regarding the pet retail industry!

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Very insightful #article using recent #survey from our new #friends @PetAgeMag on #catlife & #millennials #pet = ^.^=

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PIJAC Expresses Concern, Optimism Over Ordinance Outlawing Sale of Pets in Las Vegas

PIJAC President and CEO Mike Bober has issued a response to Las Vegas City Council's vote narrowly approving a proposed ordinance outlawing the retail sale of puppies, kittens and pot-bellied pigs.

After much public input and debate, the ordinance passed on a 4 to 3 vote after a last-minute amendment delaying implementation for a period of two years.

"While we are certainly disappointed that the council saw fit to pass a sales ban at all," Bober said, "their decision to

hold off on putting it into effect means that we have an opportunity to address numerous misrepresentations and misunderstandings presented as fact during today's hearing before they do irreparable harm to two responsible local businesses."

A recent Harris Poll found that, by an overwhelming margin, America's dog and cat owners say the best way to crack down on illegal breeding is not to ban the sale of dogs and cats at local pet stores, but rather to enact and enforce enhanced breeding standards.

"Bans like this one do nothing to address the larger issues of animal health and responsible breeding practices, and the public agrees that these sales prohibitions are not the answer," Bober said. "While adopting from local shelters and rescues may be the right choice for some, it should remain exactly that—a choice."

Bober stated that PIJAC will continue to work with lawmakers to create legislation that will protect pet owners and prioritize the health of companion animals.

Hill's Pet Nutrition and AGL Announce Vetrax™ Partnership

Hill's Pet Nutrition and AGL have announced a strategic alliance that will combine Hill's expertise in pet nutrition with AGL's new Vetrax™ veterinary medical analytics system.

The collaboration is expected to provide veterinarians and their clients with a new level of understanding about how therapeutic nutrition can help improve a dog's health and behavior.

"We are extremely excited about the capabilities of the Vetrax technology and the impact we believe it will have on veterinary health care," said Jesper Nordengaard, vice president of global marketing and innovation at Hill's Pet Nutrition. "With Vetrax, veterinarians will now have a window into their patients' behaviors and be able to monitor the effects of their recommendations in real time."

Vetrax is a veterinary medical device and information platform designed to more quickly alert veterinarians and pet owners to potential health concerns as part of an ongoing monitoring program.

It incorporates specially developed, dog-behavior algorithms with state-of-the-art sensors and data-sharing capabilities, and is the first system sophisticated enough to distinguish patterns like scratching or shaking from running.

Veterinarians will recommend Vetrax for dogs that need to be regularly monitored, including those with dermatological conditions, arthritis or obesity, and is now being tested at select veterinary practices.

It will be marketed exclusively to veterinarians and is expected to become more widely available to clinics later this year.

"Beyond the monitoring capability, Vetrax will provide analytical insights that are truly unlike anything the veterinary profession has seen before," said Joe Young, chief operating officer at AGL. "Hill's is extraordinarily well-equipped to convert those insights into innovative nutritional solutions that will advance dog health."

Radagast Pet Food's Rad Cat Raw Diet Adds Southwest Distribution

Radagast Pet Food has expanded its reach in the southwestern U.S. by partnering with Sunburst Pet Supplies to distribute its Rad Cat Raw Diet.

"We're thrilled to partner with Sunburst Pet Supplies to help grow our brand and better serve our retail partners in Arizona," said Tracey Hatch-Rizzi, vice president and co-founder of Radagast Pet Food. "The addition of Sunburst will help retailers throughout the state of Arizona maintain stock of our products, especially since demand has grown significantly in that area of the country."

Rad Cat Raw Diet is available in thousands of stores nationwide and expects significant expansion in the coming months due to additional distribution, a growing sales team and the release of new grass-fed beef and pasture-raised venison varieties.

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Southern States Cooperative to Distribute Pet Remedy and Dog Rocks

Southern States Cooperative has announced they will now be distributing Pet Remedy and Dog Rocks.

Southern States Cooperative is owned by more than 200,000 farm-members and serves its members and non-member customers through 1,200 retail outlets in 23 states. In addition to providing a wide range of farm inputs, including fertilizer, seed, livestock feed and petroleum products, Southern States carries a variety of pet food and animal health supplies.

Since launching in 2009, Pet Remedy has been naturally tackling stress and anxiety in animals and has received various awards and recognition for its unique product line.

Dog Rocks is a 100 percent natural Australian product that saves lawns from burn patches caused by dog urine. Dog Rocks filter out impurities from water such as tin, ammonia and nitrates to keep them out of urine.

Reptiles by Mack Announces New Line of Frozen Reptile Food

International reptile wholesaler Reptiles by Mack has announced their first foray into reptile food sales, entering the market with a line of pre-packaged food suitable for carnivorous reptiles.

The new Mack's Natural Reptile Food line will bring new options for all-natural frozen reptile food to both pet stores and reptile owners.

"It was a natural progression for us to get involved, supplying existing pet stores with a superior product," said John

Mack, founder and CEO of Reptiles by Mack.

Currently, the Mack's Natural Reptile Food line carries both pre-packaged, individually wrapped rodents and bulk packaged rodents. All rodents are humanely raised and selected to provide reptiles with optimal nutritional requirements.

"We noticed a need for a product like this, professionally packaged, which helps take the reptile category to the next level," Mack said.

Three Largest Pet Product Distributors Acquired by SwedenCare

SV Distribution, wholesale distributor of quality pet products, announced today the acquisition by SDC SwedenCare AB of Sweden, the manufacturer of ProDen PlaqueOff.

As part of the acquisition of SV Distribution, SwedenCare also acquired two additional international distributors, In-formpet Ltd in the United Kingdom and Buccosante in France.

These acquisitions bring the three largest distributors in the pet industry under the SwedenCare parent company as subsidiaries.

Martin Shimko will maintain his position as president and chief executive officer of the U.S. subsidiary and SV Distribution will change its name to SwedenCare USA. All other operations will remain the same.

Sleepypod Featured in Intuit QuickBooks Small Business Advertisement

Sleepypod is featured in a series of small business advertisements by Intuit QuickBooks.

The series of five advertisements cover Sleepypod's commitment to safety, use of QuickBooks to view detailed sales reports and sources of inspiration for its pet safety products.

Intuit also posted the online ads on its YouTube page. In less than 24 hours, the collection of ads featuring Sleepypod had been viewed more than 2,500,000 times.

"Sleepypod has relied on QuickBooks as an indispensable accounting tool since day one, so to be included

in Intuit's QuickBooks advertisements for small businesses is tremendously meaningful to Sleepypod," said Michael Leung, Sleepypod co-founder and lead product designer. "As Sleepypod has grown and evolved, QuickBooks has kept pace by adapting to fit Sleepypod's needs."

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Pet Partners and HABRI Partner to Promote Human-Animal Bond

Pet Partners, the nation's leading organization in animal assisted interventions, has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Human Animal Bond Research Initiative (HABRI) Foundation to advance both scientific study and public policy that recognizes the positive impact that companion animals have on human health.

"In signing this agreement to develop a more formal working relationship with HABRI, Pet Partners recognizes the importance of developing scientific evidence that shows the positive human health outcomes associated with the human-animal bond," said Annie Magnant, president and CEO of Pet Partners. "Together, along with the Pet Partners grassroots network of more than 11,000 therapy animal teams, we can share this science and advance policies that recognize the healing power of pets."

Pet Partners and HABRI will work together to support pet-friendly public policies, providing the network of Pet Partners therapy animal teams with the latest research results to persuade more people and institutions to recognize the impact of animal assisted interventions.

HABRI will also promote opportunities for Pet Partners therapy animal teams to participate in high-quality research projects that examine the important role of companion animals in human health.

"The phrase 'human-animal bond' was coined by Leo Bustad, one of the founders of Pet Partners," said Magnant. "The importance of evidence-based outcomes is at the very core of the Pet Partners organization, so it is right that we formalize our relationship with HABRI to further our common mission."

Benni & Penni to Relaunch at Global Pet Expo

Benni & Penni natural jerky treats for dogs will relaunch during Global Pet Expo, where the Hillside Farms brand will introduce new products, new packaging and new merchandising programs.

The brand also plans to showcase the news that the entire line is now made in Southern California.

Made with whole-muscle meat, Benni & Penni's premium treat line includes Chicken Breast, Chicken & Cheese & Pork varieties. The brand's value line of tender treats consists of Chicken & Sweet Potato and Duck & Sweet Potato options,

plus bite-sized Chicken Jerky Bites and Duck Jerky Bites variations.

Each product is made utilizing Good Manufacturing Processes (GMP) and ingredients like lean, U.S. raised chicken breast and Australia raised duck. No grains, fillers, animal by-products, artificial colors, flavors or preservatives are added.

"Unlike many treat brands, we operate our own state-of-the-art facility," said Steve King, vice president of sales and marketing. "As a family-owned firm, our reputation rides on every package that leaves our plant."

PetHub.com Named One of America's "50 Coolest New Businesses"

PetHub has been recognized by BusinessInsider.com as one of the "50 Coolest New Businesses in America" of 2015.

The company allows pet owners to link a physical digital ID tag to a free online profile at PetHub.com. License and rabies tag numbers, microchip number,

critical medications, dietary needs, and unlimited emergency contacts are all securely stored on the site with encrypted connections.

PetHub has also received the "Editors' Choice Award" from Dog Fancy Magazine.

PetEdge Celebrates 60th Anniversary

Andy Katz, president and CEO of PetEdge, Inc., announced the 60th anniversary of the company.

"PetEdge was founded in 1956 as New England Serum Company by my father, Loeb Katz," Katz said. "As the company grew, the product line was expanded to include pet products."

The company now offers over 15,000 products.

"Over the years, our family-owned business has evolved to serve the chang-

ing needs of pet care professionals and independent pet supply retailers across the country and around the world," Katz said. "We are on the leading edge of all that's new and innovative in pet care businesses, and we offer products that give retailers and pet care professionals a competitive edge in a growing industry."

Katz said that PetEdge will also be celebrating its 60th anniversary with sales, specials and free offers.

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Bobbi Panter and Big Boi Launch Big and Bobbi

Big Boi, American rapper, songwriter, producer and member of Outkast, has partnered with Bobbi Panter to launch Big and Bobbi, LLC, a line of dog shampoos.

Creator of natural pet shampoos and pet skin care lines Bobbi Panter was intrigued when she learned that Big Boi was interested in partnering with her. He has been a dog lover and advocate since a young age.

"I was fascinated by Big Boi's love and

passion for his pets and eager to learn more about this world of dogs that I didn't know much about," Panter said.

After meeting with Big Boi and his brother, James, at their Pitfall Kennels in Atlanta, the two knew that they were a good match and that the partnership would be a great way to reach out to even more pet owners.

"Once I saw how great Bobbi's products are and how passionate she is about

her pets and helping other animals, I knew I wanted to partner with her and get these products in even more dog owners' hands," Big Boi said.

Big Boi and Bobbi will launch their products at Global Pet Expo at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL. Attendees can meet Big Boi and Bobbi in the Bobbi Panter Pet Products booth #3910 on March 16 from 3 pm to 6 pm and March 17 from 10 am to 5 pm.

Paradise 4 Paws Pet Resort to Assume Operations of Petco's Pooch Hotel

Paradise 4 Paws, which operates pet resorts for dogs and cats, will assume the operations and management of Petco's Pooch Hotel brand.

Petco's Pooch Hotel currently maintains ten locations across the U.S. The takeover by Paradise 4 Paws, which currently owns four pet hotels, will be effective March 1, 2016.

"We are honored to assume the operations of Petco's Pooch Hotel brand to further elevate our focus on being the most trusted provider of premium

pet services across the country," said Saq Nadeem, founder and CEO of Paradise 4 Paws. "The Petco's Pooch Hotel brand offers a level of service and care that is closely aligned with our mission."

The business will be headquartered in Chicago and operate under both the Pooch Hotel and Paradise 4 Paws brand names. Services for both entities will remain the same, including premium dog boarding, social doggie daycare, grooming and dog training.

"We are proud to have built a pre-

mier brand in luxury pet boarding and daycare and we're confident Paradise 4 Paws is the right partner to take Pooch Hotel to the next level," said Jason Michal, vice president of emerging business for Petco. "With a proven track record in pet boarding business and the same high standards for animal care and superior customer service, they have the right experience, leadership and resources to continue to expand and improve upon Pooch Hotel's past success and its compelling business model."

SuperZoo 2016 Registration Opens

Registration is now open for SuperZoo 2016, which is produced by the World Pet Association (WPA) and will be held from August 1 to 4 at the Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas, NV.

Magic Johnson, former professional basketball player and CEO of Magic Johnson Enterprises, will open the trade show on August 2 with a keynote address. He will share how his company has provided high quality products and services while assisting underserved urban communities across the United States for more than 30 years.

"To say Magic Johnson's work ethic and business intelligence are exceptional

is an understatement," said Doug Poindexter, president of WPA. "We can't think of a better speaker to help shed light on how to stand out in 2016."

SuperZoo also revealed the show's 2016 concert will feature the rock band Styx, which will take the stage at the Mandalay Bay House of Blues at 6:15 p.m. on August 3.

Anticipating more than 700 new product debuts to meet the demands of the growing pet industry, WPA expanded the SuperZoo show floor by 85,000 square feet and added an extra day to the show dedicated to education.

"In 2015, SuperZoo brought together

the most diverse group of pet professionals in the show's 54-year history," Poindexter said. "With a new show floor layout and features, SuperZoo 2016 is forecasted to be the largest and most exciting show to date."

Attendees are encouraged to reserve mandatory, free tickets for the keynote session featuring Johnson, and general admission tickets to Styx's live performance may be purchased. Tickets for both events will be available through the SuperZoo registration portal on February 24, 2016.

To register and reserve tickets, or to access additional information about SuperZoo, visit www.superzoo.org.

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Healthy Pet Receives 2016 Northwest Clean Air Agency Platinum Award

Washington-based Healthy Pet, manufacturer of wholly sustainable pet products, has been awarded the 2016 Northwest Clean Air Agency (NWCAA) Platinum Award for achieving the highest standards of air quality compliance and sustainability.

“Our team is quite honored to receive this recognition of environmental stewardship,” said Ted Mischaikov, CEO of Healthy Pet. “For 30 years we have implemented responsible business practices by focusing on green technologies and committing to green programs.”

The award was based on the company’s three years of compliance with NWCAA regulations, use of LED technol-

ogy, implementation of energy efficient appliances, reduction of emissions, and enforcement of a “no idle” policy for vehicles and equipment, among many other actions aimed at improving Healthy Pet’s sustainability practices.

“We are unwavering in our pursuit of professional excellence and producing sustainable products that don’t compromise performance,” Mischaikov said. “The NWCAA Platinum Award is testimony to our continued work in reducing our carbon footprint.”

Healthy Pet is also a founding member of the Pet Industry Sustainability Coalition (PISC).

Propel Communications to Partner with International Veterinary Sciences

International Veterinary Sciences (IVS), a division of Animal Nutrition, Inc., has announced a marketing and public relations partnership with Propel Communications.

Propel will help promote and establish IVS to key pet industry and consumer media channels and achieve greater awareness for the company and pet products.

“As a strategic partner, IVS stands by the quality of their products in the pet supplement and grooming categories,” said Erin Terjesen, managing partner of Propel Communications. “We are proud to work with their team to help achieve their marketing and communications goals.”

For over 25 years, IVS has manufactured animal supplements. It has also

expanded its product category range to offer a variety of grooming solutions.

All IVS supplements are formulated and packaged in FDA and GMP certified facilities and are made in the U.S.

“IVS wants to build upon its multi-decade legacy of quality to re-establish our brand and products to the industry and the pets we serve,” said Ara Bohchalian, CEO of Animal Nutrition Industries, Inc. “To help take the awareness of the solutions our products offer to the next level in both our industry and directly to the consumer, our partnership with Propel Communications will demonstrate our unwavering commitment to education and our dedication to health and wellness in caring for pets.”

Pet Electronic Technology Showcase to Debut April 19 in New York City

The Pet Electronic Technology Showcase (PETS), presented by NYC Re-Tails and Sales Expo, is debuting in New York City on April 19, 2016.

The event will take place at Home Studios Inc., located near Union Square.

Media, pet retailers, groomers, veterinarians, social media and pet influencers will all be in attendance to learn about cutting edge pet products.

Learn more at: <http://www.retail-sandsalespetexpo.com>.

West Paw Design Named a Best Small Company by Forbes Magazine

West Paw Design has been recognized as one of the best small companies in the U.S. by Forbes Magazine.

According to Forbes, companies were chosen based on the criteria used by Bo Burlingame, author of the book “Small Giants.”

Companies chosen had to be privately owned, human-scale, possess a sound business model, contribute to its community, focus on greatness rather than growth and be acknowledged by its industry as outstanding.



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Santalis Pharmaceuticals Completes the Spin-Off of Roxy's Remedies Inc.

Santalis Pharmaceuticals announced the launch of its spin-off of Roxy's Remedies, Inc., a new brand of natural luxury grooming products for dogs with sensitive skin.

Series A financing for Roxy's was secured from the San Antonio-based Tar-

geted Technology Fund to commercialize the veterinary skin care line.

Roxy's Remedies' Pure Relief Spray Gel, formulated with the world's only sustainably cultivated, pharmaceutical-grade East Indian sandalwood oil (EISO), was launched in Oc-

tober 2015 at the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association meeting.

Additional product line extensions are scheduled for launch in 2016 and will be available in the U.S. through leading veterinarians and online at www.roxysremedies.com.

ADMC Joins P3 Trade Show Exhibitor Roster

American Distribution & Manufacturing Company (ADMC) has announced plans to exhibit at the P3|Progressive Pet Products Trade Show, which will take place from August 24 to 25, 2016 at Navy Pier, Chicago, IL.

"We are so pleased to welcome ADMC and its many brands to our growing exhibitor base," said Dean Russo, group show director for Urban Expositions, the producer of P3.

"The momentum for P3 is really starting to build, and we look forward to a long and successful partnership with ADMC."

ADMC joins other distributors, including Phillips Pet Food & Supplies and General Pet Supply, as well as the growing number of brands and emerging companies exhibiting at the show.

"P3's strong focus on our key custom-

er, the Midwest pet retail market, makes it the ideal trade show venue for ADMC," said Terry Sullivan, vice president of sales and marketing at ADMC. "By providing a much-needed product resource and networking place for our region's retailers, P3 gives us the perfect platform to meet face-to-face with our customers and share our newest products and services."

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PetPaint Announces New Distributor Relationship with Ryan's Pet Supply

PetPaint, a clinically-tested colored fur-spray for dogs, has announced a new partnership with Ryan's Pet Supply, a wholesale distributor of professional grooming and pet supplies.

"We look forward to the opportunity to expand PetPaint and partner with a distributor as successful as

Ryan's Pet Supply," said Abe Geary, founder of PetPaint. "We are quickly spreading the philosophy that adding color to our dog's life can be a fun way to interact with our animals."

PetPaint is a veterinarian-approved aerosol, making it completely safe for a dog to lick or scratch.

Skout's Honor Now Available at Petsense Retail Stores Nationwide

Skout's Honor has announced a partnership with Petsense, a national pet specialty retailer with more than 100 retail locations across the United States.

Starting in March 2016, Petsense will begin its roll out of the Skout's Honor household pet cleaning product line.

Since launching last year, Skout's Honor has gained a steady fan base of pet owners. The line is environmentally friendly and tough on stubborn stains and smells.

"Petsense is the first national retail partner for Skout's Honor, marking an

important milestone for the company as we kick off the new year," said Macon Brock, CEO and co-founder for Skout's Honor. "From the family-owned shops and independent retail chains who carry our products, to a national brand like Petsense with broader geographical reach, we know that each partnership signifies a new opportunity to connect with pet owners who will absolutely love our products."

An additional differentiator for the company is its Skout's Paw Pledge, which donates a day's worth of food for a shelter animal in need with every product sold.

Phillips Announces National Distribution of Nulo FreeStyle

Phillips Pet Food & Supplies has announced a national distribution partnership with Nulo FreeStyle dog and cat food, now available exclusively for independent retail.

Nulo FreeStyle is currently avail-

able to order in all Phillips warehouses.

Phillips Pet Food & Supplies has been a family owned and operated business since 1938. Today, they distribute over 300 brands to independent pet stores in 48 states.



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Study Reveals Insights into U.S. Pet Spending Demographics

A study published by Pet Business Professor has identified that white metro area dwellers, homeowners, households of two or more and those with an income of over \$30,000 per year generated 80 percent of pet spending in the U.S. in 2014.

The under-25 age group was the worst of all the underperforming demographic segments, which Pet Business Professor argued was the result of challenges to becoming a pet owner at a young age.

While it's clear that consumers of all income levels have pets, income is undeniably a factor in spending. This is reflected in the lower spending of single parents and service workers as well as the lower income segment.

Higher education also generally cor-

relates to increased pet spending. However, pet ownership is not dependent on education and consumers who dropped out of high school spent more per household than high school grads with no college.

Pet spending was on the rise in all geographic regions in 2014. However, the Midwest was up by 26 percent and the South by only one percent.

Consumers in areas with a population under 2,500 spend the most, but strong growth was demonstrated both in rural sections within metro areas and center cities.

The full report is available at <http://www.petbusinessprofessor.com/petmarket/u-s-pet-spending-demographics-the-2014-winners-and-losers-are/>.

Bradley Caldwell to Distribute Signature Pet Products

Bradley Caldwell, Inc., a family-owned, full-line distribution warehouse with more than 27,000 products, will distribute Signature Pet Products and their full line of Hi-Tek Rations products.

Signature Pet Products, a woman-owned and family-operated provider of pet foods, is the sole distributor of Hi-Tek Rations products.

Hi-Tek Rations is a 27 year-old family-owned-and-operated manufacturer based in Dublin, Georgia.

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Guardian Capital Partners Acquires Hyper Pet

Guardian Capital Partners, a private investment firm, has acquired the assets of Hyper Pet.

"Hyper Pet is a category-leading innovator in the pet products space," said Peter Haabestad, co-founder and managing partner of Guardian Capital Partners. "We look forward to partnering with the entire Hyper Pet executive management team and bringing the necessary resources, guidance and governance to further develop and accelerate the company's growth strategy."

Guardian Capital Partners has been

proactively seeking to make investments in the pet products sector, an industry that has grown to \$61 billion in 2015 and is comprised of approximately 85 million pet owners in the U.S. alone.

"We have had a successful 30 year run under the prior family-owned structure of the company," said Randy Woods, Hyper Pet's CEO. "We are thrilled to partner with Guardian Capital Partners and to embark on the next chapter of growth for the benefit of the company and our valued consumers."

Emerald Pet Products Changes Ownership

Emerald Pet Products, makers of Smart n' Tasty and Twizzies branded pet products, announced today that it has been fully acquired by Glenn W. Novotny, Sr.

Emerald Pet Products was founded in 2009 by Glenn W. Novotny, Michael Levy and Mark Witriol. Novotny is now the sole owner of the company.

As of January 2, 2016, Levy and Witriol are no longer on the Board of Directors.

"We are committed to developing innovative healthy new treats, chews and products that meet our high quality standards for consumers and their pets," said Novotny.

Pet Remedy and Dog Rocks Select Whitegate PR as Agency of Record

Pet Remedy and Dog Rocks have selected boutique public relations firm Whitegate PR, Inc., as their agency of record.

Whitegate PR specializes in delivering multifaceted marketing and strategic public relations campaigns. The firm aims to bring each organization's market share to the next level, providing creative strategies and solutions unique to each

company.

Since launching in 2009, Pet Remedy has been naturally tackling stress and anxiety in animals and has received various awards and recognition for their unique product line.

Dog Rocks are a 100-percent natural Australian product that saves lawns from burn patches that a dog's urine can cause.



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New Petfood Innovation Workshop on Meat & Novel Proteins Announced for Petfood Forum 2016

The new theme for the interactive one-day workshop opener at Petfood Forum 2016 will be Meat & Novel Proteins.

The workshop will debut on Monday, April 18, 2016. It will feature a themed program focused on meat and alternative protein ingredients, which are the leading growth category in pet food and treats.

Functionality, sustainability and safety challenges businesses face in creating successful high impact meat and novel protein products will be the main topic of the workshop demonstrations. Companies such as Extru-Tech Inc., Sonac, Sensient,

F.L. Emmert Co., APC and VIDEKA will show how meat and other proteins react with other ingredients and binders, the effect that meat has on nutritional value and how technology can be utilized to address food safety challenges.

Petfood Innovation Workshop will again feature a hands-on format for participants. Registrants will be transported to the Kansas State-Olathe Food Innovation Accelerator Lab, where they will rotate amongst different stations and engage in the creation of new types of protein-based pet food.

“The Petfood Innovation Workshop and Kansas State University partnership produced two highly popular and successful events in 2015, as the opportunity to create new pet food and treat products hands-on is not something you get to do every day,” said Steve Akins, vice president and publisher of Petfood Industry.

Petfood Forum 2016 is to be held April 18-20, 2016, in the heart of the animal health corridor, Kansas City, Missouri. For more information on Petfood Forum 2016, visit: www.PetfoodForumEvents.com

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OBITUARIES

Nancy Knutson, PIJAC Director of Industry and Member Relations



Nancy Knutson, PIJAC's Director of Industry and Member Relations, passed away on the evening of February 1.

Nancy served PIJAC and the pet industry for 26 years, serving in many roles for the organization. In her most recent position, she had begun the process of reorganizing PIJAC's strategies for outreach to members of the pet industry.

Nancy was known for her empathy, kindness and interest in the lives of others. Those qualities helped greatly as she led more than one troop of Girl Scouts and served as an election precinct volunteer.

Those interested in making a contribution in Nancy's name are encouraged to support either the American Cancer Society or Girl Scouts of the USA.

Tara Robertson, National Director of Sales for Current USA



Tara Robertson, National Director of Sales for Current USA, passed away on January 24 as the result of a sudden cardiac event from an undiagnosed cardiomyopathy condition.

Tara was a 2015 Pet Age Forty Under 40 honoree.

Current will announce an event

to celebrate Tara's life in the coming weeks. It will take place in San Diego at the beach, and her family has indicated that it will occur within the next few months.

Donations can be made in Tara's memory to the Humane Society of the United States.



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Four Veterinary Hospital Groups Merge to Create New Health Care Company

The leadership team at Ethos Veterinary Health today announced the formation of the new company, the result of a merger between IVG Hospitals, Premier

Veterinary Group, Wheat Ridge Animal Hospital and Veterinary Specialty Hospital of San Diego.

Ethos will provide specialty and

emergency care for pets through its 13 hospital locations across the U.S. The final merger documents were signed in December 2015.

Ethos works primarily through referral from primary care veterinarians, focusing on advanced medicine and compassionate care. Specialties include surgery, oncology, neurology, cardiology and internal medicine.

"Becoming one organization allows us to fully leverage our collective expertise," said Ames Prentiss, CEO. "We're building a national model that will leverage the regional investments we made over the years in education, compounding pharmacy and reference lab expertise."

Those who led each of the hospital groups before the merger are all part of the new leadership team and the board of Ethos.

"Ethos is defining the future of veterinary medicine through innovative scientific advances," said Dr. Chand Khanna, chief science officer. "It is my goal that our work will change the biology of many of the aggressive diseases that we deal with in the practice of specialty veterinary medicine, and in doing so, we will improve the lives and outcomes of our patients."

Correction

In the January issue of *Pet Age*, two errors occurred in the Leading Brands section of the 2015-2016 *Pet Age* Retailer Report. The correct information is presented here. *Pet Age* regrets the error.

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2. Petmate 11%

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C.J. Foods Acquires Day Six Pet Nutrition

C.J. Foods Inc., a provider of specialty dry pet food manufacturing services for pet food brands in the United States, has acquired Day Six Pet Nutrition, which also specializes in manufacturing specialty dry pet food brands.

The purchase of Day Six Pet Nutrition, based in Baxter Springs, Kansas,

further increases C.J. Foods' share in the premium pet food manufacturing market.

"The combination of Day Six with our business will immediately provide room for our clients to grow their business with us," said Tod Morgan, president and CEO of C.J. Foods. "The acquisi-

tion is also expected to result in greater flexibility in scheduling and to increase our capabilities as we add a nearly new facility along with a top-notch team of experienced people."

C.J. Foods will retain all 40 of the Day Six employees, including its management team.

HERO Dog Toys Expands Distribution

HERO brand dog toys will expand its distribution momentum through listings with major pet distributors including Gardner Distributing, Prince, Zeigler's, Cichlid Wholesale, Pet Save and ICONO.

HERO is produced by Caitec and is

now available at Chow Hound, AGWAY, Southern States, Feeder's Supply and Big Al's in Canada. The HERO 'Retriever' dog toy line has been picked up by Ca-bela's.

"We are pleased with the enthusiasm

surrounding the HERO brand," said Terry Gao, president of Caitec. "With over 79 dog toy SKUs to choose from, the pet trade is embracing HERO as a viable alternative to the assortment status quo."

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Zoomark to Host 'Made in Italy' Pavilion at Global Pet Expo

In collaboration with Global Pet Expo, Zoomark International is organizing the first ever Pavilion of 'Made in Italy,' which will include a dozen Italian manufacturers.

The companies will showcase their products and take part in meetings with foreign buyers.

"Our participation in Global Pet Expo 2016 with a delegation of Italian manufacturers is only the first of a number of actions that we are planning for the future and will involve other leading trade events worldwide," said Giuseppe Pierini of Promopet, Zoomark International's managing and operating sec-

retariat. "Indeed, one of our goals for Zoomark International 2017 is to further increase the number of our international exhibitors and buyers."

Zoomark International, the only international pet industry trade show in Italy, will take place in Bologna from May 11-14, 2017.

Good Deeds

Instinct Pet Food to Provide Over One Million Meals to Homeless Pets

Best Friends Animal Society and Instinct Pet Food announced that Instinct will continue and expand its role as Best Friends' Official Pet Food Partner by donating more than one million meals annually to Best Friends' adoption centers nationwide.

More than 20,000 pets adopted from Best Friends Animal Society across the U.S. in 2016 will benefit from the partnership. Instinct will also provide new adoptive pet parents with a complimentary starter supply of food.

In a partnership that started at the beginning of 2015, Instinct has supplied food for dogs and cats at the Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Kanab, UT. As part of the newly expanded

partnership, Instinct will also feed the pets at Best Friends' NKLA (No-Kill Los Angeles) Pet Adoption Center and Spay/Neuter Center, Best Friends Adoption Center and its Spay/Neuter Clinics in Salt Lake City.

"We are thrilled to continue our partnership with Instinct," said Gregory Castle, co-founder and CEO of Best Friends Animal Society. "It takes a lot of food to feed the animals in our care, and with this generous donation from a high-quality food like Instinct, the resources we have will go further and we can advance our mission to Save Them All."

Later this year, Instinct will also feed pets at Best Friends' new adoption



center in New York City.

The expansion of the partnership is being celebrated by new special-edition Instinct packaging, which will be available at retailers nationwide beginning in mid-February.

Oxbow Animal Health Awards 2015 Rescue Grants

The nine winning organizations will receive funding totaling nearly \$20,000 for a variety of projects and programs that benefit the welfare of small animals throughout North America.

"On behalf of the entire Oxbow family, I would like to congratulate the 2015 Oxbow Rescue Grant recipients," said John Miller, president and CEO of Oxbow Animal Health. "The ongoing work of small animal rescue organizations and

wildlife rehabilitators is humbling."

Grant winners are chosen for excellence in the areas of educational outreach, public awareness and project impact. The 2015 Oxbow Rescue Grant Recipients are:

The Bunny Bunch - Montclair, Calif.
House Rabbit Network, Inc.
- Woburn, Mas.
Oregon Humane Society
- Portland, Ore.

Western PA Humane Society
- Pittsburgh, Penn.
Cumberland County SPCA
- Vineland, N.J.
North Texas Rabbit Sanctuary
- Garland, Texas
Red Door - Chicago, Ill.
Baltimore Humane Society
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Missouri House Rabbit Society
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Good Deeds

World's Best Cat Litter Partners with "SAVE our SHELTER" Series

World's Best Cat Litter has partnered with television series "SAVE our SHELTER" as part of its ongoing effort to support shelters across the country.

"SAVE our SHELTER" airs on The CW and follows show creator, pet-expert and founder of DOG for DOG dog food, Rocky Kanaka, along with renovation specialist, Rob North, as they hit the road to help breathe new life into animal shelters and rescue facilities across North America.

World's Best Cat Litter will be featured in an upcoming episode

filmed at the Santa Paula Animal Rescue Center in Santa Paul, Calif. World's Best Cat Litter provided litter to the shelter and supported the efforts of "SAVE our SHELTER" to make needed improvements and aid in adoption.

"This partnership was a no-brainer for us," said World's Best Cat Litter brand manager Jean Broders. "We love every opportunity to partner with programs that are as passionate about bringing awareness to the importance of adoption and helping shelters as World's Best Cat Litter is."

Good Deeds

Global Pet Foods Holds Annual Show Us Your Heart Fundraiser

Global Pet Foods will hold its annual Show Us Your Heart fundraiser from February 12 to 28.

Donate \$1 or more in-store and Global Pet Foods will match it with another \$1. Purchase a paper heart for \$5 and Global Pet Foods will donate \$1.

All of the funds raised will be donated to local animal shelters and pet rescue groups.

Since its inception, the Show Us Your Heart fundraiser has raised over \$1 million to help care for homeless animals across Canada.

Petmate Donates Crates to Texas Animal Shelters

Petmate has donated over 100 wire crates to Texas animal shelters in the wake of the December 2015 tornadoes.

Many shelters in the area were in

need of additional transport carriers for displaced pets.

The donation, which totals to an approximate retail value of \$10,000,

will help aid the disaster relief efforts for the local animal shelters in the affected areas of Rowlett, Garland, Wylie and Copeville.

Movers and Shakers

Halo, Purely for Pets Appoints Myron Lyskanycz Its New CEO

Halo, Purely for Pets has appointed Myron Lyskanycz its new chief executive officer.

"I am honored to be selected as Halo's new CEO," Lyskanycz said. "Halo is more than a product—it is a mission-driven brand with a team-wide commitment focused not just on the feeding but on the betterment and complete well-be-

ing of our companion animals."

Lyskanycz has held executive leadership roles with brands in the natural pet food, dietary supplement, consumer packaged goods and advertising industries.

Most recently, Lyskanycz served as CMO on the executive leadership team of New Chapter, Inc., a manufacturer of organic

and whole-food dietary supplements, leading to its acquisition by Procter and Gamble. Lyskanycz has also enjoyed long-term partnerships with animal welfare organizations, including serving as strategy consultant to the Humane Society of the United States and its "Celebrating Animals, Confronting Cruelty" Campaign.



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Movers and Shakers

K-10+ Holdings Hires Matt Wurtzel as Vice President of Sales

K-10+ Holdings LLC has hired Matt Wurtzel to serve as the company's Vice President of Sales.

Reporting directly to the CEO and

founder, Ryan Holden Singer, Wurtzel will focus on expanding the market placement of the K-10+ line of products.

K-10+'s range of pet care offerings

includes Water Soluble Vitamin Packets, Advanced Chewable Supplement Formulas, Advanced Dental Care Sticks and Advanced Protein Bars.



American Kennel Club Appoints Senior Executive Vice President and General Counsel

The American Kennel Club (AKC) has appointed Jay W. Waks its senior executive vice president and general counsel.

Waks will serve as the chief legal officer of the AKC and its entities. He will report to Dennis Sprung, president and CEO of the AKC.

"I am pleased to welcome an attorney of Jay's caliber to the AKC," said Ron Menaker, chairman of the AKC board. "His legal acumen and leadership skills will enhance an already talented legal department."

In his new role, Waks will oversee key legal decisions, advise on laws affecting AKC, oversee the compliance program, consult on all disciplinary matters and select and manage lawyers and the organization's liability, property and commercial insurance programs. He also will be responsible for implementing and administering AKC's arbitration program.

Waks has over 43 years of experience as a lawyer, all at Kaye Scholer LLP, prior to joining AKC.

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Tug of war just got a lot more playful with ZippyPaws' new Monkey RopeTugz, which feature the same 2/3" mountain climbing rope used in our Climbers leashes! This extra-tough rope can withstand over 1,000 pounds of weight, ensuring hours of play!

Z-Stitch Warriorz

Warriorz are a new line of extra-tough plush toys reinforced with strong border webbing and stitched together with Z-Stitch Technology. Warriorz can withstand some serious chewing, thanks to their fortifying inner layers of strong mesh and 600 Denier polyester fabrics.



Adventure Life Jacket

ZippyPaws Life Jackets help keep dogs safe in or around water. Our newly redesigned life jackets feature dense foam panels help dogs stay afloat, reflective stripes keep dogs visible on the water, and built-in padded handles allow for easy assistance back onto the boat or shore.
Size XXS-XL available.



We're introducing a line of tougher dog toys, as well as new outdoor gear that is sure to be popular. Stop by our booth at Global Pet Expo, booth #1980, to see all our new product lines, and take advantage of our exclusive show specials! For questions or order inquiries email sales@zippypaws.com, or visit our website, www.zippypaws.com.

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Deb Wilson Joins All The Best Pet Care as Director of Business Development

All The Best Pet Care has hired Deb Wilson to join its executive team as director of business development.

Wilson has more than 20 years of experience in the pet industry, holding key leadership positions in

marketing, sales, management, and merchandising, most recently with Pet Food Experts and Pet Food Express.

"Deb is the perfect addition to All The Best's management team," said

Susan Moss, the company's founder and CEO. "She shares our passion for enriching the lives of animals with fresh wholesome foods and natural products that solve common pet problems."

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North American Pet Food Nutraceuticals Market Projected to Grow in New Study

According to a study by Research and Markets, the total North American pet nutraceuticals market was valued at over \$1528.4 million in 2015 and is projected to grow significantly between the years 2015 and 2020.

The report, titled "North America Pet Food Nutraceuticals Market: Growth, Trends and Forecasts (2015-2020)," cited the concept of pet humanization as the major trend pushing both the pet care and pet food markets into catering to pets' overall well-being.

One significant outcome of this trend is the consumer movement towards nutraceutical foods, which is visible in the marketing and new product launches of major firms. The choice of pet foods was traditionally based on factors like marketing claims, packaging, convenience and costs, but they have shifted as consumers become willing to pay more.

According to the study, muscle health, cognitive health and digestive health are major concerns among pet owners, driving product sales in these segments.

For more information, visit http://www.researchandmarkets.com/research/rfzw2p/north_america_pet.

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Bentley's Pet Stuff Acquires Pet Outpost Retail Store with Entrepreneur Marcus Lemonis

Bentley's Pet Stuff, a family-owned healthy pet foods business founded by Lisa and Giovanni Senafe, along with entrepreneur Marcus Lemonis, host of CNBC's reality series, "The Profit," announced the acquisition of Pet Outpost, a leading local pet products store in the Milwaukee, Wis. area.

Following the recent acquisition, plans are in place to open an additional eight to ten Bentley's Pet Stuff stores in the greater Milwaukee area over the next year to join the existing 15 Chicago-area Bentley's locations.

Previous owner Sherri Losby opened Pet Outpost in 2011. Plans are in place for Losby to stay with the newly merged


business and assist the expansion of Bentley's Pet Stuff brand.

"We are excited to bring Bentley's Pet Stuff to the Milwaukee area to help meet customer demand for natural pet products," said business partner Marcus Lemonis. "By acquiring the existing Pet Outpost location, we are in an opportune position to serve the greater metropolitan area with the same exceptional service customers have become accustomed to and start the process to open additional locations in this market."

Bentley's Pet Stuff sells natural food, pet care essentials, toys, grooming products and treats. Specialty pet food brands


such as Fromm, Orijen, Zignature, Honest Kitchen and Stella & Chewy's can be obtained from all Bentley's Pet Stuff locations.

"As pet lovers, our values perfectly aligned with Sherri and the Pet Outpost staff, and we're confident this new addition to our business and future expansion will help us continue to offer the very best in products and services to pets and their owners," said co-founder and owner Lisa Senafe. "This acquisition highlights our commitment to promoting healthy foods and treats for the well-being of animals and further allows our team to meet the vast needs of pet owners."




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Visit absorbinepet.com to learn more about the new Absorbine® UltraShield® Flea & Tick Collar.



Editor's Pick

PETKIT Fresh App Controlled Pet Bowl

The PetKit Fresh Pet Bowl features anti-bacterial technology and a digital scale that measures food. Track the amount of food pets consume through the bowl's corresponding app, as well as the quantity of individual ingredients that they are eating. Data is synchronized automatically via Bluetooth.

www.petkit.com



Pet Beds by Brentwood Home

Brentwood Home's natural and homemade pet beds contain gel memory foam, which relieves pressure, provides orthopedic support and reduces joint pain. The beds' waterproof lining and washable cover are easy to clean and keep pristine. Free customizable embroidery is available.

www.brentwoodhome.com



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Stockroom New Products



Jolly Soccer Ball by Jolly Pets

This dog proof soccer ball is made of JollyFlex material, which means that it can be punctured and not deflate. Even if dogs put a hole in it, this toy will keep its shape. It is available in two sizes and three colors. www.jollypets.com

Cool Pet Pad by the Green Pet Shop

The newly redesigned cooling pad contains a non-toxic, warmth-absorbing gel that is pressure activated by a pet's own weight. The pad's gentle cooling effect can last for up to four hours. It provides soothing relief for a host of health conditions, from itchy skin to hip dysplasia.

www.thegreenpetshop.com



Kitty Potty by OurPets

Kitty Potty lets cats go without repressing their natural instincts. Felines eliminate waste into a hole placed in the unit's center. Litter surrounds the hole, allowing cats to instinctively cover, but never touch, waste. When the waste tray is full, owners remove it, slide the bag over waste and toss.

www.ourpets.com

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Stockroom New Products



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www.fulllifeforpets.com



PETKIT Mate WiFi Enabled HD Visibility Monitor

The PETKIT Mate allows you to monitor pets with a swivel base that provides 360 degree visibility. Simply download the app and view your pet through the high definition camera. A laser, which can also be controlled through the app, further attracts dogs to play nearby.

www.petkit.com

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Stockroom New Products

Caru Soft 'n Tasty Treats

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www.CaruPetFood.com



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Purina Organic Premium Poultry Feed

The new line of USDA Certified Organic poultry feed is available in a starter-grower, layer pellets, layer crumbles and scratch grains. It contains no GMOs, antibiotics, animal byproducts, growth hormones or fillers and focuses on the simple, wholesome ingredients that backyard flocks love.

www.purinamills.com



Did You Feed The Dog

Did You Feed The Dog mounts anywhere and reduces the need for anyone to ask the question ever again. It is constructed of ABS plastic with a brushed-metal appearance. Move a slider for each day when you feed the dog and slide them all back at the week's start.

www.didyoufeedthedog.com



Animal Flatheads by Jolly Pets

For dogs who tend to remove stuffing from traditional soft plush dog toys, Jolly Pets now offer 4 new characters in their stuffing-free Flathead dog toy range. It combines chew, tug, squeak and crinkle features that dogs love and is safer than traditional rope toys.

www.jollypets.com

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This ethically-sourced, vegan fashion dog collar and matching bracelet is 100 percent cruelty-free. The collar, which comes in eight sizes, features a gold-plated buckle closure and D-rings that are compatible with charm attachments. The bracelet is adjustable to fit every wrist size. www.friendshipcollar.com



Proper Toppers by the Honest Kitchen

These innovative mix-ins are a way to boost taste and nutrition with healthy superfoods in an easy-to-serve form. Made with 90 percent real human grade chicken meat and antioxidant-rich whole ingredients like pumpkin, apples, chard and blueberries, Proper Toppers add vital nutrients to a dog's diet. www.thehonestkitchen.com



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Push to Mute dog toys are squeaky when your dog wants to play and quiet when owners need some peace. All six toys in the series are made of durable rubber with a nylon strap for interactive fun. To turn off the squeaker, simply push in the button and strap. www.ethicalpet.com

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www.PoopBags.com



Warriorz by ZippyPaws

Warriorz are a new line of extra-tough plush toys reinforced with strong border webbing and stitched together with Z-Stitch Technology, a special sewing technique created exclusively by ZippyPaws. Warriorz can withstand serious biting and chewing thanks to their fortifying inner layers of strong mesh and polyester fabrics.

www.zippypaws.com

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www.angelpetsupplies.com



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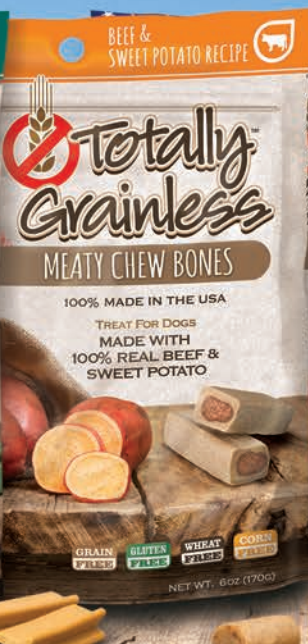
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Stockroom New Products



WWE Logo Championship Belt Lounger Bed by Petmate

The WWE Logo Championship Belt Lounger Bed features sleek, black glossy fabric on the outside and the image of a belt worn by only the best professional wrestlers. It is ideal for little champs that like to curl up and snooze and is available in a 24" by 20" size. www.petmate.com

SPIKE Dog Treats by Petcurean

These all-natural and superfood-packed treats are available in turkey, venison, catfish and duck jerky varieties, as well as a snack bar. SPIKE treats include premium quality meat proteins, micronutrients, anti-oxidants, chia, pomegranate and kale. Contains no by-products, added growth hormones, artificial preservatives, flavors or colors.

www.petcurean.com



Huck-It Horseshoe by Kurgo

Made with durable, non-toxic material, the Huck-It Horseshoe is the perfect size for dogs. Pet owners can throw a couple of stakes in their yard and practice their accuracy while dogs get the exercise they need by fetching it back. It also floats, making it ideal for water games.

www.kurgo.com

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Stockroom New Products



Mutt Nation Guitar by Petmate

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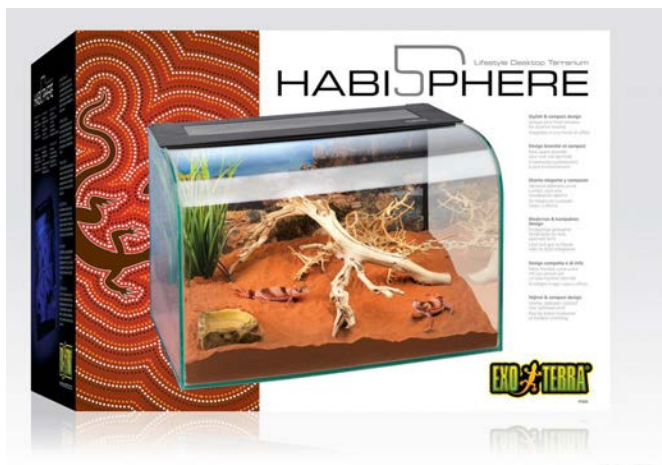
www.petmate.com



Havahart Wireless Bark Stop Collar

This collar is a multi-level correction instrument ideal for dog training. It safely uses a series of corrective static stimuli options to effectively help reduce nuisance barking within just one week. A vibration probe that distinguishes the bark of individual dogs activates the Bark Stop Collar technology.

www.havahartwireless.com



Habisphere by Exo Terra

The new Exo Terra Habisphere comes in a compact design that is energy efficient and stylish. This lifestyle desktop terrarium has a uniquely bent front window, offering a sleek look and clear view of inhabitants. The lid includes built-in day and night lighting.

www.hagen.com

Dogs Love Kale Soft Dog Treats

These three new Dogs Love Kale Soft Dog Treat flavors contain the nutritional benefits of the other eight flavors in the line with the addition of superfood Moringa's 46 antioxidants. They are available in Turkey & Cranberry, Chicken & Sweet Potato and Beef & Apple varieties.

www.dogslovekale.com



Scratch n' Shapes Purr Lounge by Imperial Cat

The Purr Lounge is a two-in-one nesting and scratcher combination that features sleek curves designed for scratching and snoozing. It also offers a scooped top for napping and a tunnel area for play. Its attractive, modern design complements home décor.

www.imperialcat.com

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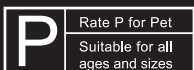
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www.swedencareusa.com



The Neater Bag Dispenser

This dispenser allows doggy bags to dispense from a small opening as easily as tissues, and there is no hassle with fighting perforated edges while juggling a dog leash. It easily attaches anywhere on leashes and collars, making it easy and simple to pack and bring with you.

www.neaterpetbrands.com



Jellybean Cat Harnesses by Petoodles

This new collection of vest-style cat walking harnesses feature bright prints and a secure design that is difficult for cats to wriggle out of. Made of comfortable cotton, the ergonomic design of the harnesses allow for cats' maximum mobility. Hook and loop closures make putting on the harness simple.

www.petoodles.net

Mineral Spa Shampoo for Dogs by RELIQ

This line of shampoos provides a natural solution for keeping coats clean, shiny and fluffy.

They provide relief for dogs with itchy hot spots or chronic skin issues and offer a long-lasting fix for dogs with smelly coats. It is available in jasmine, lavender, green tea, rosemary and pomegranate varieties.

www.reliqpet.com



STAT! Syringe by Innovet Pet Products

This emergency dog safety product can be used to help a dog vomit immediately in the event that they swallow something toxic. A one-shot oral syringe, it is intended to be kept in a first aid kit and calibrated to be suitable for dogs weighing between five and 60 lbs.

www.innovetpet.com

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Stockroom Focus on Aquarium Products



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www.aquaticlife.com

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www.fluvalaquatics.com



FritzZyme 7 and 9

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www.fritzaquatics.com



Marineland Magnum Polishing Internal Canister Filter

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Stockroom Focus on Aquarium Products

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www.aqueonproducts.com



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Next Month: Focus on Green Products



Working With Your Workers

Considering different retention goals for different types of employees.

BY DAN CALABRESE

A lot of employee retention advice involves solid but fairly general principles. Pay a competitive wage. Listen to your workers' concerns. Create a pleasant working environment. Provide benefits, if you can.

Different Employees; Different Tenures

Those are all fairly timeless—but in a pet retail environment, they don't take one major point into account: Employees fall into more than one category when it comes to where they stand in their careers. A top retail manager may

very well be someone you would hope to keep for an extended period of many years. The part-time retail clerk, by contrast, is unlikely in most cases to make a career out of the job you hired him or her to do.

Employee retention has to be seen on several levels, and success in retention has to be understood in that way. For the management employee who is getting a professional-level salary, full benefits and vacation time, success means hanging onto that person over the course of years or decades, and to have that employee successfully com-

plete training you provide so you can get more value from him or her over the years.

But you wouldn't measure success in employee retention the same way when you're talking about part-time employees, especially younger ones. There may be the rare exception—the mom who will gladly maintain a part-time job for 15 years while her kids are growing up, for example. But generally speaking, part-time employees are going to be in and out within about 18 months.

Does that mean there's no point in working at retaining them? Not at all.

Management

Feature Story

But it does mean you should measure that goal differently. Success at part-time employee retention mostly has to do with two questions:

1. If the employee is going to work part-time until a given point in their life (college starts, etc.), can you keep them on board for that entire time?

2. How can you avoid the quick flameout?

Fight the Flameout

Let's start with the second one. The quick flameout is a disaster in several ways. We're talking about the employee who interviews well but very quickly demonstrates a lack of skill, commitment or reliability on the job. They're not at all what you thought you were getting, and that becomes obvious pretty quickly.

They're late the first day. They show a negative attitude. They make more mistakes than the typical beginner. They struggle to master their training. They're always calling in with a problem or they just plain don't show up. They don't get along with other employees. They have no plausible explanation for things that don't get done.

You can usually recognize these employees pretty quickly. Even if your other employees don't alert you to what's going on—and you'd hope that they would—you're going to notice if you pay attention at all to what's going on in your store. And we haven't even dealt with the worst possible thing that can happen, which is that this bad hire upsets your customers in some way. Maybe they don't know the answers to questions. Maybe they give the wrong ones. Maybe they're surly.

When you get one of these people, the best case scenario would be that the problems are only internal and that your customers never see it.

But here's the part you're not going to like.

If you hire someone like this, the bad performance may be the employ-

ee's fault. However, the hire itself is your fault.

I know it's hard to get information from references these days because everyone is terrified of being sued if they say more than, "Yes, he worked here." But you've got to find a way to sniff these people out. There are usually red flags—people who have no jobs on their resume, or way too many for very short periods.

You also have to learn to tell the difference between sincerity and play-acting in an interview. This is probably more intuitive than scientific, but experienced interviewers should develop the skill over time.

The quick flameout is expensive because you pay for training and you pay a wage for very little in return, only to have to turn around and do the same again with someone else. And that doesn't even account for how the bad employee might have cost your store in other ways during their short and lamentable tenure.

Longer Short-Terms

On the positive end of the equation: how do you keep the short-term employee for the maximum time you can? A big part of this issue's answer is simple. Make a priority of giving that person the hours they want—enough of them and at the times they want them. You can't always do this for everyone, but by all means, play favorites and make sure you take care of the better employees.

While I'm sure you want to control your labor costs (as you should), a small raise ahead of schedule for your better part-timers will keep them from looking into job openings at the coffee shop down the street or the movie theater where their friends work. Remember: it's more expensive to replace employees than it is to pay them a little more. They'll leave you eventually; but if they leave you before they need to, that's probably on you.

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Understanding Millennials

Millennials are leading a change in consumer shopping habits.

BY ANDY BLACK

We're hearing more and more these days about millennials, also called generation Y. These folks number some 78.6 million, surpassing baby boomers as the largest demographic in U.S. history. This generation is defined by having been born within 20 years of the new century (1980-2000) and they make up a trillion-dollar demographic, driving retail trends for everyone.

Millennials are the first generation that are absolutely sure they won't be working the same job for their entire adult life. Many of them believe that the only way to move forward in a career is to move to different companies where they are offered more money or a better position.

Due to the general worldwide economic uncertainty, millennials are more aware of their personal finances than previous generations and, because of this, they tend to share information among themselves more than ever before about quality and pricing for products and services. As an example, you can see queries on Facebook, generally from that age group, asking for friends' opinions about a product they are thinking about buying or a suggestion on where to look for a service and even information about that service's dependability. Millennials actively use social media to research purchases through their friends' experiences.

It's probably no surprise that millennials are the generation driving social media. According to Entrepreneur

magazine, 71 percent of millennials use Facebook, making it the most popular networking platform. Instagram comes in second at 52 percent, followed by Snapchat, Twitter and Google+.

However, merely having a presence on social media sites isn't enough. To take full advantage of these powerful marketing tools, a retailer must offer a seamless experience allowing the millennial shopper to discover their product or service through the research stage and become a part of the social conversation by offering tips and tricks as to how your product or service will make their lives easier or more enjoyable.

An interesting point that was made during my research for this article was that, although many millennials use the Internet and social media to find and research a product, most say they would rather actually complete the purchase in a brick and mortar store. However, millennials want that purchase to be integrated with the digital experience.

According to Technology Trends 2016, a report published by Accenture LLP, millennials want "an integrated, seamless shopping experience. They expect to find the same merchandise, same pricing and same discounts whether in-store, online or on their mobile device."

With more than \$600 billion spent by millennials last year and even more forecast for this year and next, it is only logical to expect them to be savvy shoppers. When they come into your store and say, "I can buy that cheaper online,"

you should have a positive response rather than a negative one. If you can, offer a discount. Make it plain that there are associated costs to you because of paying in advance of sale and holding inventory costs. If they still decide to go online to order, wish them well and point out that you are always willing to work with them as much as possible.

Keep in mind that your service (for most of your customers) is that you have it when they want it and there are a lot of products in your store, especially consumables, that are not that easy to order online unless they want to order bucket loads.

You can also counteract the online drain by reaching out to your customers in the millennial age group. Reports show that 95 percent of this generation say they want their brands or services to actively court them. Coupons sent via email or mailed to their homes and even advertised on your store's Facebook page currently have the most influence with them.

Millennials are not only the largest segment of shoppers in today's marketplace, but they are also influencing their parent's preferences. Changes in brick and mortar retail are coming whether or not you are prepared for it, and millennials are leading the charge.

Andy Black is an associate/partner at Market Strategies, an independent rep group that serves all 50 states. He has more than 40 years' experience in distribution and as a manufacturer's representative focusing on marketing and sales in the pet industry.

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Bored Cats Create Retail Opportunities

Help owners solve their cats' behavioral challenges with interactive toys.

BY STEVE APPELBAUM

While canine behaviors can be puzzling to some pet owners, feline antics can be even more mysterious. Most owners accept that kittens can be bundles of destructive energy and expect them to soon outgrow this behavior. Unfortunately, kittens do not always outgrow rambunctious energy. Sometimes, they even regress and begin scratching furniture, chewing plants and committing other youthful indiscretions.

There are many reasons why cats might act out. Changes in their environment, such as a new pet or family member can result in destructive behavior in older cats, as can replacing or moving scratching posts and litterboxes. However, one of the most common instigators of destructive behavior is one that is frequently overlooked: boredom.

Cats are intelligent animals whose natural environment (i.e., the great outdoors) provides lots of stimulation. Hunting and exploring new territory require focus, strategy and energy. Indoor cats, however, might have little to do besides counter or furniture surf, eat and sleep. It's a safe life—potentially a boring one, too.

When bored, cats will find something that they consider interesting and focus on it. Under similar circumstances, a person might take up a hobby or

learn a language. A dog might dig holes in their owners' backyards, while cats opt to shred couches or destroy houseplants—both of which can be expensive to replace or repair.

Luckily, solving cat boredom issues can be simple. By recommending activity-inspiring products to your cat-owning customers, you can help them redirect their cat's behavior away from couch shredding or lying around doing nothing. This is where interactive toys shine.

As you know, interactive toys can be either those that owners and cats play with together or ones that cats play with on their own. The challenge with the former is that cats can become bored when left home alone. Cats really can't play with a laser pointer or wand toy on their own.

While these types of interactive toys are a great way for owners to have fun with their cats, they don't address the problem of home-alone boredom.

Fortunately, you can recommend to your customers a plethora of interactive solo toys. The variety is seemingly endless: treat balls and dispensers, activity centers, peek-a-boo boxes, toy mobiles, motion dangles, wobblers and crawlers, track balls and much more.

Here's just one example: the Catit Design Senses Circuit and Senses Cir-

cuit 2.0. Both track-ball setups can be configured into a hundred different layouts to ensure your customers' cats never get bored with them.

Due to the complicated nature of many of these toys, some cats might not interact with them right away. Alternatively, some owners might just assemble a toy, put it down and hope their cat starts playing with it—and then get frustrated when it doesn't. To get the most out of their purchases, owners first need to show their cat how a toy works and then encourage the cat to play with it. Placing catnip on or near a toy can boost a cat's incentive to play.

Some cats might lose interest in a toy over time. To prevent this, recommend that owners switch the toys out from time to time or move them to a different area. In addition, owners could only bring the toys out before they leave for the day or evening, making them a special treat for home-alone times. Doing either can assist owners in encouraging their cats to focus on the toys. With the myriad interactive toys on the market today, you can help owners alleviate their cats' boredom issues.

Steven Appelbaum is the President of Animal Behavior College, the nation's largest vocational school for animal-related careers. He is a freelance writer and dog trainer with more than 30 years of experience.



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At Your Service

Customer service is your edge against the bigger stores.

BY DAVE GOLOKHOV

The big box pet stores may have a few advantages over the local shops, but one area where the small businesses can outclass is customer service. That's because smaller companies have fewer layers to the onion, which means less employees and less red tape. They can provide the individual, personalized attention to customers that the massive stores often cannot.

If you're looking to build stronger and closer relationships with your customers, follow these four steps to improve your customer service.

Know Your Customers

Just like the theme song from Cheers, we all want to be—and shop at places—where everybody knows our name. That personal touch and familiarity is a key element of customer service. The more your pet store grows, the more you'll want to rely on some technology to help you remember the details of your clients. You can build customer profiles to get to know your clientele, understand what they want and better cater to their needs.

For example, if you have a regular customer who owns a poodle, a POS system like Lightspeed can keep track of their details, allowing you to connect with them and their pet on a first-name basis. You'll be able to track their previous purchases and gather data on their shopping habits and preferences and then create sales and discounts that will appeal to them and their pooch.

Small businesses thrive on relationships. Customers often feel like they're just another number at a big box store. By staying on a first-name basis with your clientele, remembering their pets and noting their special dates, you'll show them that you care about them as individuals.

Be Flexible

Customers get frustrated by hearing “no” or “sorry, we can't do that.” It's a common line they hear a lot from cable companies, banks and airlines. If you want to make your customers happy, learn to be flexible. Sure, every business has its limits, but remember that great customer service is about catering to the customer's needs. If an elderly person needs some help carrying dog food down the block but delivery isn't a service you provide, try to accommodate. If a regular customer is returning a product 32 days later even though you know you have a 30-day return policy, try to cater to the request.

Small businesses make these little sacrifices all of the time; this type of flexibility is added value to the customer. That's what leads them to pick local shops over the big chains.

Keep in Touch

Try to collect a little bit of your customers' information when they're shopping so you can connect with them even after they've left the store. We're not referring to upselling or spamming, but by fol-

lowing up with personalized, targeted e-mails. By doing so, you can show your patrons that you really care about their satisfaction.

Simple questions like “How's Bruiser enjoying the new dog food?” or “Did the kennel fit your space?” indicate that their comfort is important to you. They're not just a number to you because you're building a relationship with them beyond the store.

If you feel that emails are a little too intrusive, guide your customers to your social profiles where you can keep them in touch with new products, promotions and what's happening in the store. Staying in touch, in any fashion, shows customers that they are important to you even after the transaction is made. That's quality customer service.

Be a Problem Solver

Problems arise in a pet store every day; it's just part of the challenge of running a successful business. However, look at these problems as opportunities to display your strong customer service. Address the problem in a prompt fashion and take immediate steps to resolve it. When issues linger, it shows laziness and a lack of care. Show your customers that they're important to you by handling matters right away.

Dave Golokhov is an acclaimed journalist who covers high-end restaurant reviews, sports and business tech. He has written for FOX Sports, Playboy and The Baltimore Sun, and is currently a senior writer at AskMen.com.

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Millennials and Marketing

Use these three rules to engage this vital demographic.

BY KERRY SUTHERLAND

The most non-traditional generation so far, millennials (young adults who are currently between the ages of 18 and 34) offer an annual buying power of \$200 billion, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. If that's not enough to get a marketer's attention, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that millennials are also a massive generation with a population size of 83.1 million, surpassing even the baby boomers.

While there are many common misconceptions about the group—mainly that they are single, narcissistic, “selfie-lovers”—they are a diverse group that requires a tailored marketing approach. Quite simply, not understanding them, not finding ways to be relevant or engaging to them, and not adapting to their new expectations are the easiest ways for a brand to fail. The real challenge in this is figuring out how exactly to do it. At the most basic level, here are some tips to keep in mind if you're trying to grow your brand among millennials.

Be Authentic

The word “authentic” has become a general buzzword when it comes to millennial marketing; however, it is still worth emphasizing its real value and power. Millennials love content that was crafted with their best interests in mind rather than with the aim to open up their wallets. They are absolutely resistant to traditional advertising in all its forms and shapes. Forget call-to-actions focused on buying; instead, take the longer route to present consistent value, empower them and gauge their interest. At the end of the day, it's the transparent ad campaigns that win.

Be Social

Millennials are focused on solving real life problems through online research, both in search and social media. According to a study by Market Strategies International, millennials are about three times more likely than other generations to reference social media networks when making purchasing decisions.

This means your online (and particularly mobile) presence simply needs to rock. And you can't just “be” on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter. You need to use these platforms effectively and truly be engaging. Brands that can be relevant and offer simple solutions to real problems are the ones who will come ahead with this generation.

Earning a millennial's attention on social media means creating the impression that each consumer is special. There's a number of ways that your company can do so: offer special discounts and loyalty programs to social media fans, run creative contests or (perhaps most importantly) curate on-brand, user-generated content. Those tactics should seem pretty obvious, and hopefully you've tried them in the past, but find ways to connect with Millennials through social media in ways that feel authentic (for reasons discussed above) and really make sense given your brand's personality.

Be Mobile

We are increasingly living on our smartphones—catching up on emails, tapping social networks and sharing everyday events on the go. According to a Nielsen study, 85 percent of millennials in the

U.S. own smartphones, so it's essential when you are targeting this generation to have a strong mobile game plan.

To excel at mobile marketing, first consider the basics. Are your landing pages optimized for mobile? Are they too graphics-intensive, making load times longer with slower connections? Is your call to action clear, even on a smaller screen? After you've done these things, it's time to get creative.

I often recommend influencer marketing campaigns to my clients who are trying to reach millennials because they often form an opinion or make a positive judgment about a product or brand based on the opinions of those they follow on social media. We know that millennials no longer trust traditional forms of advertising, yet they are particularly prone to expert and peer opinions on products, so start working with online influencers (bloggers, vloggers, Instagrammers) to build a solid base of brand evangelists.

Always remember that winning the minds of millennials—and their dollars—happens through their hearts. Marketing to this generation doesn't have to be hard. Remember to be authentic in your communications, be thoughtful with your social media, and have a strong mobile marketing strategy. And, if you're not completely confident in your millennial strategy, I suggest you find a marketing-savvy millennial and start asking the right questions.

Kerry Sutherland is the owner of K. Sutherland PR, a public relations agency that specializes in the pet industry. She is also a marketing-savvy millennial that can be reached via email at Kerry@ksutherlandpr.com or on Instagram at [@KSutherlandPR](https://www.instagram.com/KSutherlandPR).



Off to a Great Start

2016 is already shaping up to be a great year for the pet industry.

BY BOB VETERE

What a start for the pet industry in 2016. First, the Pet Industry Leadership Conference kicked things off with a very successful program in Tucson in January. The energy at the conference was great and there was a feeling of optimism for the industry. This enthusiasm continued through the initial distributor shows for the year.

Global Pet Expo 2016

Now we come to Global Pet Expo. Recently named “The Greatest Show on Earth” by Trade Show Executive Magazine, Global Pet Expo broke records for its number of exhibitors and booths in mid-January and continued to grow. With over 3,400 booths on the floor this year, the 2016 show is over 230 percent larger than my first show in Atlanta in 2003! The industry has grown to over \$60 billion, and the future still looks bright.

2016's Global Pet Expo will have over 1,000 offerings in its New Product Showcase. Exhibitors continue to demonstrate the creative initiative that keeps the marketplace exciting and satisfying to a growing number of pet owners.

As early as three months before the show's first day, all of the specialty areas—Aquatics, The Natural Pet, The Boutique and the International Pavilion—were full. Soon after that, the What's New section filled. Buyers at Global will have the widest selection yet of pet products and foods.

Future Pet Owning Generations

It is easy to talk about the good news. As with any industry, there are always challenges to maintain momentum. We

can thank everyone's impressive efforts, coupled with a bit of good luck, for the strength we continue to demonstrate.

But we need to look at the big picture. Baby Boomers are getting older, as I can personally attest. Because they have been the industry's largest spending segment, we need to ask ourselves at what point they get too old to be the same kind of pet owner they have been.

A couple of decades ago, 60 was a point for people to either get beyond owning a pet or at least slow down in how they took care of them. Boomers blew through that barrier. But now, as the oldest of that group hits 70 this year, will they start to slow down? If so, where is the backfill?

The new and upcoming group into the marketplace is millennials. Up until recently, they did not seem to be exhibiting the kind of attraction to pets that is needed to pick up shortfall from Boomers. How do we address that as an industry? What are they looking for that is different? How do we make sure they are engaged and supporting the industry? What are their motivating factors?

Many companies are gearing advertising toward millennials. APPA is focusing our Pets Add Life (PAL) campaign on millennials with research-tested messaging on digital platforms to encourage responsible pet ownership among these up-and-comers.

Industry and Animal Welfare Collaboration

To me, the best part of the last few years is the positive response I have been getting from folks willing to work together for the greater good. Associations have made great strides ensuring that man-

ufacturers, distributors, retailers, food companies, veterinarians, animal welfare, academia, breeders, groomers and others are working together to protect and grow pet ownership.

There has been a strong response to leaving behind personal and company specific hats to think on behalf of the whole industry. The Pet Care Trust has done this for years with Pets in the Classroom. PIJAC has long been tackling tough legislative issues. HABRI has gathered and funded research to spread the word that pets are good for human health and communities. Recently, the U.S. government recognized HABRI by linking to it as an expert source for the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control.

The latest effort that has matured and is making a difference is the Pet Leadership Council. The Pet Leadership Council's mission is to advocate for pets and those who support them by promoting responsible pet ownership and educating the public on efforts to improve the wellbeing of companion animals. In other words, exactly what this industry needs to stay strong and growing.

Enjoy Global Pet Expo and look for more great things happening in 2016!

Bob Vetere is the President and CEO of the American Pet Products Association (APPA) and has lead several pet industry wide initiatives including the formation of the Human-Animal Bond Research Initiative (HABRI), the Pet Leadership Council (PLC), and Pets Add Life (PAL). Responsible for APPA, HABRI, PLC and PAL, Vetere aligns industry goals and works in collaboration with members, Board of Directors, staff and other industry associations to support and further the interests and success of the pet industry.

Pick of the Litter

Lucy Pet Products teams up with Dow Chemical Company to make ammonia-stopping cat litter.

BY TOM MAZORLIG

Pet Age spoke with Joey Herrick, founder of the Lucy Pet Foundation, and Andre Argenton, global research and development director for performance materials and chemicals at The Dow Chemical Company, about their partnership in creating and packaging a brand new kind of cat litter.

Tom: *What is the history of Lucy Pet Foundation?*

Joey: When I owned Natural Balance Pet Foods, we always donated food to animal rescue groups because it was my belief that they were the ones actually saving lives and changing euthanasia rates. I felt great supporting that. When the company was sold, I had no more food to give, so I decided I would start the Lucy Pet Foundation. It would be a fleet of mobile spay and neuter trucks and provide no cost or low cost spaying and neutering. I wanted to stop the influx of animals going into the shelters.

I told my wife I was going to take a million dollars and start the Lucy Pet Foundation; she said “OK.” Then I told her I wouldn’t make a dollar from this; I’m not taking a salary. And my wife said “OK.” My wife asked about traveling—I said we’ll travel. We’ll go to Lancaster and Palmdale and all the places there’s pet overpopulation. That wasn’t the travel she had in mind. But that’s what happened.

I hired Dr. Karen Halligan, who used to be with the local ASPCA. I met her at a trade show and hired her to be the



chief veterinary officer. And that’s how we started.

It’s been a little more than two years and I’m very proud of the Lucy Pet Foundation. We’ve helped over 11,000 animals.

I felt good about giving food away, but I had blinders on. I knew animals were being killed, I knew that. But I drive the bus to the shelter and when you go the shelters and see it firsthand, it’s pretty tough. I would be crying driving home and thinking that I couldn’t do this. Then I’d get home and my dogs would come up to me and I’d realize I have to do this.

I’m really proud that the city of Los Angeles has given us a contract. In the little over two years we’ve been doing this, we’ve gotten a really good reputation. The contract is to spay and neuter over 10,000 animals over the next two years for the city.

Tom: *How did making the products start? What’s the relationship between Lucy Pet Foundation and Lucy Pet Products?*

Joey: The Foundation became such a big project and we needed more money. I’m not a fund raising expert, but I do know how to create and sell products. So I started Lucy Pet Products in order to fund Lucy Pet Foundation. I don’t take a salary. I donate the profits back to the Foundation.

I started with shampoos. I really made them different. It’s really beau-

tiful packaging and metal bottles. The product inside works well, too. Those launched nationally with Petco and Central Garden distributing.

Tom: *You recently branched out into cat litter. Tell me how that happened.*

Joey: Someone in the industry said to me, “Joey, you’re so creative. Can you do something with litter?” I started brainstorming with Betsy Martin, who I’ve worked with for 20 years. We came up with a two-handled bag with a side spout so it’s very easy to pour. There’s not a bag like it.

The package itself is beautiful. It features our cat Ricky, who we rescued. Ricky has a very interesting tail, so on the bag the tail wraps around it and makes the handle.

I took it to Jim Heim at Central—he loved the packaging. He introduced me to the company Horn in LA. Horn has a relationship with Dow. They set up a meeting between my team and Dow, so we flew out to Houston. I said to my team on the way in, “You do realize we are going into a \$54 billion company and asking for an exclusive on their new state-of-the-art litter that stops ammonia in the box? Let’s just enjoy the meeting.”

We were shocked that the result of that meeting was that we got the multi-year exclusive. We couldn’t have scripted it any better. So now, that litter is ready to launch at Global. I’ve already got orders from Japan, Korea and Taiwan. I expect it to be a big product and, more im-

Spotlight on Lucy Pet Products

portantly, one that will help cats because there's no ammonia in the litter box. We smell ammonia at three parts per million but cats are smelling it at much less than that. And they're inhaling it. This litter is healthier for cats and I think it will be very successful and help the Lucy Pet Foundation. It's a win-win.

Tom: *Tell me about the development of the new litter. What are its important qualities?*

Andre: At Dow, we like to say that we connect science with societal needs. Our odor prevention technology is the perfect example: a groundbreaking solution to an issue plaguing cat owners everywhere. With our patent-pending, nontoxic solution, cat owners and their pets will not be exposed to high levels of unpleasant ammonia odors. Dow's solution inhibits ammonia from occurring in cat litter boxes.

Tom: *How did Dow decide to select Lucy as the exclusive package supplier for the litter?*

Andre: Joey Herrick wants to disrupt the cat litter market. He wants a product that addresses the harmful ammonia problem once and for all. And above all, he wants to have a positive impact on the pet population. Dow is very pleased to be the technology engine behind this product. Moreover, we are proud to be affiliated with a company that is actively working to make a real difference in larger animal welfare issues.

Tom: *What else is coming up at Lucy Pet Products?*

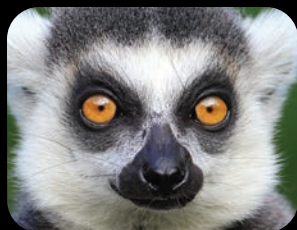
Joey: We have a dog named Surfin' Jack—he's on the bottles of our shampoo. I got him out of the shelter. He was in the Lucy Bowl commercial for the Lucy Pet Foundation featuring dogs and cats playing football with other dogs and cats watching the game. Now, Jack and Ricky are learning to surf. I've done Rose Parade floats in the past. We're bringing back a float we used in 2012 with dogs surfing on it. It's coming back for 2016 but the difference is I'm building the first



portable wave machine on it. It's going around the country, looking for the best surfing dogs. It's really the "American Idol" tour for surfing dogs to be in the Rose Parade. The goal is to spread awareness of the thousands of animals that are euthanized in shelters.



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SUPPLEMENTING

A HEALTHY LIFE

Pet dietary supplements support healthy lives and a healthy retail business.

By Alexandra Wepner

The pet humanization trend is driving major change in the pet industry, including the health and hygiene category. Pet supplements may provide nutrients that are missing from companion animals' diets or help to support bodily functions as pets age. For owners seeking ways to keep pets' minds and bodies in tip-top shape, pet health supplements are on the cutting edge of the burgeoning pet health industry.

According to the veterinary publication *Insider*, pets are living longer and owners are, in turn, looking to their own health regimens for ideas to keep their companions healthy. Such a trend coincides with the rising costs of veterinary visits, which the American Pet Products Association (APPA) reports to have increased 47 percent for dog owners over the last decade; the cat category saw an even more dramatic increase: 73 percent.

Filling Dietary Gaps

"We are what we eat—and that age old adage holds true for our pets as well," said Chris Bessent, D.V.M. and founder of Herbsmith, Inc. "We all understand the benefits of high quality pet foods made from real ingredients but in our world, pet food needs to be free of bacteria and shelf stable."

The domestication of companion animals has changed a lot about their habits, especially their diets. Pet health supplements like Microflora and Sound Dog fill the voids that are left in pets' nutrition by safe-made shelf pet food.

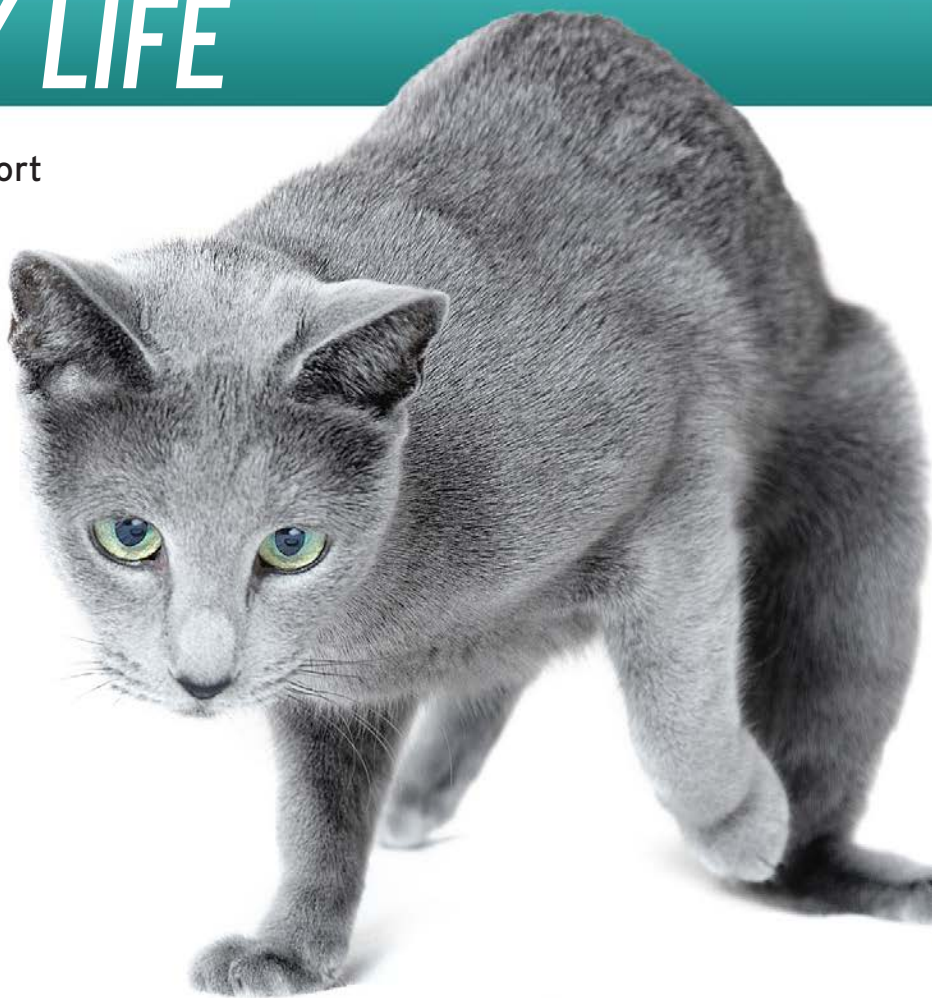
"Pet food needs to be sterile," Bessent explained. "It cannot contain bacteria,

good or bad. So a source of probiotics, dormant, dehydrated, 'good for the gut' microorganisms must be given to our pets as a supplement. [Microflora] is necessary to support any pets' digestive health and is especially helpful to support upset gastrointestinal health."

According to Bessent, Microflora contains high levels of probiotics (good bacteria), prebiotics (food that feeds that

good bacteria), digestive enzymes and gut-soothing herbs. Sound Dog, also produced by Herbsmith, similarly seeks to supplement nutrients missing from pets' domesticated diets.

"Also important is the supplementation of joint fluid and joint supporters such as glucosamine, hyaluronic acid and chondroitin," Bessent said. "When



shelf stable pet food is made, it seldom contains the cartilage ends of long bones of the prey. The joints and ends of long bones are exactly where the pet receives the nutritional support for their joints and joint fluid."

Sound Dog is a soft chew supplement with high levels of nutrients to support joints and pets' complete health.

While many pet supplements target issues that arise as pets age, several products are available for pet owners looking to fortify their younger pets' health. Vivamune, produced by Avivagen, maintains health in young pets into old age.

"It works by helping your pet's own body function help itself; truly holistic," said Tracy Gillett, marketing manager at Avivagen. "The Vivamune range of health supplements are based on the unique active ingredient, OxC-beta. In a concentrated form within Vivamune soft chews, OxC-beta helps support pets' immune systems, promotes healthy joint function and maintains healthy skin and digestion."

Most understand the benefits to human health of carotene from foods like carrots. Such nutrients are also important to pets. According to Gillett, OxC-beta was discovered by Canadian scientists as a naturally occurring substance that forms when beta carotene from orange fruits and vegetables mixes with oxygen. It is the active ingredient in Vivamune supplements.

Life by Tropiclean is a spray-on food additive formulated to support several aspects of healthy living in dogs of any age. Released in March 2016, the supplement boosts pets' immunity systems, provides healthy skin and coats, supports optimal nutrition and naturally promotes a healthy digestive system. Owners simply spray into their pets' food dishes.

"Each bottle of Life contains fresh oils from Alaskan Pollack and Norwegian Salmon, wild-caught in the pure waters of the Bering Sea to provide natural antioxidants, a balanced blend of omegas 6 and 3 and our VitaPact, which is a blend of vitamins A, D3 and E," said Joe Zucarello, director of innovation and promotions at Tropiclean. "Our supplements are designed for specific solutions created through the purest process possible, resulting in a clean, pleasant aroma."

Pet Humanization in Supplements

A recently emerging industry, pet supplements have been noted by many manufacturers to signal a shift in pet health culture and therefore the lengths to which customers are willing to go to provide preemptive healthcare for their animals. A dog owner herself, Ark Naturals founder and CEO Susan Weiss was already involved in the human sector of health when she realized the good that could also be done for pets.

"Back in 1996, we lived in a different universe," Weiss said. "The world today bears no resemblance to the world back then. Natural products were unheard of; consumers were penny conscious. We had just lost Jordan, our standard poodle, to cancer. He was raised with 'old thinking'—supermarket pet foods, lots of shots and vaccines, and low quality treats."

Weiss' loss of her beloved Jordan prompted a reimagining of ingredients used in pet foods—a vision that carried over when Ark Naturals launched its own line of supplement products.

"Basically, what makes us unique is that we invest in our ingredients," Weiss said. "All of our ingredients are thoroughly researched and chosen based on their effectiveness and quality."

As an example, Weiss cited research behind Omega Mender! Itch Ender! by Ark Naturals, a supplement providing omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids to support healthy coats, shiny fur, joint flexibility, brain function and heart health. Because animals are unable to produce these essential fatty acids on their own, supplements are necessary to combat dry skin, hot spots, excessive paw licking, stiff joints, rashes and dandruff. While many competitors use wild salmon, Ark Naturals products are formulated with wild anchovies and sardines.

"We choose smaller fish because of their life cycle," Weiss explained. "They live shorter, therefore their ability to absorb mercury is much less than that of a larger fish who has had a longer life cycle."

Similarly concerned with what they saw as a trend in pet health, Bob Goldstein, V.M.D., and his wife Susan went on to develop pet supplements to promote a range of health initiatives, from immune system support to overall wellness and longevity. They grew their business starting in

1979, when Susan first opened up a natural pet store next door to Dr. Goldstein's veterinary hospital.

"At Earth Animal, we are deeply concerned by the epidemic of cancer in dogs and cats," Susan Goldstein said. "High quality vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and herbs fed daily and dosed properly act as sparkplugs for the immune system. The immune system plays a major role in the body's defense mechanism against cancer."

The Earth Animals supplement line includes Immune Support, an organic liquid herbal remedy with active ingredients goldenseal, echinacea, astragalus, turmeric and ashwagandha. It can be fed directly to pets or mixed with food and water. Earth Animals' Health Nuggets contain living nutrients, antioxidants, phytonutrients, vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids to support overall health. For those pets with raw diets, Earth Animal's Daily Raw works to maintain nutrient balance, particularly of calcium and phosphorus.

Not Just for Cats and Dogs

The supplement industry may credit two trends for creating the conditions necessary for it to flourish: an increase in pets' veterinary visits and the lengthening of animals' life expectancy. Health supplements for small animals, birds and reptiles are also on the rise, following in the footsteps of products made for cats and dogs.

"Today's pets are living longer lives thanks to proper nutrition and care, and more pet owners are taking their small pets to the vet than ever before," said Lucas Stock, communications manager at Ox-bow. "Fortunately for pets and their owners, manufacturers have started to answer the call by formulating products to support these age-related health and wellness needs. Our Natural Science supplements, for instance, are specifically formulated with premium herbal ingredients to meet a variety of health and wellness needs in small pets."

Much like humans, balanced diets come as the result of individualized health plans—no two animals are exactly alike, so the components for a complete health plan vary from pet to pet. Displaying products in strategic ways is important for retailers who carry supplements.

"We encourage retailers to merchan-

dize the Natural Science supplements with the Natural Science foods whenever possible, as the combination of these products offers customers a customizable nutrition program all within the same line,” Stock said. “One final recommendation is that the supplements be kept at eye level. Because the Natural Science supplements are new and novel, it’s important to provide maximum exposure to encourage sales to new customers.”

Retailers must also have in-store conversations with customers in order to better understand their pets’ needs.

“One of the best ways for retailers to educate their customers on the benefits of supplements is to first understand the specific, individual needs of a customer’s animals,” Stock said. “Ask the customer about their pets—their ages, health history, and specific health and wellness needs. If you know that a customer has a pet with a history of digestive issues, for instance, recommending a digestive supplement becomes a logical and easy step.”

For customers seeking products made specifically for birds, Ohio-based Vitakraft SunSeed offers solutions to a range of issues in their Quiko product line.

“Quiko Probiotic Digestive Support Supplement is a high quality blend of bacteria that helps to support normal intestinal floral levels in your bird’s digestive system,” said Brent Weinmann, president and CEO of Vitakraft SunSeed, Inc.

According to a report produced by Vitakraft, vitamins and minerals are important throughout animals’ lives, but they become especially necessary during breeding, early development stages and during aging. Certain species, such as guinea pigs, are in special need of daily vitamin C, and the vitamins in food tend to lose potency as they are stored. Birds and small animals can also develop selective eating habits, causing them to miss out on necessary nutrients. Supplements can help remedy this issue.

SunSeed’s Vita Prima Sun Drops are formulated with vitamins A, D3 and C, each supporting a different health aspect from growth and reproduction to stress. This orange-flavored liquid vitamin is recommended as a daily supplement for a pet bird’s diet in order to fortify nutritional deficiencies caused by selective eating and

natural nutrient depletion that occurs as food ages and is stored in varying environments. They also offer a variety formulated for small animals such as guinea pigs, rabbits, hamsters, gerbils, rats, mice and more.

While dogs, cats, small animals and birds rely mostly on supplements with oral applications, the supplemental product category for reptiles includes products that some pet owners might not initially consider in addition to oral supplements.

For example, Zoo Med produces edible supplements with and without Vitamin D3. ReptiVite is a complete vitamin, mineral and amino acid complex formulated for reptiles. It is calcium based for healthy bone growth and is one of the company’s original products, first made available in 1984 and now used in zoos around the world. ReptiCalcium is an ultra-fine precipitated calcium carbonate supplement made for reptiles and amphibians and is also available with or without Vitamin D3.



Repashy’s Vitamin A Plus and SuperPig are nutrient-specific products that seek to supplement reptile diets. SuperPig is formulated with carotenoids and offers a range of benefits.

“Carotenoids are often only thought of as ‘color enhancers’, but they are much more than that,” said Allen Repashy, owner of Repashy Ventures, Inc. “They have extremely high antioxidant value, they have been shown to have important effects on vision and they are often classified as immune system stimulators and reducers of oxidative stress and inflammation.”

Repashy also offers Calcium Plus, a calcium carbonate-based all-in-one formula that includes essential major minerals,

trace elements, vitamins and carotenoids.

However, Zoo Med’s animal care and education coordinator Ashley Rademacher stresses the use of UVB lamps in addition to options like edible supplements.

“Although oral supplements such as vitamins and calcium are essential for reptile health, UVB lighting has proven to be one of the most important innovations for reptile keeping,” Rademacher said. “In 1993, Zoo Med made our crowning achievement with the development and production of the first UVB reptile lamp on the market. This lamp, along with heat and proper diet, allows herp breeders to maintain more fragile species of lizards, turtles and tortoises.”

Quality Control

The National Animal Supplement Council (NASC) works with state, federal and international governments to create regulations for animal health supplements and build a legislative framework for the animal health industry. The organization seeks also to educate consumers and manufacturers about pet supplements, and provides recommendations for appropriate usage.

“Supplements can be an important component of a comprehensive care program for companion animals,” said Bill Bookout, president of the NASC. “However, pet owners should understand that supplements are not magic bullets. It is important to realize that ‘health’ in all life stages is like a sphere—it is three-dimensional. Diet, exercise, environment, a loving home, routine vet checkups, etc., along with supplements are important in helping extend the quality and quantity of life for our pets to the maximum degree possible. There is more and more research supporting the use of supplements for animals that helps accomplish this goal.”

Bookout emphasized the importance of customers’ investment in quality when shopping for supplement products. The NASC also conducts quality audits at manufacturing facilities and customers can find the NASC seal on any product made by a company that meets the organization’s standards.



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Feature

Equalizing the Pet Industry

More women are leading and founding pet-related companies.

BY CAROL BRYANT

The pet industry is ripe for disruption and women are cracking the glass ceiling, which is now peppered with paw prints.

According to overall pet industry statistics, an average of 70 to 80 percent of purchases related to pets are made by women. On the other hand, upper management within the corporate pet space is generally dominated by men—but change is in the air.

“The pet space seems to be divided into three factions,” said Shawna Schuh, president and chief pet wrangler at the Women in the Pet Industry Network. “On one side, we have passionate pet parents; on the other side, we have corporate big guys who have been the backbone of the industry forever. Innovation is occurring in the middle part: the pet professionals that are represented by women.”

By the Numbers

According to the 2015-2016 National Pet Owners Survey conducted by the American Pet Products Association (APPA), 65 percent of U.S. households (about 79.7 million families) own a pet. This is up from 56 percent of U.S. households in 1988, which was the first year the survey was conducted.

Women are making the purchases, so why aren't there more female influencers at the top? In a study reported by CNNMoney, slightly over 14 percent of the top five leadership positions at the companies in the S&P 500 are held by women. Out of the 500 companies, only 24 have female CEOs.

“I see more and more women stepping up to start their own companies in



true entrepreneurial spirit,” said Carol Frank, founder of three multi-million dollar pet companies and the current managing director with MHT Midspan, a leading middle-market investment bank advising pet companies in the areas of mergers and acquisitions.

Frank feels that, in general, men tend to take more risks with big loans and raising equity, though she sees that beginning to change in recent years. She cites Ainsworth Pet Nutrition, a family-owned and operated company, as an example of companies with women in leadership positions.

In her area of Boulder, Colorado, a hot bed in the natural pet food space is emerging. The Boulder Daily Camera cites Boulder as the number one place for women entrepreneurs to start companies.

Setting the Bar High

Shawna Schuh knows the potential of the woman business leader and lends her support with the Women in the Pet Industry Network.

Schuh said that many women entering the pet space are doing so as a second career after having moved on from something else, which is why they are successful. Of her growing network, the largest portion of members are entrepreneurs.

“Female members ask me all the time how to get involved in the pet industry,” Schuh admitted. “Start playing with your brain and not with your emotions; ask yourself not ‘who can help me’ but rather, ‘what do I need to learn?’”

Cases in Point

Yvonne DiVita founded her first company, Windsor Media Enterprises, LLC, in 2002 to help other aspiring authors get published. That led to blogging, which led to the pet world and the founding of BlogPaws, a pet blogging and social media company recently acquired by PetSmart.

DiVita is a leader in the social media space that serves pets and the men and women who love them. She is also the current Women in the Pet Industry Woman of the Year. This award recognizes Yvonne DiVita for her career achievements but also for her impact on the lives of women overall.

According to DiVita, women are a commanding presence in the pet industry. She explained that women truly love animals and they see the value these creatures bring to the family. Her advice for any woman who wants to go into business in the pet space is to connect with other women, learn from their experiences and be open to the lessons our

Feature

own pets teach us every day.

Chloe DiVita, daughter of Yvonne DeVita, is one of Pet Age's Forty Under 40 and is emerging as a leader blazing her own trail. In her role as director of events and programs for BlogPaws, she assists in building and executing marketing and sales packages in the pet blogger and advertising sales space.

With over 10 years in the accounting sphere and a small business owner herself, Chloe DiVita's background lent itself well to her current position. She is presently overseeing blogger recruitment at BlogPaws, blogger communications, brand management and budgeting, along with integrating the programs into a family of sites.

"In the accounting firm, our clients covered many different industries from retail to consulting to newspaper to nonprofits to realtors," Chloe DeVita said.

Drawing on more than 25 years of experience in the business world, Kelly Ison founded Einstein Pets with her husband Robert in 2012.

Kelly draws on more than 30 years of business experience, having previously held global leader positions in business transformation for companies, managing million dollar improvements for restaurants and retail, legal, sales and service businesses.

"Women are leading the pack—especially among small businesses," Ison said.



"Where I have seen this most pronounced with women is probably within the pet food and treats segment, where healthier fare with limited, single ingredients has become a must for the industry's shifting customer base."

Ison said that the consumer demand for new, innovative products is driving women to start their own businesses, citing the need for higher quality, heart-healthy natural food and treats as examples. Consumers are certainly driven to provide the best for their pets, and companies that have delivered on this need are often led or owned by women.

Making a Mark

There is indication that the gender-diversity balance is getting better in the pet industry. If moving forward as an executive in the pet space is on your 2016 "Must Do" list, here are four action steps:

1. Network and then network some more: Be savvy about the conferences and expos you attend and determine up front if you are going for the relationships and education. If not, there are plenty of mixers to socialize and have fun. Get to know a wide range of people, both in the pet space and outside of it.

2. Know your goal: Do you want to follow the corporate leader to climb the corporate ladder or set a path all your own? Female entrepreneurs are on the rise, but that is not the only path to success. Get focused and get to learning. A solid education and business plan to make it happen are keys.

3. Have it both ways: You can have a family and a career, as this isn't the Mad Men generation. The same skills that make a business leader excel are the same ones that go along with raising a family. Once you make a decision, stick with it. You can have both and be successful. It's all about balance.

4. Don't go it alone: Aside from networking, enlist the assistance of those in the know. From mentoring to joining the right business-related organizations, do your research and buddy up.

The pet industry is indeed ripe for disruption; those who take the risks with proper execution will reap the rewards of their labor.

A frequent media contributor, Carol Bryant has appeared on television, radio and in print. A repeat nominee from the Dog Writers Association of America, she also works in PR and social media in the pet space and is founder of her own canine-centric magazine-style dog blog, Fidose of Reality and its fundraising arm, Wigglebutt Warriors.



Trends & Products Dogs

The Eco-Friendly Dog

Consumers desire more eco-friendly products and manufacturers deliver.

BY MAGGIE MARTON

The eco-friendly trend is no longer a trend; it's an expectation. Now, rather than just environmentally-friendly claims on packaging, the eco-savvy consumers who led the initial eco-charge are now demanding environmentally-responsible sourcing and production methods—and pet industry manufacturers are taking note.

"We have been very excited to see companies using more environmentally-friendly materials and sustainable manufacturing processes in the hard

goods categories," said Caitlyn Bolton, director of the Pet Industry Sustainability Coalition (PISC). "We have also seen a trend for companies across all categories to be more transparent in their sourcing and manufacturing processes, with a specific emphasis on the need for consumables to indicate where ingredients come from and provide certifications around sustainable sourcing, including sustainable seafood certifications, animal welfare standards and more."

The Growth of Green

According to Larry Wright, president and CEO of The Green Pet Shop, there has been considerable growth in this segment.

"The eco or natural segment is the fastest growing segment within the pet industry," Wright said. "We believe that this is not a fad and is a trend that will continue to realize growth at an accelerated rate as compared to most other segments."

Wright believes the growth is accelerated by consumers' environmental concerns.

"Consumers are becoming more educated and concerned about the environment," he said. "Additionally, most civilized countries have prioritized global warming as an issue that must be addressed for the health and survival of the planet."

The Green Pet Shop is creating an eco-warming pad that will launch next winter and is looking into expanding the cooling pad line. In addition, The Green Pet Shop has created a line of eco-friendly bamboo products (Bamboo Training Pads and Bamboo Bowls for both dogs and cats) and is expanding into waste bags and wipes.

Sophisticated Shoppers

Rebecca Gadd, president of Gold Paw Series, said the eco-conscious consumer has grown more discerning.

"I've definitely seen an increase in



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Trends & Products Dogs

the sophistication of customer's expectations," Gadd said. "It's no longer sufficient to say something is simply eco-friendly. Customers want to know exactly how something is eco-friendly. There's a newer sensitivity to sources of materials, the impacts of particular processes like the dying of fabric, and presence of potentially harmful chemicals in

the finished product."

"Our customers want to see products that are certified by third-party entities that it is safe for their pet and for the earth," Gadd said. "We've had to step up our game in every step of production to ensure that we are meeting increasingly stringent standards—whether that's using newer technologies for durable water-re-

pellent treatments that are fluorocarbon-free or closed-cycle dying to reduce water pollution."

Another eco-friendly example in hard goods is the new PAW5 interactive dog toy. The PAW5 uses a special FDA-compliant plastic and pigment for the Rock 'N Bowl so the bowls are safe for food. The PAW5 Rock 'N Bowl is made in the USA with a closed-loop, zero-waste manufacturing process to maintain the integrity of the product, avoid the possibility of phthalates, heavy metals and other variants entering the production process, and to minimize their environmental impact. When the Rock 'N Bowl is produced, waste is re-granulated, re-melted and then re-used in PAW5 products only.

Likewise, in pet food, eco-conscious customers look for responsible ingredients, manufacturing and packaging.

"Customers today are concerned about where their pet food comes from and the impact its production has on planet earth," said Adrian Pettyan, CEO and co-founder of Caru Pet Food. "They want to ensure that their pet food comes from sustainable, renewable resources as well as that its production—including packaging and shipping—has a low carbon footprint. Caru Pet Food's stews for dogs delivers on that front, as we are the only pet food in North America that uses Tetra Pak packaging. This packaging is made from sustainable, selectively harvested, regrown trees."

Greening Your Store

In the store, consumers purposely seek out products marketed as eco-friendly or environmentally-responsible.

"To be honest, I think there's a lot of environmental impact-based guilt attached to purchases and any time you can allay that guilt, you'll have a happy customer who is proud to tell others about their purchase," Gadd said. "I think as long as environmental impact is a concern on people's minds—which is certainly the foreseeable future for a majority of Americans—then I think you have growth potential. Any new ways to address those concerns is an opportunity."

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When it comes to sales, though, the bottom line, according to Bolton, is that “there will need to be an even greater push toward transparency for all companies with consumers wanting to know where, how, and what products are made from.

“We would also like to see retailers incentivize environmental and social improvements by rewarding companies who are making efforts,” Bolton said. “From highlighting great companies to setting minimum standards that all products must meet in order to carry them in their stores, retailers can have a huge impact on the sustainable practices of companies in this industry.”

Maggie Marton is a freelance writer and pet lifestyle pro. She lives in Bloomington, Ind., with her husband, three dogs and a cat.



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Harnessing the Latest Trends

Consumers expect fashionable, safe choices in harness, collar and leash category.

BY SANDY ROBINS

For dog owners, collars, harnesses and leashes are all necessary items. But it's the fact that dog people treat their

pooches as furry kids that drives this category in a fashionable direction.

Fashionable Safety

According to Angela Wharton, Petmate's product manager for collars, leashes and containment, "while pet parents also want fashionable collars and leashes for their large dogs, safety and functionality will always be the top priority for bigger breeds."

"However, small dogs are growing in popularity and at 51 percent, have the highest rate of ownership in households," she said.

"With small dogs, one of the trends that we are seeing is the use of embellishments and alternative, fun materials for collars and leashes," Wharton said.

According to Wharton, the popularity of harnesses is growing in part due to their greater safety for dogs that pull on their leashes.

"Collars and leashes are made for each other, but when you have a 'puller,' your best bet is a harness or your pet may suffer from continued stress that can result in a collapsed trachea," Wharton said.

"Overall, roughly 41 percent of pet parents own a harness," she added. "The interest in and use of harnesses has increased 35 percent over the last two years and this can be traced back to primary use by small dogs. This also relates to the fact that small dogs are growing in popularity."

Recently, Coastal Pet Products conducted an in-store consumer research project and discovered that consumers' main concerns are durability, comfort and safety. The research conducted by Vox Capio also indicated that consumers want reflective properties "built in" to the collar, such as reflective stitching and patterns.

"Our Pet Attire Pro and Lazer Brite lines offer bright, sporty colors and are currently trending in retail," said Angela Ramsay, assistant merchandising manager at Coastal. "Because of growing concerns about comfort and safety, we have found mesh harnesses to be hugely popular."

"We've determined that harnesses perform better when they're a focal point [in



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displays],” Ramsay added. “Color-blocking can also be aesthetically appealing.”

Green Materials

Over recent years, dog owners have come to enjoy a wide range of materials for both collars and leashes. A push for the use of more eco-friendly materials has brought hemp and bamboo into the spotlight, but now there are such accessories manufactured from cork, too.

Pelcor's new collection of collars and leashes for dogs is imported from Portugal where the company is headquartered.

“The collection was inspired by my Portuguese water dog, Corky,” said Sandra Correia, founder of Pelcor. “We use a fine-quality cork skin made from the regenerating bark of the cork oak tree grown in sustainable cork oak forests in southern Portugal. We find it to be the ideal material because it's smooth and lightweight while being very strong and durable. Plus, it's hypoallergenic and stain-resistant.”

Pelcor offers collars in five sizes, along with a 46-inch leash and a choice of four colors. Because cork is waterproof, the collars and leashes are easy to maintain.

Kinn, Inc., has introduced a line of synthetic fleece-lined collars and leashes with a fleece-lined handle called Healthier Pet.

“The idea behind the fleece liner on the Koala Plush-Comfort Collar is to help prevent neck skin irritations, allergic reactions, infections and injuries,” said Kinn's founder and CEO, Alex McKinnon.

“The Kangaroo Plush-Comfort Leash has a fleece-lined handle designed to act as a shock absorber when there is pulling on the leash by the dog on the other end,” McKinnon said. “We designed the products with input from veterinarians.”

The company's products are designed in California. They have sub-assembly operations in China and final assembly, packaging and quality control back in Southern California at OPARC, a non-profit organization staffed by people with disabilities—a fact that has become an indirect selling point for the company.

Sandy Robins is an award-winning multimedia pet lifestyle expert, author and pet industry spokesperson. Her work is visible on a variety of print, digital and TV platforms.

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The Cats of Summer

Summertime creates an opportunity to sell seasonal products to cat owners.

BY STACY MANTLE

Summer is right around the corner. And while it may seem that dogs grab most of the summer attention, it is important to remember cats need extra care as well. Cats are just as susceptible to heat stroke as any other species and often need help cooling down during the long, hot days. In addition, their dietary needs change and they tend to require fewer calories. There is also the all-important pest control issue that plagues all pet owners during warm days.

Keeping a cat safe during the hot summer months often means monitoring weight, keeping them indoors and learning to identify the often subtle signs of heat exhaustion.

Lead a Cat to Water

Ensuring that cats have a clean source of water that appeals to them is of critical importance, especially during summer. Cat fountains are appealing because they keep water moving and attract cats who prefer to drink running water. Not only do fountains keep water cooler, but they also keep it cleaner with carbon filters such as those from Drinkwells or the NatureSpa Premium Pet Fountain, which uses UV Light Purification to eliminate bacteria and microorganisms. The water stays illuminated by LED light to entice cats that embrace their crepuscular nature.

“Stainless Steel Wicker Dolce Diners from Loving Pets not only compliment your home decor and help keep a cat’s water cooled down, but the stainless steel also helps keep water and food fresher longer by offering bacteria resistant and veterinarian recommended stainless steel interior,” said Eric Abbey, president and founder of Loving Pets.

Hydration is crucial to a cat’s health and retailers can educate customers on ways to keep cats hydrated. A clean water source is very important, but so is providing a high-quality diet.

“Ideal for promoting hydration from the inside out, Evanger’s Exotic USA Game Meats for cats such as 100-percent USA made and sourced Rabbit & Quail, Holistic Pheasant and Duck give cats premium nutrition through highly nutritious and delicious meats that cats love,” said Holly Sher, owner of Evanger’s Dog and Cat Food Company.

Remember that during the hot summer months, most cats also require fewer calories. Leaving food out for long periods of time is not only unsanitary, but it can also attract insects. For slow eaters or homes with multiple cats, retailers suggest an automated feeder. The SureFeed Microchip Feeder uses RFID technology to make sure each cat is eating the proper amount of food. It also helps keep food fresh when not in use.

Pesky Pests

Pests become another challenge around food bowls, but natural products can help keep ants at bay.

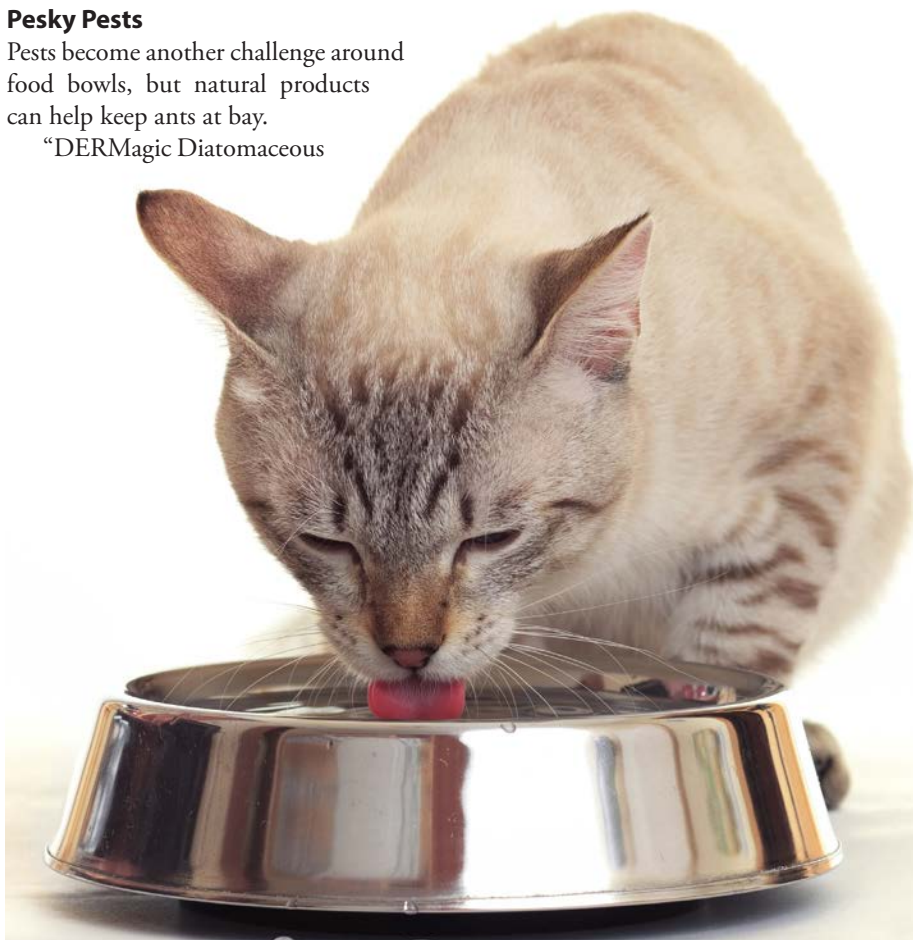
“DERMagic Diatomaceous

Earth Dust is made with USDA food-grade diatomaceous earth,” said Steve Cady, vice president of sales for Mendota, owner of DERMagic Skin Care for Animals. “The handy sprinkle-top makes it easy to safely apply it to your cat’s bedding, carpet, and furniture or around food bowls. Diatomaceous earth helps keep ants and other pests out of food, but is completely safe for pets.”

Catching Some Rays

For cats who prefer to soak up the sun in milder summer climates, an outdoor enclosure can be a big benefit for pet owners. There are dozens of new enclosures designed specifically to help pets enjoy the great outdoors without becoming a target for wildlife.

“All of our enclosures are self-enclosed and can either be used indoors or



Trends & Products Cats

outdoors,” said Scott Russman, owner of CDPets. “Each of our units comes with two to three lounging shelves so cats have plenty of opportunity to soak up the sunshine or lounge in the shade.”

Cooling mats can also help cats better regulate their temperature in extreme climates. The Green Pet Shop Cool Pet Pads are pressure-activated, needing no electricity.

“The Cool Pet Pad is a great product for both cats and dogs, especially during the summer,” said Brian Wright, vice president of The Green Pet Shop. “Even though cats typically tend to gravitate toward warmth (which is one of the reasons we’ve also brought on the Achy Paws Warming Mats), the cooling pads offer a cool sensation for your cat to help prevent overheating and dehydration. As the spring and summer season approaches, your cat needs this safe and reliable solution to protect itself from the heat.”

Harnesses and leashes are another way to provide outdoor access. Crazy K Ranch created the Kitty Holster, a secure cat harness that utilizes Velcro to keep a cat secure. For those with cats who react badly to the sound of Velcro, Sturdi Pet Products offers a lightweight vest made of microfiber that snaps closed. PetSafe’s nylon Come With Me Kitty Cat Harness & Bungee Leash is another option for taking cats out in the sun.

Outdoor play sessions in the heat, grass, pollen and other allergens can cause skin irritations and a dull coat. A grooming wipe may alleviate these problems.

“A great item to stock for in-line grooming section as well as point of purchase clip strip or at the register, QuickBath Cat Grooming Wipes from International Veterinary Sciences are formulated with gentle yet effective cleaners that remove bacteria and odors from a cat’s sensitive paws and skin,” said Ara Bohchalian, the company’s CEO. “Indoor cats track dust and bacteria from their litter box, and outdoor cats bring in allergens and dirt from the yard, so choose a convenient wipe that contains vitamins A and E and aloe vera, which promote an overall healthy skin and coat while leaving your pet clean, shiny and

prevent them from tracking a mess all through your house. Quick Bath Wipes are pH neutral, alcohol-free, extra thick and heavy duty.”

Summer should be a time for owners to have fun with their cats, both indoors and outdoors. However, their felines must be protected from the risks that can accompany outdoor play. Fortunately,

the pet industry has made it very simple to keep them safe year-round.

Stacy Mantle is an award-winning writer and multi-species pet lifestyle expert, author, and spokesperson. She is the founder of PetsWeekly.com and a regular contributor to national publications including Pet Age, Cat Fancy, and Animal Behavioral College.

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Interactive Cat Toys

Owners seek toys that support the bond with their cats.

BY SANDY ROBINS

Cats are not supposed to be couch potatoes—and the pet industry is doing a lot to get this message out there by focusing on feline enrichment products. Retailers who endorse this message can educate cat owners and increase their profits through the sales of interactive cat toys.

Tunnel of Fun

The latest product to come to market from Nekochan, the UJI Tunnel system is specially designed for interactive play between cats and their owners and gives cats an opportunity to rev up their own self-play.

"I wanted to design a tunnel system that is stylish and safe for cats with the goal of encouraging cat owners to interact with their cats—a kind of amusement park for cats," said Ellen Tsuyuki, Nekochan's owner and product designer. "By offering different combinations, cat owners can set up what best fits their living environment in terms of size. The tunnels have peek holes, and the idea is to use other toys such as our wand toys so cats can engage with the wands and hone their hunting skills."

The tunnels compress down easily and come in a stylish carry bag with handles for convenient storage and travel and the interior is ultra-soft, durable polyester. All of Nekochan's cat toys have been endorsed by The International Cat Association (TICA).

Bonding through Play

"Interactive toys are a great way for pet parents and cats to establish strong relationships," said Brittany Green, product manager at Petmate. "We believe that wands are the best toys in this category because they encourage playtime together, provide exercise for the cat, engage natural instincts and encourage bonding."

"The Air Prey Wand features a feather that spins and attracts cats that prefer to

Trends & Products Cats

watch birds fly through the air,” Green added. “For those cats that prefer chasing bugs and other critters, the Ground Prey Wand comes with a toy that mimics the movement of different bugs. Finding a wand that appeals to your cat will encourage play and build relationships, unlike toys that are only meant for solo play.”

According to Mandie Sweetnam, Knoxville, Tennessee-based product manager for the interactive cat category at PetSafe, the Pounce remains one of the company’s most popular interactive cat toys.

“The motion and settings are perfect for feline play. The stop and go action of the mouse on the track drives them wild!” Sweetnam said. “However, The Bolt remains our most popular cat toy, globally. I would go as far as to call it a classic since it has been on the market for more than five years and is still going strong.”

“PetSafe has been hard at work developing new cat toys to satisfy the wide array of feline play styles and we have some great toys to feature at the Global Pet Expo this month,” Sweetnam said. “The Whimsy is an automatic teaser toy that can be clamped nearly anywhere for your cat to bat and jump at. The Flitter is a two-armed rotating teaser toy that is great for multi-cat households. Both toys feature a Play-While-You-Are-Away mode, which means there is a setting that allows the toy to activate multiple times throughout the day for random playtime.”

“We consider both toys to be competitively priced,” Sweetnam said. “Cat parents are continuing to see the value in long lasting toys for their cats. The added Play-While-You-Are-Away function is making these toys even more popular.”

Worldwise, Inc., has various activity-boosting toys in their Petlinks line, including the Mystery Motion, an interactive toy that redefines the cat-and-mouse game. The toy replicates the mesmerizing movement of hidden prey with feathers peeking out from under a fabric cover. The whisper-quiet motor spins the enticing feather-tipped wand in an unpredictable pattern, keeping cats fascinated and poised to pounce.

New from Petstages is the Scooting Mouse, a small colorful mouse that scoots

across the floor when its tail is pulled. It’s an ideal size for cats to bat about and wrestle with and the ears are made of a crinkling material to pique feline interest.

Bergan has revved up its Turbo Scratcher cat toy to produce the Mega Turbo Scratcher. The toy now has two interactive sides, a 14-inch scratch pad on one side and a “peek-a-boo” game with ball on

the other. It is packaged with the ball and some catnip to ramp up the fun and keep cats engaged. Such toys are ideal for multi-cat households.

Sandy Robins is an award-winning multimedia pet lifestyle expert, author and pet industry spokesperson. Her work is visible on a variety of print, digital and TV platforms.



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Brighten Up with GloFish

The popularity of GloFish and their products continues to rise.

BY KAREN M. ALLEY

Cosmic Blue, Electric Green, Galactic Purple, Sunburst Orange, Moonrise Pink and Starfire Red—these snazzy names might bring to mind types of candy. In reality, they all belong to a specific kind of fish. If you're familiar with GloFish, you'll know these are the six colors available in the popular line of fluorescent fish, and you'll also find it fitting that the color names inspire an out-of-this-world sense of adventure.

The attraction of the eye-catching colors is apparent to any retailer who has set up a display of GloFish.

"We have a couple of sections dedicated to GloFish in our freshwater rows, with special lighting to really highlight the colors," said Eileen Daub, marine biologist at That Fish Place in Lancaster, Pa. "It's a good pop of color, and certainly gets people's attention."

On the market for a little over ten years, GloFish have seen pretty fast growth within the fish category. What

started out as just one type of fish in 2003 (Starfire Red), has turned into a category that includes 12 lines of fish from three species that come in six different colors, as well as more than 100 products designed specifically for GloFish.

"We estimate that about 10 percent of aquarium owners have GloFish," said Alan Blake, CEO of Yorktown Technologies, which owns the license to breed and distribute these fish within the aquarium industry.

Sales from Segrest Farms, one of two licensed GloFish breeders, also attest to the success of these fish. The Electric Green and Starfire Red Danios are in the top 20 bestselling fish in terms of individual fish. Even more impressive is that, if you look at GloFish as a group, their numbers would put them up in the top 10.

The popularity of GloFish comes primarily from two factors: the vibrant color and ease of care.

"The fact that these fish are easy to care for makes them a great choice for beginners, but the vibrant color appeals to a wide range of customers, including long-time hobbyists," Blake said. "We see a lot of people who have had aquariums for a while purchase GloFish to refresh things in their tank. They're an easy addition to any aquarium."

Making it Easy

A good display is an important selling tool when it comes to the GloFish category. Blake recommends setting up a tank with black gravel and blue LED lights to really highlight the colors.

"We provide free merchandising support for retailers, because we know that having the right mix of fish and the right lights is crucial to having a successful GloFish display," Blake said.

That sentiment is echoed by Catherine Langford, product manager for environments at United Pet Group Aquatics

Trends & Products Aquarium

(UPG), who said that many customers end up making an unplanned purchase of GloFish when they browse through a store and are amazed by the beautiful colors. To take advantage of those impulse sales by first-time fish owners, UPG offers GloFish kits through its Tetra brand in a variety of sizes and shapes. The kits include an aquarium, a filter, a pump, and a blue LED light stick. Some kits also include samples of food and water conditioner.

It's also easy to add GloFish to an existing aquarium, since these species of fish get along well with other fish. In addition to kits, the GloFish product line includes a selection of ornaments, plants and gravel that fluoresce under GloFish LED lights, which makes it easy to transform a traditional tank into a "Glo" experience.

Tetra recently relaunched its entire plant line, shifting away from solid bold colors to new and brilliant fluorescent colors which react under their GloFish blue LEDs. These plants take advantage of the popularity of GloFish and make it easier to transform existing aquariums into a GloFish experience.

"With the right display, GloFish can create a tremendous upsell opportunity for independent retailers," Blake said.

Building a Niche

GloFish are fluorescent variations of some common fish species—including zebra danios, skirt tetras and tiger barbs—which means that caring for GloFish is no different from their non-fluorescent counterparts.

There are some reasons for products engineered or labeled specifically for GloFish. One is that consumers tend to shop by type of fish. Also, many GloFish products are designed to enhance the fluorescence of the fish. For example, GloFish Light Sticks are blue LED lights, which make the color of the fish pop, especially when all other lights are off. GloFish Flake Food is specially formulated to enhance the color of GloFish.

"Our teams in the United States and Germany worked together to develop a



specially formulated nutrition that helps brighten the colors of the fish, and an added benefit is that some of the flakes glow under blue spectrum light," Langford said.

With over 100 products bearing the GloFish name, it's obvious that GloFish

have become a very popular niche within the fish category, and one that is still growing.

Karen M. Alley is a freelance writer who specializes in writing for retail and marketing publications.

GET IN THE KNOW

Did you know 85 percent of people surveyed by Yorktown Technologies weren't aware of the biology behind GloFish?

These fish are born with their beautiful color, maintain it throughout their lives and pass it on to their offspring, but the biology behind what makes GloFish special isn't widely known among consumers.

Years ago, it was popular to inject fish with dyes because the bright colors made them attractive to consumers. But these dyes were harmful to the fish and people began to equate brightly colored fish with a process that was harmful to the fish's health and welfare.

GloFish, on the other hand, are genetically modified. Research conducted by Purdue University showed that GloFish are just as healthy and live as long as their non-fluorescent counterparts.

Knowing that the fluorescence doesn't hurt the fish makes people more likely to buy them. GloFish provides educational materials for retailers to help educate their customers on these unique fish. By reaching out and being proactive with education, you can reassure your customers and increase sales.



Picture Perfect Ponds

Owners seek products that make ponds easy to keep.

BY JOE OLENICK

Pond season is upon us once again and if you haven't taken stock of your pond supplies inventory, now is the time to do so. Dedicating even a modest amount of shelf or floor space to this important market segment can increase sales significantly and give shoppers a reason to frequent your store. In addition, it can carry your aquatics department through traditionally slower summer months.

If you already stock pond supplies, now is the time to look over your inventory to pull out whatever has been stored over winter, place pre-orders and set up POP and end cap displays.

If you don't offer pond supplies in

your store, it might be time to consider adding them to your shelves. Most distributors run advance specials on pond products in spring and manufacturers' sales reps can help you choose top sellers and assist in creating effective merchandising displays.

Spring Cleaning

Most pond owners do spring cleaning at the start of the season. Python Products' Ulti-Vac gives them an affordable, user-friendly way of vacuuming debris off the bottom and performing a partial water exchange at the same time. Powered by a standard garden hose, the Ulti-Vac removes decaying material from hard

to reach corners and dead spots, while larger debris is trapped in a removable chamber and can then be used to fertilize flower beds or vegetable gardens. As an added bonus, company owner Lance Reyniers designed the packaging so that the box graphics could be arranged to create an effective merchandising tool!

Virtually all municipal water supplies in the U.S. contain chloramines and other chemicals, making water conditioners essential for pond owners. Tetra's concentrated Pond AquaSafe eliminates chlorine, chloramines and neutralizes heavy metals in addition to providing a protective colloid coating for fish.

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Algae Elimination

Nuisance algae is the biggest problem pond owners face. Preventing the onset of this pest is easier and more cost effective than trying to eliminate a full blown outbreak once it gets up a head of steam. Proper filtration, a sensible balance between fish and plants, and a controlled feeding program should prevent most blooms.

However, products like Tetra Pond AlgaeControl, Pond Barley and Peat Extract help prevent algae outbreaks when applied to smaller ponds and tub gardens. Floating barley straw bales and products like Laguna Barley Straw Pellets and Peat Granules provide a more natural, long term solution when placed in filters, especially in larger ponds. Finally, ultraviolet sterilizers, while significantly more expensive than the other products, offer the most effective preventative. If you already sell sterilizers—and even if you do not—be sure to stock and recommend replacement lamps, o-rings, seals and quartz sleeves. Train your staff to ask customers if they have refurbished their sterilizers for the coming season.

Next on the list are filter pads, pump intake pre-filters and chemical media such as carbon and phosphate removers. Even if you do not sell pond filters or pumps, stocking replacement pads and pre-filters for common brands like TetraPond, Supreme Pondmaster and Laguna will generate sales and earn new customers.

Teach your sales staff to encourage hobbyists to replace pads and install new chemical media in spring and as needed throughout pond season. Pump impellers and filter o-rings and seals are also in high demand in spring. These do not take up much shelf space and having them in stock at a time of need will make customers happy.

Feeding the Fish

Of course, no pond supply inventory would be complete without koi and goldfish pellets and food sticks. As with aquarium fish foods, your selection should include variety as well as different particle sizes to accommodate fishes of different sizes.

In early spring, a wheat germ-based food such as TetraPond Spring & Fall Diet is best, followed by Koi Vibrance Color Enhancing, Koi Growth or Variety Blend for the peak season. Cobalt Aquatics' Goldfish Pellets are ideal for smaller fish, and for the discerning pond fish owner, Hikari offers over a dozen different blends in multiple pellet sizes for every need. All of these foods are available in packages of multiple sizes.

Some people advocate focusing on niche brands to offer consumers an alternative to those sold by online and big box vendors. However, Tim Plafcan, senior product manager of the pond division at UPG Aquatics, encourages independent retailers to stock trusted and proven brands.

"Proven brands will sell quicker and resonate with the end consumer for higher profitability," Plafcan said. "Companies like Tetra not only back their

products but they have staff and tools to help new hobbyists get started and be successful. Also, a proven brand that is serious about the category will invest in a full line of products that allows that retailer to be a go-to resource for that customer. And backing those products with support, knowledge and inspiration will create a life-long customer."

Finally, a complete product selection and a well-trained, friendly staff is key to any successful sales strategy. Shoppers are more than willing to spend a little more and support a service-oriented business if you can back it up with quality products, knowledge and genuine concern for the customer. Independent aquatics retailers were largely responsible for the resurgence of pond keeping in the 1980's. Now, garden centers and home improvement stores have taken a large share of the market. Isn't it time the fish guys took it back?

Joe Olenick is an aquatics industry veteran, having managed one of the nation's largest retail aquarium departments for more than 25 years. He founded and currently owns Aquatic Environments, which designs, installs and maintains custom aquarium and outdoor water exhibits.



Trends & Products Reptiles

Slice of Life

More reptile hobbyists are keeping natural terrariums.

BY TOM MAZORLIG

One of the niches within the reptile hobby is the design and maintenance of natural terrariums, also called vivariums. Natural terrarium aficionados seek to create tiny slices of rainforests or deserts in their homes.

While there is no reliable information on how large this segment of the hobby is, some experts think the trend is growing.

"I have been seeing an increase in people designing natural terrariums," said Ron Tremper, consulting herpetologist for Tetrafauna, Spectrum Brands and Pet, Home and Garden. "Why? First, there are better designed units available, like the ReptoHabitat that affords people the chance to keep plants and herps in harmony. Second, people want more out of their reptile pet and so a beautiful terrarium gets invited into the living or family room in more and more households."

Mike Rizzo, owner of Glass Box Tropicals, a Michigan-based supplier of terrarium equipment, plants and poison dart frogs, agrees that popularity of keeping natural terrariums is growing. He sees different but related reasons for the growth.

"Yes, the keeping of naturalistic terrariums/vivariums is growing in popularity quite dramatically," Rizzo said.

He believes there are three factors feeding this trend.

"One is social media," Rizzo said. "There are now many Facebook groups as well as online forums devoted solely to this topic, many of them with thousands of members. When a member of one of these groups shares a picture or post, it allows an even larger audience to be exposed to the beauty and tranquility that these creations can bring to a home or office."

"The second factor is education," he said. "Many more hobbyists are learning that their animals will be happiest in a naturalistic setup. These setups help in-

crease humidity and create more potential hiding spots, which often makes the animals inside feel more comfortable and secure."

"Finally, there is increasing availability of the items needed to create amazing, naturalistic tanks," Rizzo said. "There are several very popular and well-stocked websites, most that can have any item to you within days of ordering it, and many that also guarantee live arrival or plants and microfauna. Many brick and mortar pet stores are starting to carry additional naturalistic terrarium products as well."

Lighten Up

Natural terrariums encompass diverse environments from rainforests to deserts to almost anything in between. One thing they have in common is live plants, and live plants need appropriate lighting.

"LED lighting has become an important part of natural terrariums for supporting plant growth and reptiles' proper vision," said Ashley Rademacher, animal care and education coordinator at Zoo Med. "Zoo Med's new energy efficient LED Terrarium Lighting with a low profile design also boasts a unique modular design that allows for replacing or swapping out LED modules. Each module comes standard with three different col-



ored light emitting diodes (LEDs) including white, red and blue. The 6500K daylight high output LEDs provide truly naturalistic, brilliant white lighting. This light supports pet's vision and promotes natural behaviors such as feeding and breeding responses. Light combinations can be easily controlled with independent rocker switches located on the end of each hood."

For terrarium inhabitants that need UVB lighting, Zoo Med offers the ReptiSun LED UVB Terrarium Hood. It combines the energy efficient ReptiSun LED lighting with a ReptiSun 5.0 UVB Lamp.

Enclosing Nature

While keepers can create a vivarium in any tank, most prefer front-opening terrariums for easier access.

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Brands offers several enclosures that will fit the bill. The Deluxe ReptoHabitats come in several sizes and have sliding glass front doors along with sturdy screen tops, allowing easy access to any part of the terrarium. The bottom features a low profile drain to make cleaning out water features simple.

Zoo Med's new Skyscraper Terrarium is an option for keeps of tree-dwelling species. It has an 18-inch by 18-inch base and is 36 inches tall.

"It is perfect for many arboreal species such as tree pythons and boas, New Caledonian geckos, anoles and many others," Rademacher said. "The extra tall habitat allows arboreal animals to perform natural behaviors and feel secure in their tree-top home. The watertight base allows keepers to build naturalist habitats including water features and plants."

Show Them How It's Done

When it comes to natural terrariums, the best way for retailers to create interest—and sales—is to have one or more on display, according to experts.

"Seeing is believing," Tremper said. "Retailers must have one or two knock-out terrarium set-ups on display. This helps potential customers envision what could be theirs; especially if a recirculating waterfall is in play. The sales force must engage customers and show them the features and how to be successful."

Rizzo agrees.

"The best way to sell many of these is to set up a nice display tank so that customers can envision the possibilities," Rizzo said. "Some stores also have great success selling tanks that are already set-up and ready for animals to be introduced immediately."

According to Rademacher, it is helpful to show products in use.

"Showing products in use is really a great way to inspire current and potential pet keepers to be creative and build natural terrariums for their animals," she said. "Zoo Med has made several different YouTube videos with examples of how to use products to create naturalistic terrariums. Retailers are always welcome to share our videos as well as photos from our website for inspiration and guidance."



Number One Sellers

Lizards are the best-selling group of reptiles.

BY JOHN MACK

Choosing which reptiles your store will provide to customers can be difficult. But, without any exaggeration, your store's best chance at successful reptile sales comes from lizards. Lizards come in nearly countless morphs, colors, patterns and species, allowing for huge variation within your store's selection.

Further, lizards have much less of a stigma than snakes. While a number of people still view snakes with fear or nervousness, those same people often show fewer reservations when viewing or handling lizards.

The Big Three

We have often advocated species of lizards as perfect starter animals, ideal for both a pet owner new to reptiles and for a pet store beginning to sell reptiles for the very first time. At the head of these is the bearded dragon, which outsells nearly any other reptile. However, the numerous varieties and morphs of leopard and crested geckos have skyrocketed these species into the upper echelons of reptile sales. In all three cases, these reptiles have proven to have the ideal combination of ease of care, voracious appetite and color/pattern appeal to make them perfect reptiles for a new sales display.

Two More

Retailers may wish to pursue some additional variety in the form of the green and brown anoles. From a pet store perspective, anoles can easily become cash cows: they are inexpensive to stock, easy to keep, don't require much in the way of care but are voracious in appetite. The two types of anoles differ most in their

choice of habitat. Green anoles tend to be more arboreal while brown anoles are typically ground-dwelling. Both anoles tend to be highly active and can provide a great deal of amusement for owners.

Unlike most reptiles, anoles can be kept in a group. Typically, an enclosure of anoles should contain one male in the company of several females. Males may become quarrelsome if caged together.

An anole enclosure does provide a reptile owner with numerous options in terms of decoration and function. They appreciate numerous logs, branches and plants to crawl around on. Ensure that your store has ample options in terms of cage decoration. Anoles also require warm temperatures, so stock the needed heating and lighting elements.

Matching the Lizard to the Customer

One important factor to consider when stocking lizards is the activity cycle of the lizards in question. New reptile owners are often dissatisfied with purchased reptiles when those reptiles are not active while the pet owner is awake. This demonstrates a lack of education between the store owner and the consumer. When stocking reptiles, particularly lizards, make a concerted effort to display whether a given reptile is diurnal or nocturnal.

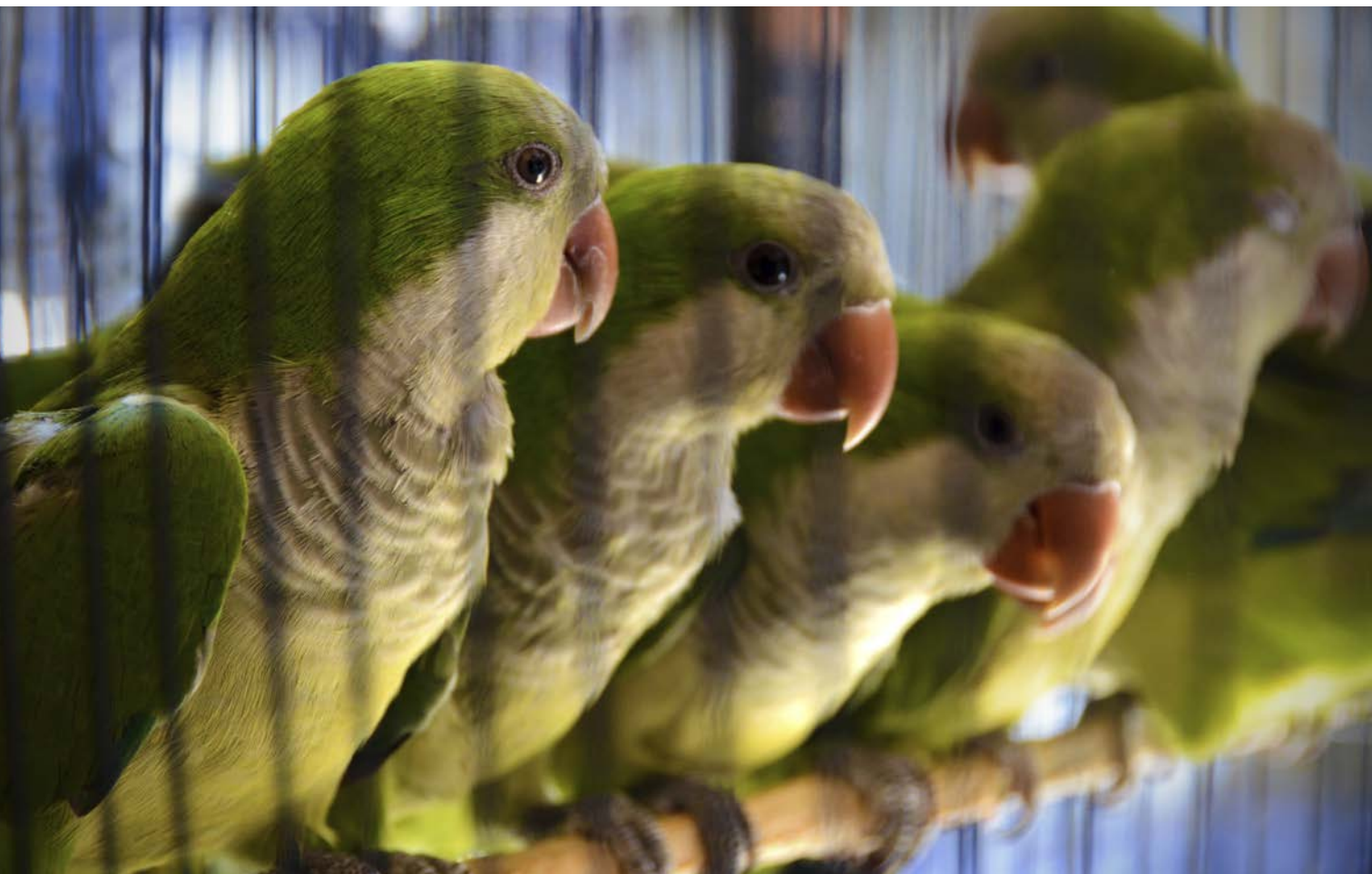
One of the reasons bearded dragons and veiled chameleons are popular is that both species are diurnal. They are active at the same time as their owners, making them more appealing as pets. Anoles are also active during the day which helps make them a perfect entry animal into reptile keeping.

Of course, any pet store's ultimate

goal is twofold: to match up would-be pet owners with an ideal pet while simultaneously making a reasonable profit. The core of that potential profit is subsidiary sales that accompany any initial reptile sale. The greatest of these is food. Most of the lizards in this article eat crickets and other live insects. A display of multiple lizards can be voracious, particularly considering the fact that lizards need to be fed daily. This equates to several dozens of crickets per week for an enclosure, which must be refreshed weekly at your store. Establishing a positive relationship with a new lizard owner can surely pay dividends for a well-stocked store.

One last item to be aware of when stocking anoles is their susceptibility to stress. Typically, this occurs when being handled, being threatened by a predator—perhaps a curious housecat—or when the environment changes—if the enclosure is too warm or cold. If stressed, an anole will change color. Green anoles will turn brown, gray or even black. Pay close attention any color change in your anoles, as they might indicate that something may be wrong. Extended color changes may indicate that an anole is sick or otherwise unwell, beyond the above stressors. Keep a close eye on your reptiles and ensure that your staff is well educated as to what your animals require in terms of care. And, of course, extend this knowledge to your customers; they will surely thank you for it.

John Mack is the founder and CEO of Reptiles by Mack, one of the largest reptile breeders in the U.S.A. He is on the board of directors of PIJAC and a member of PIJAC Zoonotic Diseases Committee.



Cage Appropriate

The latest avian habitats offer versatility, variety

BY ERIK J. MARTIN

They are not likely to reinvent the wheel anytime soon—just as they are not likely to completely revamp the tried-and-true design behind most bird cages, which continue to come in conventional rectangular and/or curvilinear shapes.

But the good news for pet owners and retailers seeking more diversity in this space is that the humdrum bird box habitat has gone the way of the Dodo. Larger sizes, greater compatibility with fun and user-friendly accessories, attractive colors, textures and materials, and ease-of-cleaning amenities are among the features that manufacturers are including in their products in recent years.

Walk the Walk-in

Bigger—without being overwhelming—has been a focus lately, according to Mary Wyld, owner of Wyld's Wingdom, a Norfolk, Va.-based pet bird supplies distributor. Wyld says that, when it comes to cages, bigger is better for most species.

"Indoor walk-in cages have traditionally been too large for many homes, but we are seeing smaller versions of walk-in cages, which afford the bird more room than the standard large cages," Wyld said. "They can more easily be accommodated into the human living environment, and they prove to be great enhanced living arrangements for these intelligent creatures."

For example, A&E Cage Company offers a medium-sized walk-in aviary (79 inches by 85 inches by 61 inches), Cages by Design makes a 5 by 7.5-foot Suncatcher Sectional Bird Aviary, and Cheek's Custom Cages has a 4-foot hexagon-shaped model. Depending on your square footage, you may be able to fit these and other smaller walk-ins into your retail footprint.

Overnight Sensation

Another trend building greater momentum is providing two types of enclosures: regular-sized day cages and smaller cages for night-time sleeping. As parrot owners are probably aware, many parrot species

Trends & Products Birds

that are single cage-dwelling pets often become cage-bound or territorial as they approach adulthood, viewing their sole habitat as a nesting site. Consequently, the instinct to protect takes over.

“The benefit of having a night cage is to help prevent hormonally driven attitudes that become challenging for owners,” said Melanie K. Allen, avian product specialist with Rolf C. Hagen (USA) Corp. in Mansfield, Mass. “This is especially noteworthy when spring arrives and our feathered companions often display new attitudes, like excessive screaming or aggressive behavior.”

A night/sleep cage should be a bit smaller than a traditional day cage, contain only food/water dishes and comfortable perches (no toys allowed) and offer the bird total security for a good night’s sleep.

“The day cage should be the place for all of the toys and enrichment foods and provide a versatile environment to ward off undesirable behavior associated with hormonal overdrive,” Allen added.

For instance, a good combo to recommend for a small conure could be Hagen’s Living World Sol Bird Cage (24.4 x 19.9 x 21.3 inches) as a day cage and Living World’s Volare Bird Cage (17.1 x 19.7 x 22 inches) as a sleep cage.

Playtime Heads to the Top

While it’s hardly a recent development, the movement to provide out-of-cage playtime remains hot, as evidenced by more cages and related products designed to increase exercise and exploration beyond the bars.

Case in point: Pets International-Kaytee offers a variety of activity centers—including the EZ Care Activity Center Playground—providing small to large species of birds with an exercise platform and a safe place to play outside the enclosure.

“These are win-win products,” said Jason Casto, director of Pets International-Kaytee, Schaumburg, Ill. “The birds win by having fun and healthy exercise and enrichment playtime outside of the cage, and retailers win because they have the opportunity to sell an additional

play stand type product in addition to the cage.”

Additionally, cages with tops that provide open play areas or removable activity centers—such as YML’s Square Playtop Cage and A&E Cage Company’s brand new Open Victorian Top cage—continue to be popular.

Worth a Look

While major innovation in this segment is rare, new products that inspire “oohs” and “ahhs” continue to hit the market with some regularity. For example, Companion Habitats recently rolled out its fresh Signature line of cages, including its Island Viewer that is ideal for displaying multiple birds in your store with enhanced visibility via a 79-inch enclosure with transparent walls and a top-ventilated design.

Meanwhile, Prevue Pet recently announced two new noteworthy items. Its value-minded Copacabana Bird Cage is for smaller species, and sports a hexagonal shape and finial hook for hanging, all in a compact package available in blue, green, yellow, gray/brown or light blue. The elegant Dynasty Bird Cage has sturdy stainless steel construction,

an embossed decorative design around the roof cap and base and an embellished finial.

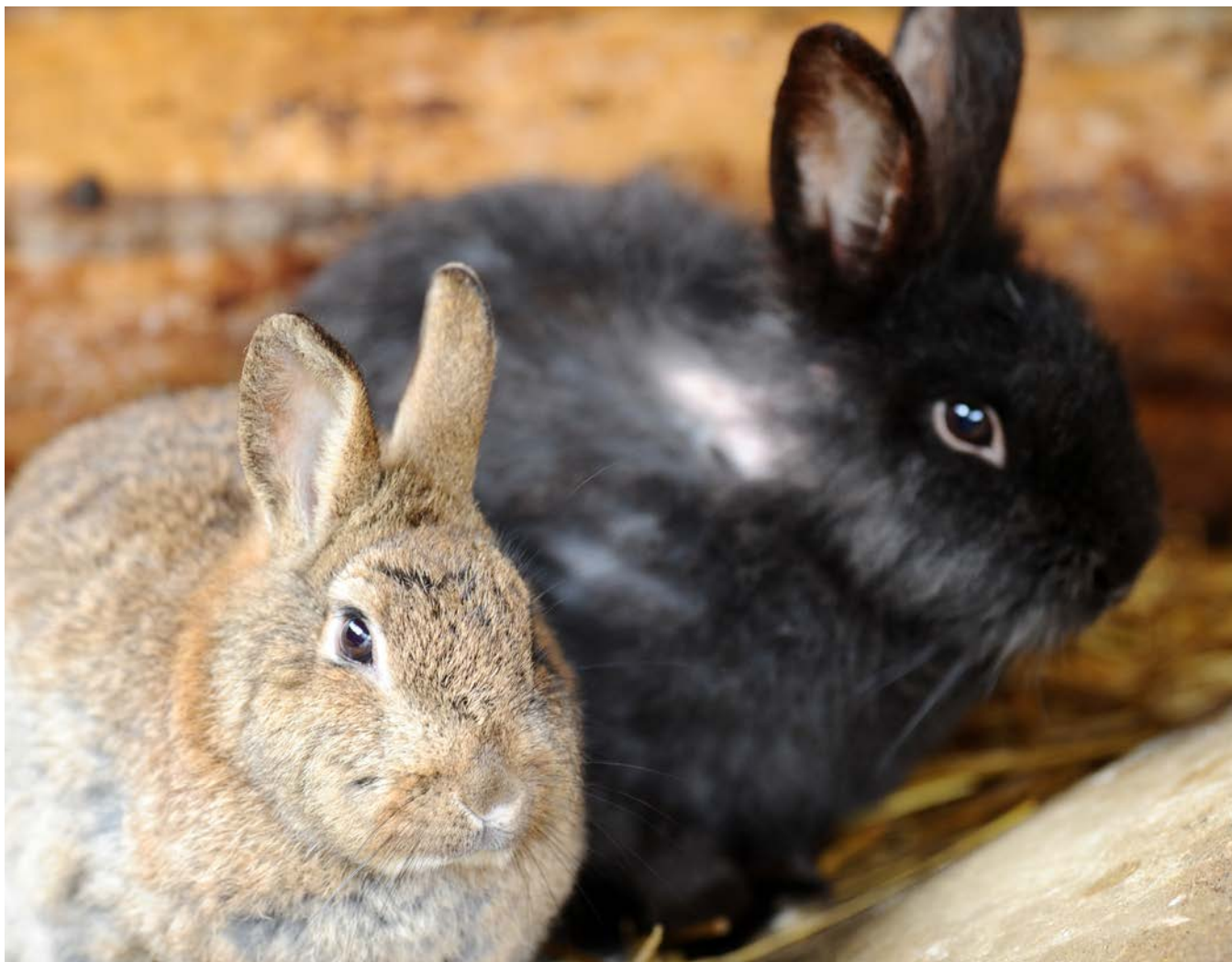
Retailing Tips

Showcasing an assortment of aviary habitats throughout your bird section—including hanging types, models on floor casters, portable/traveling cages, activity centers, corner cages and indoor walk-ins—is a wise way to get customers’ attention and also merchandise your livestock for sale. Just remember to regularly:

- Rotate and reposition your stock and setups, giving needed emphasis to the newest products.
- Clean live cages thoroughly to demonstrate your compassion for the animals and attention to cleanliness.
- Encourage customers to interact with cage products and handle birds inside/outside your display cages, when this is appropriate.

Erik J. Martin is a Chicago area-based freelance writer whose articles have been featured in Cat Fancy, WebVet.com, AARP The Magazine, Reader’s Digest, Costco Connection and other publications.





The Tooth of the Matter

Newest chew toys and dental products offer lots of bite for your buck.

BY ERIK J. MARTIN

Anually celebrated as National Pet Dental Health Month, February may have come and gone. But calendar matters aside, it's never too late to emphasize oral health to mini mammal owners. After all, teeth and gum health are constant concerns for all small pets, particularly those with incisors that grow incessantly like chinchillas, guinea pigs and rabbits.

Fortunately, an ample array of merchandise is available today that fills this niche and focuses on safeguarding those little pearly whites.

Naturally Healthy Teeth

Oxbow Animal Health's communications manager, Lucas Stock, is based in Murdock, Nebraska. He said natural and healthy products are a higher priority on the menu today.

"The chew and dental product segment of the market has grown considerably in recent years and consequently, some retailers are now able to dedicate more real estate to these items, making them more visible and often easier to sell," Stock said. "This growth has been driven in large part by a yearning among

pet parents to provide the best quality of life possible for their pets. In particular, we've seen a growing demand for chews that provide not only enrichment but high quality nutrition and potential health benefits."

Kathleen Kintz, digital marketing specialist with Plano, Texas-based NPIC, agrees that this niche is increasingly stressing "natural"—as in less processing, more organic ingredients and products geared toward small animals' natural inclinations to chew.

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Trends & Products Small Animals

rets, for example, combine the need to chew with other activities, such as digging or finding treats,” Kintz said. “The focus is more on what is good for your pet than ever before. Natural products that cater to their instincts can solve many of the problems that owners have.”

Indeed, pet teeth and gums are getting more attention among small pet owners in no small part because of consumer awareness about dental health in the dog and cat product categories.

“Manufacturers are merchandising these items with specific dental claims,” said Angie Schmitt, brand manager for Kaytee in Chilton, Wisconsin.

Products that contain fortified pieces designed to be more abrasive in order to mechanically wear down teeth and contain ingredients known to address tartar and bacteria are starting to gain traction in the market, too.

Case in point: Kaytee offers its Froti Diet Pro Health small animal food now enhanced with fortified pieces designed to promote dental health, as well as a wide assortment of fun chews and chew accessories for added enrichment and dental support. NPIC’s natural N-Bone Ferret Chew Treats (in chicken, bacon or salmon flavor) help remove plaque and tartar buildup while the animal chomps away.

Mouth Merriment

Chew and dental products that provide extra benefits beyond being good for the mouth can also be strong sellers.

“Value-added products like 100 percent woven hay chews and toys are oftentimes an easier sell,” Stock said, citing Oxbow’s Timothy Tunnel as an example. “In addition to encouraging play and mental enrichment, these items are fully edible and promote the consumption of hay—the ideal material for providing adequate dental wear and high-fiber nutrition.”

Chews fashioned in fun and colorful shapes are also prevalent in the market. Eye-catching examples include Ware’s Tea Time heart-shaped chew made of tea leaves, twigs and twine; Super Pet’s Play ‘n Chew Cubby Nest, which serves

as a hideout, toy and chew in one; A&E Cage Company’s Corn Dogs toy, made from corn cob, loofah, sisal and coconut husk; Kaytee’s Combo Toy Crispy & Wood Hamburger loofah chew; Marshall Pet Products’ Bunny Chew Ring, consisting of natural woven grass; Super Pet’s Crispy Surprises, available in Veggie n’ Fun carrot shape or Fruit n’ Fun apple slice shape; and Kaytee’s Chew ‘n Cube natural wood toy, resembling a checker-colored, hollowed-out Rubik’s Cube.

Merchandising Tips to Chew On

Using in-store signage that conveys the importance of oral health and creating end caps festooned with foods, treats, hay, chews and toys that promote dental vitality can be a smart way to draw attention to the topic for customers and make it convenient for them to locate these products in one handy spot.

“This is really about education—making sure that retail associates and customers are both informed and understand the need for dental care with small animals,” Schmitt said.

That means also providing helpful dental health advice to patrons beyond

product recommendations. For example, remind customers not to allow their small animals to chew on inappropriate objects like the metal bars of their cage, which can damage or break their teeth.

As is the case with most items, location is key when it comes to promoting and selling chew and dental products. Thankfully, these are typically small packages that can easily be positioned to stand out in the aisles.

“Clip strips are one great option to draw attention to chews and make them easily accessible,” Stock said. “Many of these items hang easily from peg boards.”

Additionally, to better merchandise your chew-worthy wares, don’t let them gather dust; take them out of the box and place them into the cages more often, Kintz suggested.

“Putting some interesting and fun toys in with your livestock can liven up both the display and the animals’ lives until they are adopted into a loving home,” she added.

Erik J. Martin is a Chicago area-based freelance writer whose articles have been featured in Cat Fancy, WebVet.com, AARP The Magazine, Reader’s Digest, Costco Connection and other publications.



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Trends & Products Natural

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The number of natural flea and tick products keeps expanding.

BY STACY MANTLE

Flea and “tick” are the four-letter words in the pet industry. No one likes to talk about them, but nearly everyone has some type of experience with them.

While chemical-based flea repellents may seem like the most effective method of eliminating these pests, it's really not necessary for pet owners to wage chemical warfare on their pets and families. Natural remedies have come a long way over the past few years, and most are just

as effective as chemicals. There are even ultrasonic methods to protect your pets from pests.

First in the lineup is Wondercide. This innovative company offers a full lineup of indoor and outdoor products formulated with organic, food-grade ingredients. Each of the products is safe, effective and easy-to-use.

“The pest repelling qualities of essential oils are exceptional, but cats don't have the liver enzyme needed to break down phenols, which are commonly found in many essential oils,” said Stephanie Boone, Wondercide CEO. “When formulating Wondercide Natural Flea & Tick Control for Pets + Home, we knew it needed to be safe and effective for cats. To do this, our cedar oil is steam-distilled and tested to ensure all phenolic compounds have been removed, providing a safe, pesticide-free and non-toxic solution for unwanted fleas and ticks for our cats and other pets.”

Natural Chemistry, recently acquired by Muntech, also has an extensive line of natural flea and tick products.

“While fleas themselves are irritating, some cats may even be allergic to the saliva they contain, which can result in a hypersensitivity reaction and more discomfort for your pet,” reports their website. “Natural Chemistry Pet provides a full line of flea products to help provide relief and treatment for your furry friend!”

Ticked Off

While ticks don't form infestations like fleas do, they can carry serious diseases, including Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. In the event a pet does fall victim to ticks, it is important for owners to know what the ticks could be carrying. That's where the Earth's Balance Tick Releaser Spray and Test Kit from Marshall Pet Products comes in handy. The kit includes all-natural releaser spray, tweezers, a collection tube, an alcohol

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Trends & Products Natural

prep pad and a mail-in testing form.

"The number of people who have contracted Lyme disease has increased twofold, leading consumers to seek out solutions to help protect them against this disease," said Linda Cope, global marketing manager for Marshall Pet Products. "Our Tick Release Spray uses all-natural essential oils to encourage the tick to quickly release itself from you or your pet. Once it has disengaged, simply drop it into a vial that is included in the Tick Release Packet and mail it in. Our laboratories will test for up to seven tick-borne diseases, including Anaplasma, Babesia, Ehrlichia, Lyme Disease, Bartonella, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and Tularemia."

Supplements, Sounds and Soap

For those who are sensitive to odors or prefer nothing on their pet's coat, TickZ is an herbal product created by Petzlife that helps to repel ticks and other bit-

ing insects. Since it does not contain any chemical insecticides, it is ideal for dogs or owners who are allergic to chemical sprays. Owners sprinkle TickZ on their pet's moist food twice a day for five days, and it provides two to three months of protection. It's made of all-natural ingredients, such as quassia bark, anise and brewer's yeast.

Earth Animal offers an all-natural and safe Flea and Tick Program that includes a water additive and a topical spray.

"At Earth Animal, we encourage pet parents to consider a safe organic approach, such as herbs and specific nutrients, for flea and tick prevention, as opposed to the use of insecticides, which have known side effects," said Susan Goldstein, founder of Earth Animal.

Ultrasonic devices are making a strong showing in this category. These types of products emit a series of ultrasound pulses that are both imperceptible and harmless to pets and people. One need only attach

it a pet's collar. Continuous wear provides several months of safe protection against parasites. Options include the TickLess Pet Ultrasonic Repellent and Love2Pet Ultrasonic Flea and Tick Shield.

To help prevent fleas completely, natural solutions are the way to go. DERM-Magic Skin Care for Animals released the first Diatomaceous Bar that provides all-natural protection from pests. Formulated with food-grade diatomaceous earth, this bar is safe for use on both dogs and cats and can help keep insects away between baths.

Pyrethrins, from the chrysanthemum flower, help give Bioderm Laboratories' Bio-Groom Flea and Tick Shampoo its pest repelling power. Bio-Groom rinses out quickly and provides maximum effectiveness in killing fleas, lice and ticks.

Outdoor Safety

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Skin Deep

Skin care products that solve problems attract consumer attention.

BY MAGGIE MARTON

Dog owners usually seek skin care products to solve a problem. They notice their dog is itchy, for example, or perhaps that the dog has dandruff or oily fur. When it comes to skin care, it is often an “as needed” purchase rather than a preventative one. Because of the problem-solving nature of the purchase, consumers focus on products that are simple, targeted and effective.

An increase in allergies that manifest in the skin and an emphasis on environmentally-friendly products have shifted purchasing habits.

“Our products are free of all toxins—phosphates, phthalates, sulfates, parabens, DEA, and synthetic fragrance and color—so dogs get clean, rinse clean, smell great and their parents can feel

good about the choice they made,” said Jane Bond, co-owner of Eco Dog Care.

This month, Eco Dog Care will launch a new shampoo called Soothe.

“So many people have told us about their dogs who are suffering from environmental allergens and triggers, and we’re rolling out a new fragrance variant about the same time that will offer a burst of citrus freshness from Israeli orange oil,” Bond said.

Cameron Fang, who runs product development and international sales at RELIQ, expressed a similar sentiment.

“Customers want a product that will thoroughly clean their dog and leave them smelling fresh without damaging their skin or coat,” Fang said. “RELIQ’s cleansing process actually removes bac-

teria and toxins through an absorption process, while stimulating the skin and helping to clear problem skin, hot spots and odor problems.”

According to Fang, the products in RELIQ’s line are also all-natural and “eco-safe: safe for the pet and safe for the environment.”

Bond explained that dog owners are becoming more conscious of their purchasing decisions.

“I think folks, in general, are just more aware of how their personal decisions can affect the environment, and they want choices when they shop,” Bond said. “So, for example, adding detergents can create a lot of foamy bubbles in shampoo, but additives like phosphates and sulfates can also con-

Trends & Products

Groom and Board

taminate the groundwater and oceans. So when you rinse your dog after a bath with these products, you're also washing contaminants down the drain and into the water."

Part of that awareness includes the effects pet products can have on dog owners and on groomers.

"Not only are our 'green' ingredients important for the health of a dog's skin and coat, but our products are healthier for the people that use them to bathe and groom their dogs," Bond said. "Nothing harsh on your dog, nothing harsh on your hands."

For those owners who are concerned about dry skin or are grooming novices, simple products often provide the best solution. For instance, guide those customers to a clean-rinsing shampoo that does not require a second conditioning product.

"When using our formulas, there is no need to use a conditioner following the shampoo process," Fang said. "Our shampoos are pH balanced and

low-sudsing for easy rinse. They're also 100 percent chlorine, alcohol and paraben free. They are formulated with far fewer lathering additives. Dead skin cells, dirt and stains are separated from the hairs and are effortlessly rinsed off without unhealthy cleaning agents being left behind. Our solutions offer an easier application, quicker clean up, less wasted product, less water consumption, and pets will no longer suffer from dry skin."

Skin care products are not limited to shampoos, conditioners or sprays. An important consideration and possible upsell is a quality brush. Dog owners might not realize just how important regular brushing is for their dog's skin health.

The line of ActiVet brushes hits on all major needs. For instance, Pro Firm Purple has bent firm bristles on both sides with a firm flex ratio—perfect for undercoat removal. The Gold Supersoft Coat-grabber meets needs on the opposite end of the coat spectrum. It's a soft brush for

short, dense coats with little or no undercoat. ActiVet also includes combo brushes and options for various coat problems. However, many dog owners are unaware of the relationship between brushing and skin care. Consider product demonstrations in the salon to illustrate the necessity of good brushing.

Often, when faced with a skin care problem, dog owners ask for advice on which products to purchase to solve a specific problem. This positions groomers and retailers to make product suggestions that address the acute issues as well as any possible preventative steps. Be prepared with a few suggestions to answer some of the most common skin care problems your customers face. Utilize displays that are solution-focused rather than brand- or product-specific to provide clearer buying options for concerned dog owners.

Maggie Marton is a freelance writer and pet lifestyle pro. She lives in Bloomington, Ind., with her husband, three dogs and a cat.





Sustainability in the Tradeshow Industry

How can pet products companies reduce the environmental impact of trade shows?

Trade shows are particularly challenging when it comes to sustainability. They are the second highest producer of waste behind the construction industry and are known for their heavy consumption of energy, water, and fuel, according to Thomas Schueneman in his article "Five Industries That Need Way More Eco Attention."

This is quite the dilemma as the world grows more environmentally and socially conscious. According to Mitra Sorrells, author of "11 Ways to Make Trade Show Exhibits Sustainable," vendors often express a desire for a better way to properly dispose of waste. This introduces the complex problem of what materials to use, how to recycle them and on which key areas to focus in order to be more sustainable.

Across multiple industries, there are many initiatives today that are raising the bar on sustainable business practices and are reducing the overall footprint of their trade shows. For example, Sustainable Brands San Diego implemented several sustainability programs, including zero waste, sourcing 100 percent of food locally and going paperless. As a result, they were able to divert 90 percent of their trash from the landfill and paper usage was reduced by 30 percent, according to the company's website.

Blog Paws adopted PISC's Zero Waste challenge in 2015, with the goal to divert 65 percent of their trash to recycling or compost. They achieved a 78 percent diversion rate and plan to build upon their success for their 2016 show in Phoenix this June.

According to Outdoor Retailer's website, the company developed the Green Step program that called out "companies adopting green practices in their prod-

ucts, policies and business tactics in and around the outdoor industry." The result was an "annual savings of greenhouse gas emissions from 102 passenger vehicles and 179 tons of waste diverted to recycling rather than the landfill."

The Pet Industry Sustainability Coalition rolled out the Green Paw program, modeled after Outdoor Retailer's efforts, at SuperZoo 2015 with 19 companies participating in the pilot. The program's goal is to highlight companies that are working to create a more sustainable future. PISC intends to expand the program for the Global Pet Expo trade show in 2016.

Many brands are making the switch to increase their environmental sustainability at trade shows due to the proven benefits. Top advantages of adopting a sustainability agenda for trade shows include:

- 1. Marketing:** Market research consistently reports a strong preference for companies, products and services that demonstrate environmental responsibility.

- 2. Innovation:** The EPA, Green Meetings Council and Convention Industry Council (CIC), among others, have joined together to develop sustainable benchmark standards for trade shows. By getting ahead of the curve and implementing a sustainability plan for shows, companies can be sure to meet and exceed these standards in the future.

- 3. Competition:** The benefits of differentiating your company at a trade show are no secret. By showcasing programs, systems, products or initiatives that have a positive impact on the environment and the supply chain, a company can increase exposure and engage with prospective buyers in meaningful and differentiated conversations.

With the increasing favoritism towards sustainable brands and the EPA/CIC working group focused on defining sustainable benchmark standards, is your company ahead of the curve with a sustainable process for trade shows? If not, consider adopting the following practices.

- 1. Air Travel:** To reduce your trade show foot print, limit attendees to only essential personnel or fly non-stop whenever possible in order to limit jet fuel usage.

- 2. Utilize Green Displays:** There are many eco-conscious options on the market today. Consider moving away from the traditional plastic signs.

- 3. Use Recyclable or Green Flooring:** Flooring can represent hidden waste and is a great way to reduce your trade show footprint. According to Forest Nation, Brumark is one of the greenest options for trade show flooring.

- 4. Eco-Friendly Promotional Products:** An important part of any trade show, your promotional products need to catch your visitors' attention and also reinforce your brand. You can reinforce your message by aligning your takeaways with your values.

- 5. Go Paperless:** Offer electronic brochures, flyers, and business cards. This is a great way to trim overhead costs while providing an environmental benefit. If you have to print, use recycled paper and green ink. A great option is Greenerprinter. The company "uses recycled paper, soy and vegetable-based inks, and state-of-the-art equipment to minimize waste during the printing process" according to Forest Nation.

Content provided by Pet Industry Sustainability Coalition, a collaborative playground for advancing sustainability throughout the pet industry.

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Community News and Events in the Pet Industry

Pet Age Retailer Forum

The Pet Age Retailer Forum was held in New York City on November 12, 2015. The event gathered together pet industry manufacturers and independent East Coast retailers for the purpose of discussing their successes, opportunities and challenges in the market.



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March 4-6 Long Island Pet Expo,
Suffolk CC Expo Center, Brentwood, N.Y.
www.familypetshows.com

March 10-13 Atlanta Pet Fair,
Hilton Atlanta Airport, Atlanta, Ga.
www.atlantapetfair.com

March 11-13 NAPPS 2016 Annual Conference, Orlando Fla.
www.petsitters.org

March 16-18 Global Pet Expo, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla.
www.globalpetexpo.org

March 18-20 Super Pet Expo,
Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, Va.
www.superpetexpo.com

March 18-20 Chicagoland Family Pet Expo, Arlington International Racecourse, Arlington Heights, Ill.
www.petchicago.com

March 19-20 South Florida Pet Expo,
West Palm Beach, Fla.
www.southfloridapetexpo.com

March 26-27 Tampa Bay Pet Expo,
Tampa, Fla.
www.tampabaypetexpo.com

March 31-April 3 American Animal Hospital Association Conference,
Austin, Texas.
www.aahanet.org

April

April 12-13 New England Buying Show, Foxwoods Resort & Casino, Mashantucket, CT
www.phillipspet.com/customers/phillips-buying-shows

April 18-20 Petfood Forum,
Kansas City, MO,
www.petfoodforumevents.com

April 19 Pet Electronic Technology Showcase (PETS), Home Studios, Inc., New York, NY.
www.retailsandsalespetexpo.com

April 21-24 Northwest Grooming Show, Tacoma, WA,
www.nwgmroom.com

April 22-24 America's Family Pet Expo, OC Fair & Event Calendar, Costa Mesa, Calif.
www.petexpooc.org

April 23-24 Calgary Pet Expo, Spruce Meadows, Calgary, Alberta, Canada,
www.calgarypetexpo.com

May

May 2-5 Pet Boarding & Daycare Expo West, Burbank, Calif.
www.barkleigh.com

May 6-8 Groom Classic Trade Show, Kansas City, Mo.
www.groomclassic.com

May 10-13 Animal Care Expo 2016, Las Vegas,
www.animalsheltering.org

May 13-15 Mardi Paws Pet Expo, The Doubletree by Hilton, New Orleans Airport, Kenner, La.
www.mardipawspetexpo.com



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS!



Pet Age is looking for industry ICONS who have shown a long term commitment to the success of the pet industry based on experience, integrity and leadership. Successful candidates will have at least 20+ years in the pet manufacturing or servicing industry. The award recipients will be recognized and profiled in the September issue of Pet Age.

Eligibility Requirements:

- May be self-nominated or nominated by another person.
- Only one individual may be nominated per company.
- Nominees may be employed in for-profit pet manufacturing or servicing businesses or nonprofit organizations.
(*pet retailers are not eligible.*)
- Must hold a senior management-level position with significant authority in decision making for their organization.
- Cannot be a member of the judging panel or a member of any judge's immediate family.

NOMINATION DEADLINE: May 20

To submit your nomination, visit www.petage.com and click on the events tab.

**Questions? Contact Erika Plateroti at 732-246-5713
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Looking Out for the Groomers

Groomer's Helper makes dog grooming safer and more efficient.

BY TOM MAZORLIG

Pet Age's Tom Mazorlig spoke with Chuck Simons, founder of Groomer's Helper, about the history of the company and its successful business partnerships.

Tom Mazorlig: *Tell me about the history of Groomer's Helper.*

Chuck Simons: My wife and I had a small pet grooming shop in Ventnor, New Jersey. One day this wonderful man—may he rest in peace—Dr. R. K. Anderson sent us this little aluminum clamp with a wingnut on it called the Alpha Lock. When I saw the Alpha Lock I said, “Holy mackerel, look at this!” I took it and put it on my grooming arm and hooked it right to my grooming loop. It put the dog in a cross tie. We've been cross tying horses for thousands of years. It's a rope from one side of the stall to the halter and one to the other side of the stall. It controls the horse's head and when the horse realizes that he is in the cross tie, he calms. It reduced the area the dog could turn and bite by 90 percent and reduced the area in which the groomer could get bitten.

The Alpha Lock was not selling to groomers because it's hard to groom a dog with a muzzle on. It became prominent when it turned into the Groomer's Helper because it held the loop itself and instead of the dog being able to jump or fall off the table, it makes it safer. PetSmart and Petco tested it and it has reduced injuries to groomers and pets substantially. The Groomer's Helper is a fantastic time saver and will allow the groomer two or three more grooms per day, making it a huge money maker.

Tom: *Groomer's Helper is the distributor for the ActiVet brushes. How did that partnership come about?*

Chuck: Originally, the brushes were made by a private label in Germany,

but there was a falling out with the U.S. distributor. When I was at InterZoo in Nuremburg, Jerry Knoll asked me to come see the brushes. He had redressed them. He made them with color-coded handles indicating what they were and the tops were now white. These were brushes that everyone was dying to get. I asked him what I had to do to bring these brushes back to the United States. Jerry knew me from the shows and trusted me, so he gave me the North American distributorship. Two SuperZoos ago is when we reintroduced them to the United States. They've been a phenomenal success.

Tom: *What makes these brushes special?*

Chuck: They've had 22 years to develop their product. This is German stainless steel with blunted pins. It's a flexible headed brush, so instead of your wrist doing the work, it's the flexible head that does the work. They are double-sided and double-headed, so that's going to do twice the area and there's no stopping between brushing.

Tom: *How did the partnership with Dog Fashion Spa come about?*

Chuck: For many years, there has been the same-old shampoo with fragrances. At Interzoo, I met a gentleman named Domenico Ponti and his significant other is Elena Volnova.

Their products are all natural, use essential oils, and everything is made in the USA. They have a wonderful line of products that go along with the shampoos, such as a glass nail file, non-acetone based nail polish and nail polish remover, a nose brush and a skin and coat conditioner that is absolutely phenomenal.

The products are really fantastic but it's tough for a company to start out



brand new and sell ones and twos for wholesale at these shows. I came up with an elite dealership plan. For \$2,000 a grooming shop can have a complete line of these products. We give them \$500 worth of free shampoo, fragrances and support materials for the back of the store so they can use the products on the dogs. When the people pick up their dogs at the front counter and say, “Where can I buy this stuff?” the groomer can point to the free kiosk and there it is. The dog is their salesperson, so there is a chance for a sale on every groom. They make 100 percent profit. They have six months to pay and at the end of the six months if they don't think it's the greatest thing since sliced bread, we will buy every product back from them for what they paid for it.

We are really committed to the groomers. Retail will give them an extra \$50-\$75,000 per year. This gives them one product line to buy from one company. They don't have to worry about going to different companies and pricing.

It rounded out our line with brushes and now the shampoos, coat conditioners and Groomer's Helper. PetLift is now making our tub insert. Groomers have been asking me to get something in the tub because they are getting severely bitten there. I've developed an insert for the tub that allows the groomers to use Groomer's Helper in the tub. We should have the full prototype available for the InterGroom show in June.



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