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Lori Nebel, Proud Pet Lover and Pet Supplies Plus Owner

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Top reasons to convert your store.

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MOTIVATING YOUR EMPLOYEES

FELINE PRODUCTS

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The top reasons to convert your store:

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Pet Age

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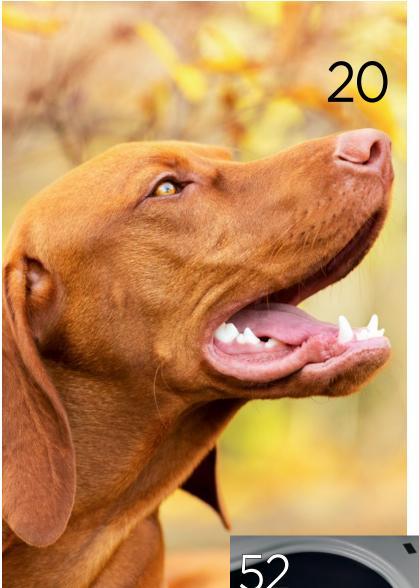
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EDITOR'S LETTER



PLENTY TO CHEW ON

Pet food, dental health and CBD products are just some of the topics that are in the spotlight this month.

ponsored by the American Pet Products Association (APPA), the Pet Industry Distributors Association (PIDA) and the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC), the 2020 Pet Industry Leadership Summit took place January 13-15 in San Diego, California. The conference brought together heads of manufacturing companies, wholesale distributors and trade organizations to discuss the challenges and issues facing the industry. Presenters and panel conversations covered topics that included legislative issues, the importance of transparency, the enforcement of MAP policy, the challenges of online retail and the industry's commitment to animal welfare.

Drawing the most attention among attendees was a lunch presentation featuring Dana Brooks, president and CEO of Pet Food Institute (PFI), and Dr. Tim Schell, director of the office of surveillance and compliance for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). They presented an update on the FDA's investigation into canine dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) and how PFI is responding to reactions from consumers, veterinarians and pet food manufacturers. The audience was informed that, while there are multiple possible causes of DCM, the question of what was responsible for the reported DCM deaths was "not going to be solved anytime soon."

Pet food is one of the many trending product categories represented in this issue, with cat litter, CBD products and leashes, collars and harnesses among the others that we place in the spotlight. And with February being National Pet Dental Health Month, we're pleased to help increase the awareness of the importance of proper dental hygiene in pets via an article featuring valuable insight from brands making dental treats and oral care products.

In terms of expert advice, our MANAGE-MENT section once again provides you with business strategies that can help set you apart from your competition. Amy Castro dives into what it takes to motivate and empower today's employees in order for them to better serve your customers. You'll also find John Mack detailing the value in carrying reptile food and hard goods, Jamie Popper shedding light on essential dog training tools and Robbi Hess offering advice on how retailers can benefit from branded products.

And with Global Pet Expo taking place this month in Orlando, Florida, many brands are introducing new product lines, releasing additional varieties to existing lineups and even revamping their packaging. You can find 30+ listings for these exciting launches in our Stockroom section. And if you're attending Global Pet Expo, be sure to stop by our booth (Booth 3670) to meet and speak with our team. As always, in our continuous effort to improve our publication, we welcome your feedback, thoughts and suggestions.

Until then, there's an enormous amount of news and information in this issue of Pet Age. So what are you waiting for? Read on, and enjoy!

> Glenn A. Polyn Editor gpolyn@petage.com

Pet Age

GROUP PUBLISHER Ken Kiczales kkiczales@petage.com

GENERAL MANAGER AnnMarie Karczmit

SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES Juliana Hefford jhefford@petage.com 310-507-4605

Tara Preston tpreston@petage.com 917-331-8904 EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Glenn A. Polyn gpolyn@petage.com 732-246-5734

ASSISTANT EDITORS Megan Jander mjander@petage.com 732-246-5739

Chris M. Junior cjunior@petage.com 732-246-5714

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS Nicole Haggard

HOW TO REACH US

MAILING ADDRESS Pet Age, 220 Davidson Ave., Suite 122 Somerset, NJ 08873

Phone: 732-339-3700 Fax: 732-846-0421 Email: info@petage.com To subscribe visit: www.petage.com For list rentals: The Information Refinery, Inc: 800-529-9020

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PET OF THE MONTH

NASO TANG

Maximum Length: Up to 18 inches.

Average Lifespan: Typically 8 years or older.

Habitat: Naso tangs, commonly called clown tangs or lipstick tangs, need plenty of swimming room and places to hide, as well as a tight-fitting lid to prevent the fish from jumping to escape. It does not do well with other tangs, but it is peaceful with other tankmates that are larger than it. A minimum tank size of 150 gallons is recommended.

Food: The naso tang is an herbivore that should have algae or vegetable-based foods. It is ideal to offer marine-based seaweed and algae, which are staples in a tang's natural diet. It can flourish on frozen foods, such as mysis, brine shrimp, krill and squid.

Water Conditions: 74° to 78°F, dKH 8 to 12, pH 8.1 to 8.4.

Fun Fact: Naso tangs can change color depending on their environment or mood, such as turning black with gray patches when excited or frightened.

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MANAGEMENT S strategies

TAKING THE LEAD

Stop managing and start coaching your employees.

BY AMY CASTRO



Amy P. Castro, MA, is a business, leadership and communication expert, author and speaker who helps organizations develop leaders and build amazing teams one person at a time. She works with pet industry professionals who want to grow their loyal customer base by building a "Best in Show" team that can deliver a 5-Star Customer Experience. Amy is also the president of Starlight Outreach and Rescue, a nonprofit rescue in the Houston, Texas, area, and she has personally fostered more than 1,000 shelter pets.

The job of leading employees has definitely changed over the years. In the past, it was an owner's or manager's job to tell employees what to do and then follow up to make sure the tasks were completed. However, today's employees are looking for coaching in a collaborative environment where they are encouraged and given regular feedback on their performance. It might sound like extra work, but taking the time to coach your employees rather than just managing them will pay off for you and your business. Not only will your employees be more engaged, they'll be more productive, more dedicated and they'll serve your customers more effectively.

First, let's define the difference between managing and coaching. Managers are directors. They tell employees what to do and then make sure those things get done. Their conversations with employees are one way, with the exception of occasionally asking, "Do you have any questions?" Coaches, on the other hand, encourage two-way communication. They ask more than they tell and truly listen to their employees. Coaches know that the best way for employees to learn is not to be told over and over again what to do, but to be asked what needs to be done, why it needs to be done and how the employee plans to accomplish the task.

Here are five simple things you can do to make the transition from being just a manager to being a great coach for your employees.

Employee Motivation

Every employee is motivated by something different, and it's very likely that what motivates you isn't what motivates your employees. Managers try to use the things that motivate themselves to motivate their employees. A manager might say, "If you keep coming in on time every day, you'll have a chance at being our team lead." However, if the manager hasn't taken the time to get to know the employee, he or she has no idea if being the team lead is even a goal for that employee or whether the thought of a promotion is motivational. A good coach finds out what motivates each employee and then provides those motivators to get the most from each employee. If an employee was motivated by the opportunity for additional training or education, providing these opportunities would be more motivational and gain better performance than the promise of a promotion.

Asking Questions

One of the things I always stress in my coaching workshops is to ask when you know you could tell. Many managers know exactly what's gone wrong in a problem situation and what can be done to fix it. Therefore, when problems arise, they just tell their employees what they did wrong and what they need to do to avoid the problem in the future. However, coaches know that telling isn't the best approach to developing employees. Coaches ask questions like, "What do you think you could do differently tomorrow to be here on time?" or "What do you think you could have said instead that would have avoided the customer getting more upset?" By asking questions, the coach learns whether the employee has any idea how to avoid or fix the problem. Additionally, asking questions encourages employees to be more proactive in thinking through solutions to their own problems rather than always relying on the boss' advice. Finally, asking a question and allowing the employee to come up with a solution turns the conversation into an opportunity for the coach to praise the employee for his or her good thinking and to end the conversation on a positive note.

Give Positive Feedback

When it comes to praise, many managers are a bit stingy. These managers feel that employees should know when they're doing a good job and shouldn't have to be told. However, today's employees want to know exactly what they're doing right when they're doing it. Therefore, good coaches give specific, positive feedback regularly. It's not enough to say, "Great job today. Keep up the good work." If you want good work to be repeated, you need to tell employees exactly what they've done well and why the good work matters to you. You might say, "Megan, I really appreciate how you handled the conversation with Mrs. Davis when she was upset about Buster's food not shipping on time. You let her vent and took the time to explain the delay and what we'd do to compensate her. Your calm demeanor and sincerity really helped de-escalate the situation. This is the kind of approach to problems that keeps our customers coming back to us. Thank you for handling this so well."

Address Problems Early

When problems occur, many managers let them drag on or occur several times before addressing them. A great coach addresses problems the first time they happen. They know it's best to deal with an issue when it's a small one rather than waiting for it to grow into a bigger problem. For example, let's say Kelsey, who is normally on time, arrives 10 minutes late today. Many managers won't say anything to Kelsey because it's "just the first time." However, a good coach knows that saying nothing means you don't care, and that is not the message you want to send to your employees. Therefore, a coach might say, "Kelsey, I was worried because you're 10 minutes late and you're always on time. Is everything OK?" If something happened to Kelsey that morning, such as having an accident on the way to work, asking the question shows that her coach cares about her. If Kelsey hit the snooze button one too many times, she'll know that her coach cares about lateness and she'll be less likely to hit that snooze button again tomorrow.

One-on-one Coaching

Whether the communication is a problem-solving conversation or praise for

a job well done, coaches know these conversations should be handled one on one. Too many managers praise publicly and only provide negative feedback in private. I know this because when I ask employees what they'd think if their boss came to them and said, "I need to see you in my office," the first thing they always say is, "Uh, oh. I'm in trouble." Another poor tactic of managers is to give feedback to the entire team rather than giving it to the employee or employees who need it, such as saying, "As a reminder, we all need to do a better job of..." A good coach realizes this is not only an ineffective way to address performance with those who need the feedback, but it also punishes those employees who are doing things right. Coaches know that performance issues, both good and bad, should be addressed one on one with each employee. They know it's important to take the time to sit down with each employee, look them in the eye and let them know how they're doing.



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MANAGEMENT S strategies

YEAR OF THE REPTILE

Herp products can boost your store's reputation and profitability.

BY JOHN MACK



John Mack is the founder and CEO of Reptiles by Mack. He is also the vice-chair for PIJAC and is on the PIJAC Zoonosis Diseases Committee. His Ohio-based company is widely recognized as one of the largest reptile breeders and suppliers in the USA today. You have likely already taken stock of last year in the hopes of finding out what's working best for your store and what improvements can be made this year. With so many options out there, finding sure-fire "wins" for your store becomes a job in and of itself.

The popularity of reptiles and amphibians within the pet trade is simply on fire right now, with reptile shows seemingly held every single weekend. Here in Ohio, we have over 25 separate shows per year, while Texas holds upward of 40 shows! These shows are consistently packed with attendees, with reptile enthusiasts coming from all corners to get a glimpse of the latest morphs and species, and the gear to keep them happy and healthy.

Over the years, we've worked with a number of larger chains, some who had never carried reptiles in the past. As those stores expanded their stock to include reptiles, their food and their necessary care supplies, they've seen a huge area of gain for their individual stores across the board. In many of these cases, their largest areas of growth have come directly from the sale of reptiles and their subsidiary supplies.

It's in those subsidiary supplies that a store new to the reptile category can really begin making inroads into the subsector. One of the greatest advantages pet-specific stores have over big-box stores lies in the specialty of animal food: Many of these stores quite simply do not carry the sort of food, caging and other materials necessary to maintain a snake, frog or turtle.

In taking advantage of this gap in the market, carrying reptile supplies allows you to tap into a vast array of recurring sales. In the case of a reptile that eats crickets or mealworms, a combination of quality customer service and a suitable stock of food can ensure repeat customer visits upward of 50 times per year. This, compared to a cat or dog, whose food can be found in any nearby grocery store. If a pet owner comes into your store every other week for mealworms, that customer will be walking through your door 26 times each year!

The importance of these repeat visits becomes more magnified when we consider the number of pets owned by an average reptile owner. Our research shows that reptile owners are more likely than owners of any other variety of pet to have multiple pets within their household, whether of the same type or other types. Each time that reptile owner walks into your store to pick up a box of crickets or a pack of mealworms, they become increasingly likely to pick up a bag of cat litter, a jar of fish flakes or a new leash for their puppy. These additional sales would not be possible, if not for the ability to offer something that a bigbox store doesn't usually have.

If you're dipping your toe into the waters of the reptile trade, use simple food products—crickets, mealworms and specialty greens—as an in-road to accessing the reptile market. Alternatively, if you already have a freezer in your store, consider stocking pre-frozen mice or rats, suitable for snake owners. These types of food take little in the way of preparation and keeping, but provide avenues for the continual recurring sales that every store thrives on.

Once you've established a market for reptile owners in your store, consider adding a variety of caging products. Provide a section specifically for reptile enclosures, lighting, substrate and other necessary materials, preferably close to you reptile food station. Doing so begins to establish a one-stop shop for all your reptile-owning patrons. Customers will know exactly what part of the store they need to go to for their reptile wares, while a new customer will find reptile supplies as an easy-to-find area within your store's layout.

Of course, if you decide to move into the actual sale of reptiles, rather than just food and supplies, there are a number of great, easy-to-care-for animals available both for the novice customer and the newly carrying store. Consider the numerous varieties of lizards, geckos and easy-to-carefor colubrid snakes (including king and corn snakes). Each of these comes in a variety of colors and morphs, making them appealing to both new reptile owners and those looking for something new.

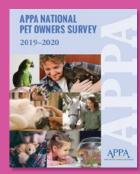
There's no better area for growth and profitability than in reptiles. They can't be just dismissed as a fad; as a pet, they're here to stay. Every indicator is showing reptiles as the hottest pet category; it's up to you to take advantage of it.

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WITHIN YOUR GRASP

Help customers understand collars, leashes and harnesses.

BY JAMIE POPPER



With a formal education in canine conditioning and strength training, Jamie Popper has been working within the pet training industry since 2011. She is a registered therapy dog evaluator and has collaborated with the Orlando Health therapy dog program on curriculum and program development. Since 2015, Jamie has dedicated herself full-time to Blue-9 Pet Products, where she is involved with the development and overall growth of the company. here is perhaps no greater annoyance to dog owners than a dog that pulls on the leash. Retailers educated in various no-pull solutions and fitting suggestions are better able to help their customers while minimizing returns and exchanges. There are dozens of no-pull solutions available on the market. Understanding how they work will allow retailers to make better suggestions for dog and handler teams.

Head halters look like a horse halter. These tools provide the most leverage over the dog; however, many dogs find them annoying or aversive. When considering this tool, be sure to do a slow introduction. Front attachment harnesses can be broken into two categories: restrictive and non-restrictive.

Restrictive harnesses have horizontal straps that cut across the shoulder. These harnesses often have martingale loops that tighten when the dogs pull. These harnesses work by blocking the dog's forward movement and shortening their stride. The martingale loop applies additional pressure to the dog when they pull as a correction.

Non-restrictive harnesses have a Y-shaped front and allow full freedom of movement in the forelimb. These harnesses curb pulling by gently guiding the dog around back toward the handler. The handler can then re-engage the dog and reward them for walking nicely. This option is best for long-term use.

Be sure to recommend a treat pouch and some high-value soft training treats. Training a dog to walk nicely on a loose leash takes patience and consistency. Unlike training a dog sit or down, where we are simply labeling a behavior the dog does naturally, training loose-leash walking is a foreign concept to most dogs. We have arbitrary criteria, such as walk at the same pace as me, turn when I turn, and don't go too far in front of me. No dog and owner will achieve their loose-leash walking goal without spending dedicated time training their dog their expectations for a walk. A helpful tip I share with my students is to manage their dog closely the first few walks with new equipment. If we teach the dog that with new equipment comes new expectations, the dog can pick up on the skill

much faster. If we simply allow the dog to continue with old habits while wearing the new equipment, the behavior will not change.

With all the above-mentioned tools, proper fit is critical. Ensuring a proper fit helps eliminate chafing, reduces the risk of the dog escaping the harness and limits chewing of the harness due to an uncomfortable fit.

If high-touch customer service is your thing, consider offering a fitting service for your customers. Discussing the best no-pull tool and fitting it to your canine customer allows you to build a strong relationship with your customer. Allowing customers to try out new equipment in the store will give them a good understanding of how it will work when walking their dog in distracting environments. Offering this can also decrease returns and exchanges and minimize disgruntled customers when their dog chews through the harness. Be sure to discuss with the customer that chewing happens in a blink of an eye, so it's important to remove harnesses after walks or when the pet isn't supervised.

If you do bring on this service, consider designating a small section of your store to be a fitting corner. Setting aside a dedicated space in a lower traffic part of your store can help minimize distractions while the pup is being fitted. Some dogs are shy with humans and aren't fond of the handling it takes when fitting a harness. Consider having a small, elevated table to place the dog on to boost their confidence and provide a defined space of the dog to stay on for the fitting process. High-value single ingredient treats like beef liver is sure to win over their hearts. Reinforce the dog for calm behaviors during the fitting process.

This service can be by appointment only, allowing you to staff the day appropriately while also creating a demand for this exclusive service. Most harness fittings can be accomplished in 20 minutes or less.

Be sure to have other training products nearby to make recommendations for your customers. Specialty leashes, treat pouches, training treats and even dog-training clickers can be easy upsell items for a motivated customer.

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CATCHING THEIR EYE

Today's shoppers are impulsive and desire visually-pleasing items.

BY JERRY SMITH



The wave of online shopping continues to grow. It seems today that you can buy everything online and have it delivered right to your door overnight. The rate at which consumers are using the internet for purchases is increasing every day. Some studies forecast that almost 80 percent of internet users in the United States will make at least one online purchase this year.

What this trend is making clear is not that in-store retail is a thing of the past. That would be impossible to say, as a 2019 survey from Valassis reported that 96 percent of U.S. internet users will shop in a store at some point this year. The leading reason why people in that survey said they shop in store was the desire to see the item in person.

Think about it. When you shop online, you don't just read about the product, check the price and then click purchase. You open all the pictures the online retailer has of the product to see what you're purchasing from every angle. That's our desire as shoppers to absorb what we're about to buy with our eyes to make sure it looks nice. But online shopping doesn't allow a consumer to physically interact with a product-to not only see it through a screen but to see what it looks like in front of them, what it feels like, maybe even what it smells like.

The online shopping push doesn't mean retail owners should abandon their brick-and-mortar stores, and it doesn't mean that companies who sell products in these brick-and-mortar stores should pull everything out and go online only. Instead, it means the items you sell in these stores need to be displayed in a way that allows today's shopper to easily find your item—like they can search online and then be drawn to that item by not just what it is, but what it looks like.

Making your product stand out is especially important when we consider the next most important characteristic of shoppers today—they are impulsive. More than 90 percent of shoppers make at least occasional purchases they didn't intend to buy initially. In a given year, these impulse buys add up to almost \$5,400 a year on average. This trait of the American shopper, if you will, does not just go for when people are strolling around aimlessly, enjoying window-shopping, impulse buying occurs even on planned shopping trips.

What this means is that even when shoppers enter a store with the intent of only buying one specific item, their inner impulse buyer can be activated at any time to make an additional purchase and add money to their total at the checkout line. In fact, the average shopper will make an average of three unplanned purchases in four out of every 10 visits they make to a store.

Shoppers' impulsive behavior, and how they interact with products online, makes visual marketing and instore product displays ever the more important in today's retail world. The impulsive-behavior side of the shopper craves a product that catches their eye that stands out from the rest in the store, that's easy to find and that's pretty. The online side of the shopper yearns to see a product displayed in its best light, with easy-to-understand explanations of what the product is.

The best way to do that is to display your product in a visually-pleasing way so the customer can not only find your item among the slew of other products offered in a store but will be drawn to it by the sheer attractiveness of the display. If your product is simply sitting on a shelf next to 10 other similar products, shoppers may not even find it unless they are looking specifically for it. But if your product is displayed front-and-center in a way that catches their eye, draws them in and engages them, then you'll have the chance to convert that impulse shopper into a hopefully regular purchaser of your product.PA

Jerry Smith works with clients looking to increase sales by having their product stand out at retail level. Possessing a unique perspective as to what works and what won't, he offers a business relationship with small, medium and large companies on hundreds of displays a year across various industries.





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MANAGEMENT S strategies

TIPS ON PROMOTIONS

These ideas can set your business apart from the rest.

BY ROBBI HESS



Robbi Hess is the content specialist at PrideBites. She was a finalist in the solopreneur category for the Women In The Pet Industry Network Woman Of The Year Award and has been involved in the pet industry for close to a decade. She writes full-time and jumps to meet the demands of her two mini poodles, three cats and three lizards. Pet parents are constantly on the lookout for unique items for their fur babies. Consumers want items that highlight their love for their pet and items taht are different from every other dog they see in the dog park. As a pet retailer or a pet brand, you can set yourself apart from the competition, garner the dollars that pet parents are looking to spend and spread the word about your business by creating custom products.

When you consider that Americans spend close to \$70 billion annually on their pets and there is no sign of a slowdown, you want to get in on that action with your store's promotion. To get your share of the pet parent spending pie, your products need to be extraordinary, differentiate you from the competition and make the pet parent feel good about buying your product.

Here are ways in which you, your store and/or your brand can catch the attention and garner the attention and build a community of pet-loving consumers.

Be Unique

Create products that are different from those you have seen or been given by other pet-centric businesses. Set your business apart from other pet marketers in your city or state. Create designs exclusive to your store or your brand, and attract local pet parents and even tourists who may be seeking a vacation souvenir for their pets.

If your store or business is located in a vacation spot or a historical area such as Philadelphia, look at creating unique toys, collars and leashes with a city-based theme. A Philadelphia design could include: Philly cheesesteaks, pretzels and the Liberty Bell.

Stay Current

Create products that are trend-driven and exclusive to your brand, as well as those that will become customer favorites and highlight your company's unique attention to detail, customer desires and reliable products. Use the products you invest in as promotional items for:

- · A store opening
- · General brand marketing
- · Incentive program

Look at your design with the customer in mind and invest in branded pet products that leave a lasting impression!

Make the Investment

Promotional and branded items provide the highest impact to audiences and are the most cost-effective form of advertising. In fact, 41 percent of promotional products are kept on average of one to five years, and 22 percent are kept between six and 10 years.

Promotional items have staying power. Your brand or retail location benefits from creating an incentive program using unique products! For example, you can run a promotion where your customer buys four bags of dog food and on the fifth they receive a free toy with your company or brand logo on it. This isn't a throw-away item, but a valuable promotional tool the pet parent will give to his dog.

Highlight Your Uniqueness

Invest in items and work with a design partner that focuses on quality over quantity. Look for a business design partner that offers a low, cost-efficient point of entry; if you have to buy hundreds or thousands of units for a one-time event, what will you do with the leftovers?

Low minimum quantities are a great opportunity for you to test new products and refresh product lines more frequently. Create customized products for a new store opening or a new brand product launch and easily have them updated for future events.

Branded products should be part of your overall sales and marketing strategy. Look for a product development partner that will guide you through the ideation and design of your product and manufacture and ship to you. A brand partner that supplies you with your own account executive who is also a pet expert will help assure your new branded item is on point.

Bottom Line

Every dollar invested in branded marketing needs to count. PrideBites is your partner in creating amazing pet products your customers crave. We are the only turnkey solution for designing and creating one-of-a-kind pet products to engage your dog-loving customers. Since being featured on "Shark Tank," PrideBites has produced award-winning products such as plush dog toys, collars, leashes, water bowls and poop bags. **PA**



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What the Link Plus can do



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Near Base Station Bluetooth safe zone around radius where the basestation is plugged in.



Away Away from a safe zone — not necessarily lost! GPS track just by being on the Location screen. Note: Lost Mode leaves GPS on if you leave the screen.

Visit LinkMyPet.com to Order

MANAGEMENT S strategies

SALES FUNDAMENTALS

Skills and processes are key to a successful selling environment.

BY DUSTIN SIGGINS



In his acclaimed book, "Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion," Robert Cialdini profiled Vince the waiter. Vince is officially a taker of orders and a deliverer of food, but Cialdini explained that he is actually a sly salesman who earns trust through calculated menu recommendations.

Whether you see Vince as creating satisfied customers or pulling the wool over their eyes, his sales strategy is clearly built on trust. However, he also knew his menu, its prices and how to tailor his approach to each table's customers. Vince's success is driven by his mastering both skill with people and the process of sales.

"To be a good salesperson, you need to have successfully worked as a waiter," said 1 Million Cups Fairfax co-organizer Tony Barnett, who "grew up in the restaurant business" and has "done every role." Barnett said waiting tables is the perfect sales training environment because "the skills to be effective and the processes are the same."

"Waiters learn to promote, build relationships and manage the objections, stress and complaints from customers while maintaining composure and process for other customers," he explained. They also "learn about hunger when they fail and rewards when successful."

Here are the five skills Barnett calls essential to successful table-waiting and sales:

"A waiter has to understand what they are serving," from food preparation to how food tastes to changing menus.

"A waiter needs to be organized and understand the back-end systems so they can place and track orders, and keep their flow of delivery accurate."

"Third, they need to be fearless," always ready "to approach a customer with a genuine smile and friendly greeting."

"Fourth, communicate clearly and listen to the customer; nothing brings more frustration than getting orders wrong."

"And, finally, follow-up." Barnett said waiters need to learn the balance of "when to check on their customer" without being "a nuisance," and "how to ask for the payment at the right time."

Many small business owners struggle to put this package together. They know what service or product they are putting into the market, but they lack effective back-end processes... and so a customer's shipment arrives late or damaged. They are fearless but don't listen, and so rapport is lost in misreading what a customer wants.

This is why Barnett separated "skills" from "process." It is skill that often gets a small-business owner in the door, but it is process which turns opportunity into contracts and checks. A successful sales process starts with the basics, said Barnett: "Identify and acknowledge the customer." It is the distracted person who "starts the relationship off on the wrong foot" and is stuck trying to fix a poor first impression.

The next step in success is what Cialdini identified in Vince: the ability to "qualify and advise" a customer. Barnett said waiters must ask "direct questions about what [customers] are interested in and [make] sound recommendations." This step "is critical to the success of the short-term relationship."

The final step to ensure a positive initial relationship is to "close effectively" and make the customer "feel they've made the right decision," said Barnett. This step is critical—how many times do we sign a contract and then immediately feel trepidation and emotional uncertainty?

Delivery is next, whether it's food on the table in minutes or a multi-year contract with many large orders. "The salesperson and the waiter must both track their orders and assure delivery in a reasonable time regardless of processing," said Barnett. "No one likes to wait too long for their food."

The final part of the sales process is handling payment challenges. "You would be surprised how often this step goes wrong," said Barnett. "Complaints about accuracy, price and declined credit are a daily situation, and how they are managed dictates if the customer returns."

From the first greeting to the last payment negotiation, waiters are the front-line soldiers for short-term restaurant success (Did the customer pay today?) and longterm success (Is the customer coming back, and will their Yelp review criticize or praise?). Salespeople are often reviled as tricksters and manipulators who put money ahead of ethics and honest dealings, but the best sales are created by mastering one's craft and creating genuine relationships with customers.

Dustin Siggins is the founder and CEO of the publicity firm Proven Media Solutions. Previously a journalist published more than 3000 times, he has also served as director of communications for the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC).

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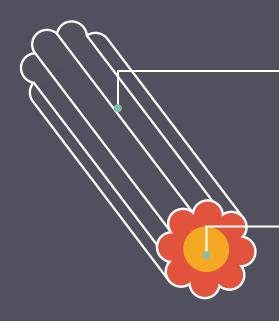


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THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

Manufacturers are digging deeper to address pet oral health.

BY MEGAN JANDER

ebruary is Pet Dental Month, and many brands are bringing forth awareness to pet oral health. Some are looking deeper into the issue, whether that's enhancing awareness methods or recognizing that the biggest concerns lie beneath the surface.

Treats

C&E Animal Health was established 30 years ago with a focus on large animals. Its BriteNamel was conceived by Dr. Casey Haught, DMD, about six years ago. As a product that regulates the bacteria in the mouth that causes bad breath and other oral health issues, it was released a year ago to dive deeper into canine oral health.

"BriteNamel is setting out to help address some of those issues naturally, go beyond just masking the bad breath or just basic debridement," said Dr. Haught.



WITH





Merrick[®] Fresh Kisses[™] is the only all-natural pet dental treat with a dual-action brush that cleans teeth and freshens breath with mint and botanical oils at the same time.

MERRICKPETCARE.COM

COVER STORY



According to Dr. Haught, it comes down to controlling the bacterial level in pets' mouth, both at and below the gum line. This year, C&E Animal Health is doing commercials, educational training videos and expanding its marketing to address this issue.

Merrick Fresh Kisses provides a double benefit. The innovative treat has a double-brush design to clean teeth by removing plaque and tartar during the chewing action, with all-natural ingredients such as coconut oil and mint oil that freshen breath.

"Pet parents are beginning to understand the benefits of dental hygiene with regard to maintaining perfect teeth and healthy gums and reducing bacteria in the mouth that could cause further health complications," said Jilliann Smith, director of communications for Merrick Pet Care. "We consider it less of a trend and more of a pet health necessity." That's why this year, Merrick is continuing to focus on raising awareness for Fresh Kisses and educating pet parents. Since veterinarians nationwide offer discounts for dental-related services to make them more affordable as well as draw attention to the benefits of a healthy mouth, Merrick encourages retailers to offer free dental treats to customers, discounts on products or even host in-store educational events to highlight the necessity of a good pet dental routine.

"Be sure to take photographs and share them on social media channels because a picture of a healthy and happy, smiling dog is still worth 1,000 words!" Smith added.

Toothpaste and Toothbrushes

Techmira Corp. was established in January 2018 in Basel, Switzerland, securing North America and Latin America distribution rights for Mira-Pet product lines. Mira-Pet applies patented ultrasound technology to clean not only the surface of teeth but also inside the gum pockets. It's vibration-free and offers silent cleaning.

According to Stephen Spector, president of Techmira Corp., the biggest challenge is changing the behavior of pet owners, and that's where retailers can take advantage of oral care in their grooming services.

"Retailers are constantly under pressure from rising operating expenses and shrinking gross profit margins. Create attention first for pet oral care amongst humans. [Then] creating a new highly profitable category/channel of profits [will be] critical to success," he said.

Petsmile was founded by Dr. Irwin Smigel under the belief that it "should do no harm." There are no parabens, animal by-products, BPA or silica that damages enamel in its toothpaste. It's also allergy-free.



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COVER STORY



"Petsmile wants consumers to be educated on the choices they make for their pets," said Petsmile VP Ephraim Diament. "More pet owners are caring about their pets' oral health, and they are asking amazing questions. I feel we are still very much at the beginning of the education stage."

Petsmile designed its Calprox for-

mula so that it can be used without a toothbrush. Petsmile also gives away a free e-book called "Petsmile's Guide to Dental Care," which is full of tips and tricks for taking care of pet oral health. And after the success of its patented 45° toothbrush last year, Petsmile is introducing something just as revolutionary for pets later this year.



Dental Assortment

Pure and Natural Pet believes there are different solutions for every age pet. So it has three oral cleaning kits—for puppy, adult and senior dogs—as well as Plaque and Tartar Fighting Dental Gel and Dental Spray in Clean Mint flavor.

"More brands are providing natural options and going beyond traditional toothpaste and dental chews. There are many more healthy options now to choose from," said Julie Creed, VP of sales and marketing at Pure and Natural Pet.

Swedencare USA's PlaqueOff brand is an easy-to-use, daily application to foods that helps prevent plaque and tartar in dogs and cats. It also helps eliminate bad breath. To provide consumers with more variety, PlaqueOff is also available in select chews.

"Consumers are looking for effective ease of use and natural products. Our products are designed to offer both benefits," said Scott Reinhardt, VP sales and marketing at Swedencare USA.

Swedencare USA is going to continue expanding its PlaqueOff core brand with its PlaqueOff System Dental Care Bones and PlaqueOff System Crunchy Dental Bites. It encourages retailers and consumers to read the label on oral care applications and to choose products that help prevent expensive and painful alternatives to extensive dental vet visits.

"Ask the question, 'How do you take care of your dog or cat's teeth today?" [For] most consumers this is an afterthought or only important when oral problems arise," Reinhardt explained. "Understand the importance of dental health relative to not only the teeth and gums, but overall animal health implications of not attending to oral hygiene."

To Oxyfresh, dental care is as the top of the list when creating products that matter to pets. It believes in partnering with pet parents and offering solutions with ingredients they can trust and formulas that work.

"Our goal with our education is not to pitch products, it is to help provide

Bad Breath Happens... Always Be Ready.

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 Dr. Judy Devine, DVM



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COVER STORY



the pet parents with valuable insight and awareness," said Melissa Gulbranson, VP of marketing at Oxyfresh.

Gulbranson's biggest concern is the use of human ingredients and incorporating them into pet products. That's why Oxyfresh offers non-toxic solutions that pet parents can feel good about. And this year, Oxyfresh launched a new pet dental kit and dental pet point-ofpurchase display to make it easy for retailers to display dental care products.

"Fun dental displays in the front of the store are key to help bring awareness," Gulbranson said. "Educate team members on asking customers great questions on what they really want out of a dental care product."



YOU MAKE THE MOMENTS. WE MAKE THEM FRESH.[™] **(ROPICLEAN**.com • 1(800) 542-7387 • MADE IN U.S.A. Cardinal Pet Care has devoted much of its R&D resources to addressing pet dental health. Its two products introduced last year were developed to provide pet parents with easy-to-administer dental hygiene alternatives to toothbrushing.

"The demand for such alternative products is being driven largely by pet parents themselves, many of whom are aware of the importance of oral hygiene, but still aren't brushing their pet's teeth regularly," said Tony de Vos, president of Cardinal Pet Care.

Cardinal Pet Care encourages retailers to inform consumers that giving their dog home dental care regularly is one of the biggest things they can do to make a positive difference in their pet's overall health. To help address this, Cardinal Pet Care is offering customized educational webinars for retailers' sales staff on demand. It also advises retailers to try methods that encourage a conversation about dental health.

TropiClean knows that dental health can compromise a pet's overall health. That's why it has created a complete no-brushing portfolio that makes caring for pets' teeth easier.

"Pet parents want products that are safe, effective and liked by their pets. We understand that, like people, all pets are different, and we need to create products that fit the lifestyle of both pets and their people," explained James Brandly, associate trade manager at TropiClean.

TropiClean is introducing two Fresh Breath by TropiClean products to its portfolio that will help remove plaque and tartar and freshen pet's breath.

"According to APPA 2017-2018, 58 percent of pet parents become aware of new pet products by browsing in a store. We find that placing multiple in-store placements like counter displays and end-cap displays can help drive awareness of the dental category," Brandly advised. "When pet parents come in seeking a safe and effective dental care solution, you'll be able to direct them to products that you're knowledgeable about and trust." PA



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www.earthkind.com



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www.kennelmasterfoods.com



K9 Explorer

K9 Explorer, with its bold colors and rugged hardware, is one of Coastal Pets' most popular product lines. In 2020, the brand has added a front-connect harness option and rope leash in our "brights" color pallet and a bold orchid in our traditional color pallet of K9 Explorer collars, leashes and harnesses.

www.coastalpet.com





Air-Vac OnGuard System

The OnGuard purification system from Air-Vac not only treats the air for odors, viruses and bacteria, it also removes the dust, dirt and dander that are a nuisance in any animal facility. The OnGuard system is a larger commercial-grade air scrubber utilizing all industrial components, including the filters. With NASA-developed technology, Air-Vac systems use a power fan that "pushes" and circulates a redundant mixture of ions that sanitize the ambient air and surfaces to halt the spread of dangerous pathogens.

www.airvaconguard.com



TLCBD

Love Your Fur Baby is a naturally-flavored, CBD-rich product that aids in anxiety, arthritis and numerous skin conditions. More than just CBD, pets get maximum benefits of this potent, human-grade, terpene-rich full-spectrum extract. TLCBD products are subject to the same rigorous lab testing as human products, ensuring animals live their best lives.

www.tionnewellness.com



Paludarium 3-in-1 Lamp

Zoo Med's Paludarium 3-in-1 Lamp creates a balanced lighting experience in your habitat that helps both plants and animals flourish. Unlike UVB bulbs, which are coated specially to emit UVA and UVB, this lamp has three unique coatings on each of its fluorescent tubes so it provides different beneficial wavelengths. The Paludarium 3-in-1 Lamp is especially good for planted paludariums with amphibians as it doesn't add any heat, helps amphibian vision (with UVA) and keeps plants happy with proper wavelengths to aid their growth.

www.zoomed.com



Pet Botanics Organic Training Reward Treats

Pet Botanics treats are now available in a Certified Organic variety. Made with real, delicious organic beef or organic chicken as their No. 1 ingredient for an irresistible taste and aroma that will motivate dogs during training. The treats also contain a healthy feast of organic fruits, vegetables and grains, including organic pea flour, barley, oats, cranberries, blueberries and apple cider vinegar. An Oregon Tilth seal, a leading USDA National Organic Program accredited certifier, assures consumers that the treats are made with certified organic chicken or organic beef. All meat and poultry is also Animal Welfare Certified, with only ABF (antibiotic-free) beef and ABF cage-free chicken used.

www.petbotanics.com





Smoochies Scratcher

The Smoochies Scratcher silicone pet brush has an adjustable strap and is flexible to fit on your hand or strap to a piece of furniture. Made of soft rubber, this toy is washable. And not only is it great as a toy, but it also is practical for proper hygiene of your pet. Comes in pink, blue and yellow.

www.petsmoochies.com

Spruce CBD

Spruce CBD's 750mg CBD Oil tincture for dogs is made to boost pet health and wellness. The product is the same as Spruce's human lab grade, full-spectrum CBD oil but bottled specific to dogs with coconut oil that's easier to digest. Owners can drop two or three drops per 20 pounds of dog weight on their dog's food one or two times per day. Spruce CBD's Dog Friendly 750mg CBD Oil is made with full spectrum organic CBD oil and organic coconut MCT oil.



www.takespruce.com





WAUDOG Retractable Leash

This new leash from COLLAR Company is lightweight, ergonomic and stitched with a reflective thread. WAUDOG retractable leashes come in two lengths (10 feet and 16 feet) with a two-year manufacturer's warranty. Styles include NASA, Tartan and Summer.

www.collarglobal.com



ScratchLadder

Inspired by Scratch Play Meow's CEO's cat, Milo, the ScratchLadder was designed from wood. Now ScratchLadder is a four-rung system designed with interchangeable panels such as pile carpet, sisal carpet, velvet and more to provide any cat with variations of scratching surfaces they can enjoy. It's handmade from high-guality materials and a game changer for all owners that want to protect their furniture while also allowing cats to embrace their natural behavior to scratch.

www.scratchplaymeow.com







Drinkwell Butterfly Pet Fountain

The brand-new fountain, featuring a whimsical design including an optional butterfly topper, offers multiple free-falling water streams, a quiet operation and a raised drinking platform. The Drinkwell Butterfly Fountain, which offers a 50-ounce water capacity, is equipped with a replaceable carbon filter that removes bad tastes and odors, while a replaceable foam filter catches debris before it can reach the pump. Additionally, the fountain features an easy-to-clean, compact design that is manufactured from safe, BPA-free plastic. Perfect for cats and small dogs.

www.petsafe.com



SodaPup Corn on the **Cob Nylon Toy**

The chicken-flavored and scented SodaPup Nylon Corn on the Cob toy features flavor pockets on the back that can hold peanut butter, cheese spread and other food items with similar consistency. The flavor pocket design makes this a multipurpose toy that can be used to help with problem chewing, crate training and separation anxiety.

www.sodapup.com





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www.awesomepawsome.com

Naturalistic Flora

Zoo Med debuts seven new décor items to their Naturalistic Flora line. Give habitats the look of a flourishing tropical oasis without the hassle



oasis without the hassie of caring for each plant's unique needs. Pets can use their hunter-gatherer instincts to collect water droplets from the water-resistant leaves, or they can hide in the voluminous foliage to sleep. Don't worry about body-builder pets knocking these plants out of place, as they have a sturdy root stake to anchor them into the substrate. For pets, the fun may stop there, but these plants are so real looking, you might find yourself putting them in pots at your desk and around your home.

www.zoomed.com

Hush Puppies Cotton Pet Mat

Footwear brand Hush Puppies, known for its iconic basset hound and love of four-legged friends, has a line of pet mats coming this spring that includes five cotton versions. The skid-resistant cotton mats can be used for pets to lay on, under pet bowls or as an entry mat to the home.

www.hushpuppies.com





www.zoomed.com

Safari by Coastal Grooming Products

Packaging for Safari grooming products is getting a fresh, professional look and feel. Color-coding at the top of packaging reinforces clear and quick consumer decisions. Standardized packaging footprints allow for clean and organized retail walls. PVC has given way to more environmentally friendly PET when plastic is necessary.

www.coastalpet.com

CBD (Tr) EATS for Dogs

Dogs get an extra health boost with these delicious human-grade treats made with CBD oil, a non-psychoactive, hempbased supplement that has been reported to help with



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www.wet-noses.com



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www.fromthefieldpet.com





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Paludarium Double Door

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market, allowing it to hold much more water and ultimately a wider variety of aquatic life.

www.zoomed.com

Hush Puppies Jute Pet Mat

Footwear brand Hush Puppies, known for its iconic basset hound and love of four-legged friends, has a line of pet mats coming this spring that includes two jute versions. The mats can be used for pets to lay on, under pet bowls or as an entry mat to the home

www.hushpuppies.com



SodaPup Peanut Nylon Toy

The SodaPup Nylon Peanut toy is peanut flavored and scented. It features flavor pockets on both sides that can hold peanut butter, cheese spread and other food items with similar consistency. Not only is it a durable chew toy for power chewers, it is also a nylon treat

dispenser that can be used to help with problem chewing, crate training and separation anxiety.







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Churu Dog Treats

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www.inabausa.com

HandsOn Gloves

Say hello to a new generation of gloves for professional and athome grooming. With improved flexibility, the new gloves are even easier to groom, bathe and de-shed with. The scrubbing nodules on the fingers and palms of the new generation will match the color of the glove itself —black, purple or green—differing from the previous collection's two-toned design. Whether used wet or dry, HandsOn Gloves are perfect for gently cleaning matted or muddy fur.

www.handsongloves.com

Crosscheck Harness

The Crosscheck Harness is a training harness that reduces a dog's pulling via a girth-checking system. It functions similarly to a martingale but instead checks around the dog's girth rather than its neck. This alternative limited-slip system allows the handler to give a correctional tug as the dog begins to pull, teaching the dog to walk beside them in an effective and humane way while doubling as a solution for escape artists.

store.ezydog.com



PetGuard

The manufacturer of natural, super-premium pet food and products since 1979 has a fresh, new look! The updated packaging designs offer stronger brand presence and visuals than the previous look, with a contemporary style intended to appeal to millennials, Gen Xers and baby boomers alike. Starring real pets to help closely relate to the former packaging, pet parents will appreciate that PetGuard now has a cohesive look across all of their products without changing the wholesome goodness on the inside that's been nourishing pets for 40 years.

www.petguard.com





Pet Botanics 2-In-1 Training Reward & Meal Mixer

Available in flavorful chicken and Canadian bacon varieties, this new 2-in-1 treat from Pet Botanics can be used as either a training reward or a meal mixer to enhance the taste of a dog's regular food. Complying with AAFCO standards for complete and balanced nutrition for adult canine maintenance, it can be



mixed with dry or canned dog food to entice finicky pets to eat. Not only will dogs love its taste, but it contains added vitamins and minerals, as well as Omegas 3 and 6 for shiny, healthy coats and skin.

www.petbotanics.com



STOCKROOM ____ new products

Safari by Coastal Slicker

Safari by Coastal helps pet owners' grooming at home feel like one of the pros with purposefully designed, easyto-use, high-quality tools. This new style of slicker has elongated, coated tips that reach through long hair to remove shed hair and prevent tangles or mats with regular use.



www.coastalpet.com

SodaPup Hot Dog Nylon Tov

The SodaPup Hot Dog nylon toy is an innovative chew toy that features two colors of nylon: an orange bun and a red hot dog. SodaPup uses a proprietary FDA-compliant nylon material in its toys to ensure safety for dogs. By injecting nylon over nylon instead of TPR over nylon, SodaPup has created a fun, two-color toy that is more durable than TPE over-molded nylon products.

www.sodapup.com

Churu Bites

Churu Bites are soft pillow-shaped natural chicken treats seasoned with natural flavors, green tea extract and vitamin E. Creamy Churu filling inside, soft baked chicken paste outside—two different textures in one bite. No grains, preservatives or artificial colors. Each package has three individual packs to maintain maximum freshness. Made with 100 percent

pure and natural chicken meat and wild tuna.

www.inabausa.com

Canine Camo Collection

The Canine Camo Collection was created by Up Country as a way to thank all members of the military for their service. Product features the camo pattern and name of the five U.S. military branches: Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines and Navy. Twenty percent of sales from each item sold is donated



Bites

to Dogs on Deployment, a national, nonprofit providing a central network for military members to find volunteers willing to board their pets during deployment or other service commitments.

www.upcountryinc.com







Q: At the retail level, it seems that cat products are less prevalent than dog products. Can you tell me about the opportunity for retailers in the cat segment? Are there certain products or brands that retailers should be focused on in order to win in cat?

A: While it's true that dry dog food leads in overall sales across the pet category, cats should not be ignored. One great example is the opportunity in cat litter. Currently more than 33 million U.S. households shop for cat litter, with around 50 percent of those shoppers are loyal to Purina Tidy Cats. Litter is actually one of the fastest growing segments within the entire pet care category, growing over 5% in 2018 and now nearly 10% in the last quarter alone (9.8%). In fact, we expect litter to be a three Billion dollar business by the end of 2019. So the opportunity in cat litter is ripe for both manufacturers and retailers alike.



Q: Tell me about the latest trends in cat litter, and how Purina is either leading or reacting to those trends.

In recent years we've seen a trend towards the premiumization of cat litter. Cat owners have come to expect basic product performance, and they are constantly on the hunt for added benefits that their litter can deliver. We find that pet owners want a product that's not only 100 percent safe and effective for their pet to use, but also one that performs in keeping their house tidy and odor and dust-free. And they're willing to pay for these added benefits. Our data shows that litter buyers are spending 11% more dollars per trip year over year.

When it comes to innovation within the litter category we have to acknowledge that consumers see litter as a chore, and since Tidy Cats is the leading litter brand, it's our job to provide a product that delivers on solving the most common litter problems cat owners encounter. We start with identifying the consumer tension, i.e. weight, odor or dust, and we design our products to combat these issues. Take for example Tidy Cats Lightweight Free & Clean, which we released in January 2018. With no added dyes or fragrances, Free & Clean is Tidy's very first unscented litter, and also half the weight of the traditional clumping litter. After one year on the market, it's now the #1 branded unscented cat litter in the category. We're also innovating our entire line of Tidy Cats LightWeight litters to have a dust free pour. Combined with guaranteed ammonia odor protection and even tighter clumping action, this litter delivers against all of the top consumer tensions and eliminates the dust, which is increasingly a consumer concern.

Q: Do you have any suggestions on ways retailers can merchandise their selection of litter in ways that will let consumers know about the new products in the marketplace?

There are a number of merchandising and promotional strategies retailers can leverage to win in litter and ultimately lift their overall pet category sales.

- First, make it simple for your shoppers to locate the litter section in your store. Cat litter should anchor one side of your cat department and be adjacent to dry cat food, with navigational signage to help shoppers find their chosen product.
- Also ensure you carry the right assortment, with a focus on premium products that deliver on form and function. Highlight products that offer multiple benefits and solve the consumer tension that comes with a category like litter.
- Next, ensure that you promote cat litter as part of your ecommerce solutions. Litter is heavy, and therefore inconvenient to shop. Retailers should promote litter as part of their click & collect or delivery offerings. Capturing the ecommerce sale also will spur repeat purchase.
- Lastly, build a promotion strategy around cat litter. Consider cross-promoting litter and dry cat food at regular intervals, such as monthly. Also consider adding cat litter to your spring cleaning ads, since it goes hand and hand with the cleaning category.





OREVER



Dr. Elsey's Cat Litter

Dr. Elsey's offers a variety of cat litter options, including Cat Attract, for felines that will not use the litter box: Senior, which helps prevent kidney failure and urinary tract infection in older cats; Kitten Attract, a training litter for young felines; and R&R Respiratory Relief, which helps control respiratory disease.

www.drelseys.com

Stella & Chewy Cat Kibble

Stella & Chewy's cat offerings include its raw-coated and raw-blend kibble. Raw Coated Kibble is rich in Omegas to benefit the skin and coat, while the only fruit added is cranberry that helps promote a healthy urinary tract. It is available in cage-free chicken and wild-caught salmon recipes. Raw Blend Kibble is a cage-free recipe, and it includes probiotics for optimal digestion. Both new lines are available in grain-free and single-animal protein diets.

www.stellaandchewys.com

Redbarn Cat Food

Made in the USA, Redbarn Pet Products' canned stews and pâtés for cats feature high-guality ingredients in a variety of flavors, including chicken, salmon and tuna. Our natural canned cat food contains absolutely no artificial colors, flavors or preservatives, so you can be confident you're feeding your feline the very best.

www.redbarninc.com





Kitty Babble Ball

Pet Qwerks has a new generation of the popular Kitty Babble Ball. It makes over 20 squeaks, peeps, meows and interactive sounds. It's catnip-infused and rechargeable. It starts making sounds when touched and turns off automatically. The Babble Ball is a great exercise toy that can relieve boredom.

www.petgwerks.com

Arty Cat Scratcher

The versatile two-in-one Arty Cat Scratcher is a stylish retreat featuring multiple surfaces and angles to handle every cat's needs. Its curved design separates into two pieces and can be used together or apart to provide more than one scratching outlet in customers' homes. Designed for the fiercest scratchers, it's made with FDA-certified corrugated recycled paper, offering extra durability and preventing excessive fiber shedding.

www.petplay.com



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www.inabausa.com

FELISCRATCH

FELISCRATCH is clinically proven to stop and prevent both vertical and horizontal destructive scratching in the home by redirecting cats to scratch in the right places, such as their scratching post instead of furniture. It is a naturally derived, drug-free solution.

www.savethecouches.com





Hauspanther Cat Toy Collection

The Atomic Flyers and other Hauspanther cat toys are as satisfying for cats as they are for people. Each toy encourages a different kind of play behavior from stalking and pouncing to chasing and tossing, keeping cats active and entertained. The abstract shapes, unique textures and sophisticated modern colors make the toys look like modern art on your living room floor. Who says cat toys can't be beautiful?

www.primetimepetz.com



Finicky cats agree: Vitakraft treats please! PurrSticks are made with over 70 percent real meat and individually wrapped for freshness. Meaty Morsels semi-soft treats are small-batch made with vital nutrients. Lick 'n' Lap makes treat time fun with a creamy, low-calorie snack served right from the tube. Souprise Snack tasty broth with real chunks of meat keeps cats satisfied and hydrated.

www.vitakraft.com



PureBites Ocean Medley

Go ahead, turn the bag around and look at our ingredients. PureBites Ocean Medley is made with only three ingredients; 100 percent pure and natural human-grade sockeye salmon, wild tuna and shrimp. Cats love the taste of PureBites because our treats are freeze dried raw to lock in the aroma, texture and freshness they crave.

www.purebites.com





JEFF BAKER FOUNDER, CANINE CAVIAR

What kind of research went into the creation of Canine Caviar in the mid-'90s?

A I have a background in animal science, nutrition and pharmacology. While working as a stem cell researcher for a pharmaceutical company in Germany, I was researching and analyzing the effects of a flea control product. I noticed the chemical reactions between food and the venom in the insect bites in my own Great Dane. That led me to more extensive research in animal nutrition, how wolves or wild dogs would eat and how pH affects our pets.

Canine Caviar continues to be a science-based diet as I continue to work with a dedicated team of researchers, scientists, veterinarians and nutritionists all over the world. Together we seek new advancements and latest breakthroughs in pet health.

What does the saying "Closest to Nature" mean to Canine Caviar?

Canine Caviar is created with carefully selected and minimally processed ingredients, limited to what is necessary for optimal health and free of ingredients used as fillers. Minimal processing leaves more nutrients in the kibble and gives Canine Caviar the highest digestibility. Since wolves' diets in nature are single protein, Canine Caviar formulas are also single protein. Since wolves eat an alkaline diet with pH of 7.1-7.4 in nature, Canine Caviar is also alkaline 7.1-7.4. Pet parents can offer their pups a complete and balanced diet with the health benefits seen in nature or a raw diet.

What are the primary benefits of proper pH levels for a dog?

The pH level is one of the most important balancing systems of the body. An alkaline diet helps more oxygen move into the cells that allow the DNA's self-recovery mechanism to function more efficiently and effectively. It reduces the risk of many health issues like kidney and liver problems, diabetes, reduces itching, scratching and hot spots, settles digestive upsets, reduces anaerobic activity and cellular degeneration (aging). We all want our beloved pets to live a long, healthy and happy life, and it begins with Canine Caviar and the right pH balance.

How would you describe the sourcing of Canine Caviar's proteins?

A Canine Caviar utilizes wild-caught or free-range protein sources that are free of added hormones and antibiotics. Great care is taken to ensure all proteins are sustainably sourced and ethically raised.

Who was Moguls the Great Dane, and what was his impact to Canine Caviar?

Moguls was the best friend of mine when I was working as a research scientist. The bond between us was the driving force that led to the creation of Canine Caviar. Moguls had some health issues and allergies, specifically to insect bites, which resulted in several visits to the emergency room. During my research, I discovered the chemical reaction between the insect venom and food was leading to allergic reactions in Moguls. This prompted me and my fellow scientists to research and formulate a special diet for Moguls that consisted of all-natural holistic pH balanced ingredients to maintain an alkaline pH. An alkaline pH of 7.1-7.4 mimics and supports the pH of all of the organs and tissues in the body. While being fed this special diet, Moguls stopped having allergic reactions, maintained a healthy pH of 7.1-7.4 and lived a long, healthy life to the age of 17.

After the pharmaceutical company sold, I was encouraged by family and friends to start my own pet food company to help other pets. Continuing to be true to the roots of Canine Caviar since 1996, the alkaline diets have made a difference in millions of animals' lives. Canine Caviar is a science-based manufacturer and one of the few remaining family-owned and operated companies in the industry.

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Pet Age Names 2020 Women of Influence Award Winners

Pet Age's Women of Influence (WOI) Award program recognizes the accomplishments and successes of women working in the pet industry. The sixth annual WOI awards will honor 25 ambitious, hardworking women who were selected from nearly 100 nominations.

The winners are:

- Robin Bennett The Dog Gurus
- Donna Birnbaum Penn-Plax
- Judy Breton World Pet Association (WPA)
- Collette Bunton Whistle Lab
- Susan Calles Ethical Products
- Lucy Calamari Caprez Natural Cravings
- Carrie Cissell Walmart
- Kelly Costello Puppy Cake
- Peta Cutts Mars Petcare
- Johnna Deverauex Fetch RI
- Kat Donatello Austin and Kat
- Sherry Huber Treat Planet
- Angela Hughes Mars Petcare
- Wenchi Lin New Age Pet



- Christy Love Diggin' Your Dog/Super Snouts
- Dr. Ruth MacPete MacPete Veterinary Services
- Dr. Molly McAllister Banfield Pet Hospital
- Sissy McGill Solid Gold Pet
- Jill Nazimek Katie's Pet Products
- Kris Parrottino Healthy Dog Chews
- Anne Rotberg American Pet Products Association (APPA)
- Patti Salladay Northwest Naturals
- Elizabeth Stevens WholesalePet.com
- Annette Uda PetAirapy
- Rita Zarate Zoo Med

This year's winners hold leadership positions throughout the sector with titles that include veterinarian, senior buyer, sales di-



rector and CEO. No matter their position, these women have made a notable impact on the field in which they work. In addition to being game changers and trailblazers who make tremendous contributions to the pet care community, they are also inspiring a new generation to join the industry.

Pet Age is proud to celebrate the 2020 class of WOI recipients in the March issue with a special feature that will include their full profiles. The issue will also reveal the recipient of Pet Age's Women of Influence Lifetime Achievement Award. Past honorees have been Sue Goldstein of Earth Animal and Laura "Peach" Reid, chairman of the board of directors for the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC).

Leadership Changes at WPA

The World Pet Association (WPA) recently announced key changes to its leadership team as it looks to forge greater ties within the pet community. Celebrating its 70th anniversary, the organization seeks to grow its industry-leading event business while seeking to foster greater innovation with new media endeavors planned throughout the year. Industry veteran Vic Mason named interim president, effective immediately, will lead these new initiatives.

"Our foundation in the pet industry is primed for launching new ventures across the consumer, B2B and pet community, and I am proud to lead this organization through these new endeavors," said Mason.

He will be joined by Chris Clevers, a 44-year industry veteran, as chairman of the board. Outgoing president Jacinthe Moreau has resigned to pursue new opportunities.

Mason has a 40-year tenure in the pet industry. He served as CEO and co-founder of Replenish Pet. Previously, he was director of business development and key accounts at Veterinary Service Inc. (VSI), a large West Coast distributor servicing the animal health industry. Mason has been a WPA board member since 2010 most recently serving as chairman.



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Nulo Partners with Kane Veterinary Supplies



Nulo Pet Food is excited to announce its new partnership with Kane Veterinary Supplies Ltd. to distribute Nulo's products throughout Canada.

In January, Kane started distribution of Nulo's super-premium recipes, which are all high in animal-based protein, use low-glycemic carb sources, contain no artificial ingredients and have a patented probiotic that supports digestive and immune health. Nulo's core principle—that nutrition is just as important for our pets as the love we show them has fueled its success as one of the most innovative consumer brands overall, as named recently by Forbes Magazine.

Pet parents in Canada will now be able to find Nulo's popular FreeStyle and FrontRunner recipes at independent retailers nationwide, as a result of the company's new alliance with Kane.

"We are thrilled to be partnering with Kane," said Michael Landa, Nulo founder and CEO. "They are the perfect match to help grow Nulo's portfolio across the pet specialty channel here in Canada. Kane has extremely passionate, dedicated and knowledgeable staff and provides a high level of customer service. They go above and beyond and are well respected within the pet specialty, agricultural and veterinary industries in Canada. We can't wait to begin our journey together, to bring healthy pet food options to pet parents throughout Canada."

The excitement around this partnership is mutual. "We at Kane are proud to partner with Nulo," said John Sousa, national manager of the pet division. "They bolster our offering of high-quality pet products. We have great admiration for how conscientious Nulo has been in recognizing the needs of pet parents and pets."



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Health Extension Acquires Ancestry Pet Food

Health Extension Pet Care has announced the acquisition of Ancestry Pet Food.

Founded in 2001, Ancestry adheres to the same core values as Health Extension, with quality ingredients and a commitment to support the independent pet retailer. The combination of the two companies creates exciting growth opportunities, according to Brad Gruber, president of Health Extension.

"Ancestry Pet Food is a well-established brand that falls directly in line with our own 'pets first' philosophy and commitment to quality," said Gruber. "We can leverage Health Extension's wealth of experience in product development, brand building and worldwide distribution to build the Ancestry brand within the independent pet channel."

Health Extension is a family-owned, third generation company that crafts natural food and treats that pet parents can feel great about feeding their best friend. The manufacturer is a member of the Pet Industry Sustainability Coalition and works toward sustainable business solutions.

Ancestry Pet Food (which will continue to carry the Ancestry name) will be offered exclusively to independent retailers. As part of the acquisition, Health Extension also acquired Sammy Snacks, Ancestry's popular line of human-grade treats.

Ancestry's current president, Jeff Lysak, will join Health Extension as a director to oversee the brand's expansion.



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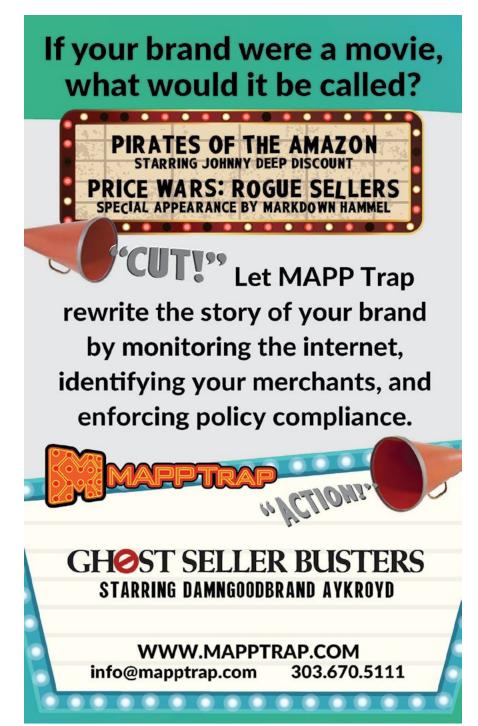
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The Dog Pillow Company Partners with New Rep Companies

The Dog Pillow Company is pleased to announce its partnership with three new rep companies: Debbie Dean Promotions (Northwest), The Pet Team (California, Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii) and Pet Brand Builder (Northeast). Teaming up with these manufacturing representatives will help to further distribute The Dog Pillow product to the best wholesale and pet retailers around the country.

Launched in early 2019, The Dog





Pillow Company has been successfully helping dogs to cozy up like never before. This one-of-a-kind innovative pet pillow was specifically designed with a pet's comfort and security in mind. Not only does The Dog Pillow enhance a pet's sleep space, but its unique dogshaped design makes a great calming companion for canines who suffer with anxiety. Pet owners are also finding that it's an easy familiarity item to pack during travel or boarding as well.

"Since we launched, it's been amazing to see how The Dog Pillow Company has won the hearts of both dogs and owners alike," says Paula Savarese, president and founder of The Dog Pillow Company. "We are very excited to team up with these three reputable and well-established rep companies that will help take our pillows to the next level of success!"

The Dog Pillow Company was created by founders Paula Savarese and Dawn Ward after they realized that their dogs loved to rest and cuddle with anything that wrapped around their chin and raised their heads just enough to be comfortable. The company has designed every pillow to do just that.

There are seven pillow styles to choose from, with two new designs launching at Global Pet Expo in February (Booth 1222). All of the pillows are made from premium polyester/double core fiber fill with a soft, plushy exterior. They are anti-allergenic and machine washable.



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AAVMC Names Recipient of 2019 Veterinary Teaching Award

The Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) recently named Dr. Jerome Masty, an associate professor in the Department of Veterinary Biosciences at the Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, as the recipient of the 2019

AAVMC Distinguished Veterinary Teacher Award, presented by Zoetis.

"Every day, educators and researchers at our member institutions make outstanding contributions to academic veterinary medicine that inspire others, contribute to medical breakthroughs and work to educate upcoming generations of

veterinarians," said AAVMC chief executive officer Dr. Andrew T. Maccabe. "We are pleased to honor these extraordinary individuals through our awards program and look forward to recognizing their achievements during our 2020 annual conference."

The award, which is considered one of the most prestigious teaching awards in international academic veterinary medicine, recognizes excellence in professional veterinary medical education and is presented to an educator whose sustained record of teaching excellence and ability, dedication, character and leadership has contributed significantly to the advancement of the profession.

Dr. Masty is the recipient of nu-

merous teaching awards at Ohio State, where he teaches first-year gross anatomy, second-year neuroanatomy of the nervous system and three second-year elective classes in surgical anatomy, feline anatomy and neuroanatomy. His research interests include the development of programmed self-instruction in veteri-

nary anatomy and the role of brain-gut peptides in autonomic innervation of the gastrointestinal tract. He earned a M.S. and Ph.D. in veterinary anatomy and a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), all from Purdue University. His award will be presented during the AAVMC's Annual Conference and Iverson Bell Symposium, being held March 6-8 at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Pet Partners Commits \$100K to Support Therapy Animal Research

The Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI) announced that Pet Partners will donate \$100,000 to fund scientific research on the health, education and wellness outcomes of therapy animals, for both the people and the animals involved. This is the second year in a row that Pet Partners has contributed to HABRI's research grant program, raising the total amount awarded to \$200,000.

To be eligible for HABRI-Pet Partners funding, investigators must incorporate registered Pet Partners volunteer therapy animal teams into their proposed research. As part of the organization's registration requirements, all Pet Partners therapy animal teams must meet high standards in the areas of patient and public safety and animal well-being. "We are



research initiative foundation

grateful for our dynamic partnership with Pet Partners and for their sustained commitment to scientific research," said Steven Feldman, HABRI executive director. "Last year's contribution funded two important research projects that we expect will produce meaningful results, and with this generous donation, we will work together to make an even bigger impact in 2020."



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INDUSTRY BRIEFS good deeds

NutriSource Funds Hospital's First-Ever Facility Dog

At M Health Fairview University of Minnesota Masonic Children's Hospital in Minneapolis, young patients met the hospital's newest staff member, who will help them take medicine, relax during anxious moments, encourage them to walk after surgery and offer support and affection during medical procedures.

Rocket, presented by NutriSource, is a golden retriever and the first and only full-time facility dog to join the team at M Health Fairview University of Minnesota Masonic Children's Hospital.

Rocket will help support children and families during hospitalizations and clinic visits. Rocket was formally introduced to the hospital during a short program on December 5. The staff position was made possible by community support and a generous gift of \$250,000 from NutriSource Pet Foods.

Rocket went through years of advanced, specialized training allowing him to be present during medical procedures—something other therapy dogs visiting the hospital are not able to do.

"There is nothing more important than



the health and well-being of our children. The bond between pets and kids is extra special," said KLN Family Brands president Charlie Nelson. "In addition to our mission to provide nutritious and healthy food for our four-legged family members, we are proud to support the great work at M Health Fairview University of Minnesota Masonic Children's Hospital by funding the NutriSource Facility Dog Program."

"We want to extend a huge thank you to KLN Family Brands for their generosity and support to help launch the NutriSource Facility Dog Program at M Health Fairview University of Minnesota Masonic Children's Hospital," said Anna Dressel, child life coordinator — Facility Dog Program at the hospital. "Rocket has only been at the hospital for a total of seven days, yet he has already had a huge impact on patients, families and staff."

Based in Perham, Minnesota, Nutri-Source produces dry dog and cat food kibble along with semi-moist pet treats. The family-owned and operated company was founded in 1964 by Darrell "Tuffy" Nelson and his son, current CEO Kenny Nelson. The company recently completed a \$35 million grinding, mixing and storage bin expansion as well as an \$18 million investment in a fourth extruder adding 50,000 additional annual tons of capacity. By the end of 2020, a new state-of-the-art \$65 million dog-andcat-treat manufacturing facility will be up and running in Delano, Minnesota, as their manufacturing footprint continues to grow.

Cardinal Donates Grooming Products to Paw Works



A clean, well-groomed pet is much more likely to be adopted than an unkempt, scruffy one. To help homeless pets put their "best paw" forward and find forever families, Cardinal Pet Care recently donated nearly 2,500 grooming products from its professional-quality Gold Medal brand to Paw Works, a Ventura County, California-based rescue group committed to saving abandoned shelter animals.

Since its founding in 2014 by Christina Morgan and Chad Atkins, Paw Works has successfully rescued and rehabilitated over 6,000 homeless dogs and cats, including many special-needs animals that are older or have disabilities. The group is credited with helping Ventura County become the first major county in Southern California to achieve "No Kill" status. Paw Works' Honorary Celebrity Ambassadors include actress Kaley Cuoco and "Today" co-anchor Natalie Morales.

"When Cardinal Pet Care heard of the amazing work Paw Works has been doing to save the lives of abandoned pets, we immediately wanted to join their effort," said Tony de Vos, president of Cardinal Pet Care. "As a manufacturer of pet grooming products that has been in business for more than 70 years, we know what a huge difference grooming can make in enhancing a pet's appeal and increasing its chances of adoption. It gives us great pleasure to know that our products will be used by Paw Works for this purpose."

The Gold Medal products donated to Paw Works address a variety of grooming needs, and include Medicated Shampoo, Breath Spray, Tear Stain Remover and Antiseptic Spray. All of the products were manufactured at Cardinal Pet Care's family-owned Southern California facility using solar power.



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TRENDING TOPICS

A LITTER OF THEIR OWN

Litter products that do more than take care of business resonate with consumers.

hereas dog owners normally must let their pups out or be walked to do their business, cat owners are often considered lucky for having litter box-trained pets. The truth of the matter is that cat litter is a very complex product category.

Litter has come a long way since it was introduced to consumers in the late 1940s, evolving over the years to the many forms that are on the market today. And while maintaining a litter box will always be undesirable, innovations have even turned cleaning that aspect of pet care into something more bearable. Gina Zaro, marketing director at Dr. Elsey's Cat products, recently shared her insight on the importance of the cat litter sector and what it means to the industry, consumers and even homeless cats.

What is a solution-based litter product, and when did Dr. Elsey's realize the need for it to be available to the public?

At Dr. Elsey's, enhancing the lives of cats to the degree in which they enrich ours is the ultimate pursuit. We put heart, soul and science into our products—it's all about pets, not profit. Every problem calls for a solution. Whether it's bringing a fussy feline back to the box, keeping paws clean and free of dust or fueling the ancestral dietary needs of our beloved pets, Dr. Elsey's is dedicated to creating products that solve the complex needs of pet owners.

In 1985, Dr. Elsey, in search of a better in-home elimination solution, started packing litter in gallon milk containers and selling them to his clients at The All Cat Clinic. Soon after, Dr. Elsey officially starting selling Classic, the first all-natural, superior clumping cat litter on the market.

In 1999, Dr. Elsey starting testing Cat



Attract (the feline behavior modification and training cat litter) at his All Cat Clinic and at the Animal Rescue and Adoption Society in Denver, Colorado. Testing was also done at The Cat Care Society of Colorado and many other independent feline clinics in the United States. The launch of Cat Attract and Kitten Attract soon followed.

Dr. Elsey's donates litter to shelters nationwide to keep cats in loving homes. Dr. Elsey's is currently hosting adoption events nationwide at cat cafés for their Power of Purrsuasion campaign. The Power of Purrsuasion aims to increase adoption rates by raising awareness of the benefits of owning a cat to those who might need "purrsuading" to adopt. The campaign kicked off at Meow Parlour in New York City. During the course of the event, 35 cats were adopted with their new owners receiving complimentary Adoption Starter Kits full of item from Dr. Elsey's line of products as well as campaign partners. Additionally, adopters also received financial support with entrance and adoption fees.

Dr. Elsey's is launching an online iteration of the Power of Purrsuasion campaign in partnership with PetFusion to support three cat cafés around the country through social media promotion,



product donations and by entering them to win a \$10,000 prize. The goal is to provide one lucky cat café with the ability to upgrade its facility and improve its space to attract more potential adopters, while spreading the word of the winner's contribution to the health of cats. With 3.4 million cats entering shelters each year, Dr. Elsey's is on a mission to change this statistic through the interactive Power of Purrsuasion campaign. Dr. Elsey's believes that donating litter is a generous act, but creating behavior that leads to adoption is a powerful movement.

What kind of research and development goes into creating a single variety of Dr. Elsey's litter?

Dr. Elsey is the driving force and innovator of Dr. Elsey's Cat Products. Dr. Elsey's Cat Products is the only feline-focused and veterinarian-owned, solutions-based cat-product company. Dr. Elsey has been a feline veterinarian for over 40 years, and he saw firsthand how heartbreaking it can be for a cat not to use the litter box. Inappropriate elimination is the No. 1 behavioral reason cats are abused, abandoned and surrendered to shelters. Our litter address specific issues like inappropriate elimination and nonuse of the litter box with Cat Attract and Kitten Attract or upper respiratory issues with Respiratory Relief litter.

We always speak for the cat at Dr. Elsey's cat products by putting ourselves in the cats' paws. Ultra litter has the right texture a cat loves with no scent and low dust with superior odor control due to its hard clump.

What is the most important trend currently in the litter sector?

The humanization trend continues to be important. Cat parents are more educated than ever, and they want specialty products like they are able to purchase

for themselves. Every problem calls for a solution, whether it's bringing a fussy feline back to the box with Cat Attract or Kitten Attract or keeping paws clean and free of dust with Clean Tracks. Dr Elsey's is dedicated to creating products that solve the complex needs of pet owners.

What makes Dr. Elsey's Senior / Post Surgery Litter so unique among litter products?

Senior litter addresses the medical

and urinary tract problems that this specific group of cats' experiences, with an amorphous silica gel litter infused with hydrolyzed herbs. This litter will help prevent kidney failure and urinary infections that can cause nonuse of the litter box.

Senior litter has a small particle size that cats prefer. It absorbs urine and odor on contact and traps it inside the crystals to keep a cat's genital area clean to help prevent urinary tract infections. Its small particle size and dust fines also coat and dehydrate cat feces to reduce odor.

How is Dr. Elsey's supporting the environment with its packaging materials?

Dr. Elsey's believes that a successful business environment requires investment back into the people and planet that allow us to thrive. Dr. Elsey's solution-based products include Ultra, Classic, Cat Attract, Kitten Attract, Clean Tracks, Touch of Outdoors, Respiratory Relief, Senior and Long Hair litters and clean protein kibble and canned food for cats. We always put pets first and strive to provide solutions that are safe and environmentally friendly. Dr. Elsey's is on a mission to provide recyclable packaging materials and opportunities for our customers to minimize their waste footprint.





DIETARY NEEDS

s we enter 2020, the issue of dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) continues to be a dark cloud that hangs over the dog food sector. And while U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) investigators have been unable to find a causal relationship between DCM and dog foods rich in legumes or potatoes, the DCM impact not likely to go away soon.

As scientists search for answers, dog food manufacturers are doing their own research on recipes and how to give consumers what they want in a diet that delivers proper nutrition to their dogs. And that's something that crosses all pet categories; balanced nutrition.

Whether the pets in question are corgis, collies, goldfish, gobies, hedgehogs, mice, cockatiels, finches, bearded dragons or turtles, diet is of optimal importance to their well-being, and not all animals are equal when it comes to nutrition. Thanks to transparency and the clean label trend, today's consumers want to know specifics on the sourcing of ingredients. They're looking for such terms as "human-grade" and "organic," and they're gravitating toward foods that are free of artificial additives and preservatives.

While there is a lot of variety to diets for dogs and cats, those for reptiles, small animals, birds and aquatic livestock are more specified based on the specific species of animal. When it comes to reptiles, brands are offering specially formulated diets, including commercially raised insects that are fed a high quality diet—known as "gut-loaded" before being fed to the companion pet to ensure its dietary needs are being met.

Among small animals, rabbits and chinchillas are fibrevores while ferrets are obligatory carnivores, so consumers obviously cannot expect them all to flourish on the same diet. And the lifestyle of companion birds are far different than that of their wild brethren, thus their diets should not be identical.

And the diets among aquatic livestock might be the most complex of all, as there are thousands of species being kept as pets. Not only does a fish require certain nutritional needs to be met for it to remain healthy, its diet will determine whether it will be able to reproduce.

Stella & Chewy's Freeze-Dried Dinners



All Stella & Chewy's recipes are formulated to mirror the best nutrition for pets. Dogs deserve to thrive on pure, simple and minimally processed raw food that's delivered in its most natural state. That's why Stella & Chewy's starts with responsibly sourced animal proteins (cage-free poultry, grassfed beef and wild-caught fish), with no added hormones or antibiotics, and add wholesome fruits and vegetables. These freeze-dried dinners are complete and balanced, and they are 90 to 95 percent meat, organs and bones. They are made with no grains, are gluten-free and include probiotics to support digestion.

www.stellaandchewys.com



Wellness CORE RawRev

Wellness CORE Raw-Rev recipes give pet parents a convenient

way to add raw protein to their dog's diet. Available in four recipes: Original Deboned Turkey, Chicken Meal & Turkey Meal; Ocean Whitefish, Herring Meal & Salmon Meal; Small Breed Original Deboned Turkey, Turkey Meal & Chicken Meal; and Puppy Deboned Chicken, Chicken Meal & Turkey Meal.

www.wellnesspetfood.com



Versele-Laga Complete Small Animal Food

Containing all nutritional elements, this complete, high-tech all-in-one extruded small animal food has an industry-leading palatability and prevents selective eating. Based on advanced scientific insights, the composition is tailored to pets to keep them in top form. Available for rabbits, rats, mice, hamsters, gerbils, chinchillas, degus, ferrets and more.

www.versele-laga.com







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ZIWI Peak all-natural recipes use a slow and gentle air-drying method to eliminate pathogenic bacteria which preserving the nutrition of the raw ingredients. ZIWI Peak's proteins are 100 percent free-range, grass-fed and grass-finished, ensuring the company's recipes are free from added growth hormones, antibiotics and GMOs.

www.ziwipets.com





Purina Oyster Strong System

Purina's Organic layer feed for chickens now includes the exclusive Oyster Strong System, meaning all the calcium hens need to stay healthy and lay strong-shelled eggs is included in the bag no supplements needed. Purina Organic layer feed is available in crumbles or pellets.

www.purina.com

Tiki Cat Raw

Tiki Cat Raw offers cats complete and balanced nutrition with the soft texture cats prefer. The single-protein formulas come in hermetically sealed food-safe tubs and are available in ground chicken or turkey plus liver options.

www.tikipets.com



Hill's Science Diet Youthful Vitality



The Hill's Science Diet Youthful Vitality formula contains ingredients that provide key nutrients important for aging cats (7 years old and older) to support brain function, energy and vitality, a healthy digestive system, luxurious fur and coat and healthy kidneys and bladder. It is available in chicken & rice recipe for dry food and tasty canned varieties in chicken, tuna and salmon.

www.hillspet.com

Sunseed SunSations Natural Parakeet Formula

Sunseed SunSations Parakeet is a natural diet with a variety of grains, seeds, pellets and specialty ingredients. Containing over 10 percent veggies, fruits and nuts, it's the "Sunthing Special" that birds need and pet parents expect. What people won't find in SunSations are artificial colors and preservatives—just natural, delicious nutrition and foraging fun.

www.vitakraftsunseed.com





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Farmina N&D Rawcan

Farmina Pet Food N&D Rawcan is a onestep, gently steamed GMO-free wet food incorporating the highest quality European ingredients. Every formula is complete and precisely filled into BPA-free cans using a proprietary six-stage fill system so every can is nutritionally identical. All recipes are free of guar, xanthan, cassia, carrageenan and all industrial gums, and they have no water added for processing.

www.farmina.com/us



Grandma Mae's Country Naturals

Grandma Mae's Country Naturals has released five new pâtés and three new slices in gravy canned cat formulas. Grain-free, carrageenan-free and non-GMO, these unique cans meet consumers' demand for fish-free foods for their feline friends. All of the new formulas are supplemented with DL-methionine to promote and maintain urinary tract health.

www.grandmamaes.com

ZuPreem PastaBlend

ZuPreem's line of daily pet bird food called PastaBlend has fun pasta shapes and natural colors. It provides the essential vitamins and minerals birds need every day for good health



and is available in three pellet sizes for medium birds, parrots and conures and large companion birds.

www.zupreem.com

FEGNION

www.fegnion.com

FEGNION's biologically appropriate recipes consist of high-quality, fit-for-human consumption, single-species meat protein, raw bones and organs, sprinkled with minerals, vitamins and other trace nutrients. The products are free of fruits, vegetables, grains, fish, artificial colors, flavors, hormones, antibiotics and preservatives. The single-species meat recipes come frozen and are available in chicken, turkey and rabbit.





At Dr. Elsey's, enhancing the lives of cats is the ultimate pursuit. Every problem calls for a solution – whether it's bringing a fussy feline back to the box, keeping paws clean and free of dust, or fueling the ancestral dietary needs of our beloved cats – it's all about pets, not profit.

DrElseys.com



BIG NEWSCOMING

Visit us at Global Pet Expo Booth 2579





GO! SOLUTIONS

Petcurean's GO! SOLUTIONS wet food collection includes 14 premium recipes for dogs and cats. Packaged in sustainable, recyclable and re-closeable Tetra Pak cartons, these pocket-sized packs of solutions-based nutrition provide functional wet food recipes for unique dietary needs, including picky eating, dandruff or dull coat and food sensitivities. Petcurean is currently the only company to offer the distinct textures of shredded, minced and pate, plus stews.

www.petcurean.com





Timberline Reptile Lunch Box

Timberline's Lunch Box contains 24-plus fresh, maintenance-free crickets boxed up and ready to go on the retail shelf. The packaging of each Lunch Box is clear plastic, so retailers and customers can see what's inside without having to worry about escapees. Each Lunch Box comes clearly marked with a "born on" date, allowing for seven days of shelf life, and customers get approximately seven days of home use, often more.

www.timberlinefresh.com



RAWZ Meal Free Dry Cat Food

RAWZ Meal Free Dry Cat Food is a minimally processed, rendered-free, dry food for cats. The first seven ingredients are real protein. It contains no added rendered chicken fat, and there is no added water. The diet offers a high-protein, low-carb, moderate-fat food for cats. The food is produced in small batches, and 100 percent of profits are donated to charity.

www.rawznaturalpetfood.com



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www.tetra-fish.com



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acids, vitamins and minerals.

www.drbslongevity.com





Chelsea Rivera Co-Founder Honest Paws **Q:** What is the difference between Full-Spectrum CBD, CBD Isolate, and Broad-Spectrum CBD?

A: There are a few different options when it comes to choosing CBD for your pet.

CBD Isolate is pure CBD with no other cannabinoids, terpenes, or flavonoids. Full-Spectrum CBD is CBD that also contains all the other benefit-rich cannabinoids, including trace amounts of THC.

Broad-Spectrum is very similar to Full-Spectrum CBD except there is one additional step. This step consists of removing any traceable amount of THC. However, with this additional step, you run the risk of removing many of the benefit-rich terpenes and cannabinoids that Full-Spectrum contains.

While you may think that pure CBD Isolate would be the best option for your pet, it turns out that studies prove Full-Spectrum CBD to be preferable. This is due to something known as the "Entourage Effect". The cannabinoids work in conjunction with each other to provide your pet with the most benefits.

You can think of it like a salad. Kale, on its own, offers a lot of benefits. But, when you add cucumbers, tomatoes, and carrots, your salad is now jam-packed with nutritional value.

Grandma Lucy's Moxie

Ideal for pets of all life stages, Grand-

ma Lucy's Moxie is a freeze-dried dog and cat food that acts as a scoop-andserve meal or a mixer. Made with human-quality meat and packed with protein, Moxie promotes overall pet health,



including a shinier coat, healthier skin, higher energy and reduced allergies. Available in beef, chicken and turkey varieties.

www.grandmalucys.com

Honest Paws offers premium CBD products for pets. Our line is organic, non-GMO, soy-free, and lab-tested for quality.

www.honestpaws.com



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Selective Naturals Grain-Free Food

Supreme has gone grain-free with Selective Naturals rabbit and guinea pig food. Ninety-three percent of pet owners think there is a benefit to feeding grain-free, believing it is less likely to cause health problems. Selective Naturals Grain-Free is rich in Timothy hay and garden vegetables, with no added sugars, corn or wheat.

www.supremepetfoods.com







FUSION Premium Flakes

This line of flakes was developed as a natural premium diet with limited ingredients suitable for both fresh and saltwater aquarium fish. Five times thicker than standard flake foods, FUSION flakes come in four different flavors and do not contain as many fillers as its competitors.

www.elivepet.com

Hikari Sinking Goldfish Excel

Goldfish keepers are always on the



lookout for feeding options for their fishy friends, and Sinking Goldfish Excel is an option for improved growth, excellent coloration and lots of natural nutrients that goldfish crave. The sinking pellet helps avoid air gulping, which can reduce the chances

of swim bladder issues common with many goldfish species.

www.hikariusa.com

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www.mannapro.com



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www.omegasea.net







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New Senior Advanced product line addresses the specific needs of senior dogs, or when the most support is needed.

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- Gum & Breath helps promote healthy teeth & gums
- Incontinence supports bladder function and control
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NaturVet Global Pet Expo

Dr. Elsey's cleanprotein

The primary ingredients in Dr. Elsey's cleanprotein are among the highest biological value proteins available, and the result is an appetite that is satisfied longer. Dr. Elsey's cleanprotein is 100 percent grain-free and gluten-free, with no fillers or preservatives added. Over 90 percent of the protein is animal-based, and high protein optimizes body condition for all cats at all stages of the life cycle.

www.preciouscat.com



SquarePet Dog Food

SquarePet Nutrition promotes highmeat, low-carb recipes without peas, legumes, lentils or potatoes. If you like the nutrition delivered by raw diets, you'll love SquarePet HMLC formulas. The brand makes the first meat-free, true vegetarian formula to utilize cage-free, whole eggs as the No.1 ingredient. SquarePet offers veterinary-formulated solutions for sensitive skin and digestive support.

www.squarepet.com



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Fromm Four-Star Nutritionals is a diverse menu of more than two dozen grain-free and grain-inclusive entrees that can be fed exclusively or in rotation with any other Fromm recipe. Each artisan recipe is meticulously prepared using the highest quality ingredients at our family-owned-and-operated manufacturing facilities.

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Dr. Bob & Susan Goldstein - pioneers in the field of holistic and integrative veterinary medicine - have always been driven to enhance the lives of dogs and cats. They believe that every day should be filled with wholesome goodness and a whole lot of fun. They believe each day should end drifting into a peaceful, pain-free sleep.

By combining science with nature, they've crafted Earth Animal into a company whose mission is to create an exceptional family of products that reflects our passion for ensuring animals - from puppyhood to the golden years live their healthiest, happiest lives every single day they grace the Earth.



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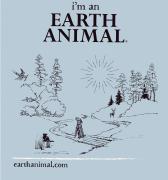
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CBD

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not recognize cannabidiol (CBD) as a safe food additive, therefore not allowing it as an ingredient for ingestion in pet food. However, over the years, the pet supplements market has benefited from a variety of ingredients from the human health market, including glucosamine and omega fatty acids. CBD is the newest cross-over member, and it has impacted the pet supplements sector more than any other in the past couple of years. Although regulatory issues are still unsettled, according to a recent Packaged Facts report, "it is likely only a matter of time before supplement marketers are able to begin a full court press into CBD territory, integrating CBD into products targeting all kinds of health conditions." It's important to note that late last year the FDA issued warning letters to several companies based on what the FDA considered to be illegal disease treatment claims on their products—in all of those letters but one, the identified products were labeled as CBD. One warning letter included a product labeled as hemp.

Paw CBD Delivers the Products Customers Demand

From fresh diets to organic treats, alternative health and wellness products are quickly becoming the fastest-growing segment of the pet retail scene. As pet owners demand alternative options for the care and comfort of their four-legged family members, hemp-derived CBD has flooded the market.

For retailers, it's no longer enough to offer a simple line of CBD oil tinctures. Customers want options, from flavors and strengths to delivery methods and issue-specific formulas. They want a good variety of choices to spoil their pampered pooch or favorite feline, and they want to know that what they're giving their pets is veterinarian-formulated with safe, effective, human-grade ingredients without chemicals or added preservatives.

Are you ready for this new level of customer demand? Do you work with a CBD oil brand that can deliver the quality and variety of products that pet owners are looking for?

Paw CBD Provides Variety

Paw CBD was created to provide safe, versatile, and convenient CBD oil products for the support and overall care of pets. We truly believe Paw CBD is the very best CBD for dogs and cats on the market. Why? Because all of our products are veterinarian formulated from non-GMO hemp manufactured to deliver all the potential benefits of CBD without any of the associated risks of THC.

Paw CBD goes beyond basic tinctures. Our canine oils come in both peanut butter and natural flavors, in five strength options based on a dog's weight. Feline tinctures are available in catnip and natural flavors for cats under and over 12 lbs. Our newest tincture is a blueberry-flavored calming formula that combines CBD with soothing ingredients like chamomile, melatonin, and valerian root. And because we put pets first, our tincture droppers are always made of plastic for safety!

While oil tinctures are still one of the most popular options, crunchy treats and soft chews are quickly gaining favor. They offer an easy, portable way to provide pets with all the properties of CBD.

For cats, Paw CBD has a chicken catnip soft chew

and a salmon-flavored kidney support formula. Dog soft

chews are available in a chicken bacon flavor, as well as a turkey-flavored calming formula and a bacon-flavored hip + joint formula.

Our crunchy baked treats come in three dog-favorite flavors: baked cheese, sweet potato, and peanut butter, all in three varying strengths.

Another pet-approved favorite is our creamy, rich Paw CBD Peanut Butter, also available in three strengths.

Paw CBD Balm is a rich ointment made with nurturing ingredients to soothe "For retailers, it's no longer enough to offer a simple line of CBD oil tinctures. Customers want options, from flavors and strengths to delivery methods and issue-specific formulas."

paw pads, noses, elbows, and hot spots.

And one of our unique product features is that all of our packaging is color-coded by pet size to make it easier for consumers to know what strength they need for their pet.

If you are looking for a great CBD lineup that is veterinarian-formulated and offers the variety, flavors, and delivery options your customers demand, look no further than Paw CBD.

Special Offer

Right now, Paw CBD is offering our new Premium Treat Shipper that includes 39 bags of our popular baked CBD Treats in all three flavors and strengths. For a limited time, you can get the shipper – a retail value of \$1295 – with a BONUS \$195 in product!

This is a limited time offer, so reach out to our pet product specialists at 803.381.7983 or wholesale@ cbdMD.com to reserve your premium shipper today!





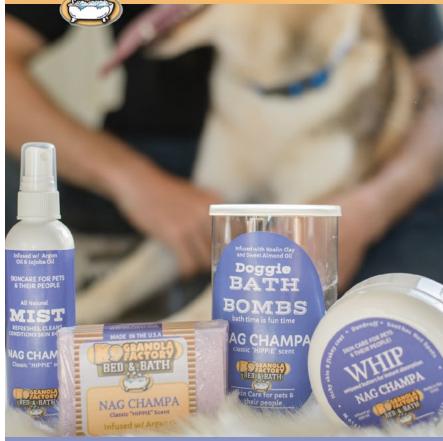
LUV Chewable Pet Tablets

Santeer uses cutting-edge science and natural ingredients to formulate its LUV Chewable Pet Tablets. The fast-acting tablets come in three variants for small, medium or large dogs. Santeer's products allow your pet to absorb more CBD, since the LUV Chewable Pet Tablets are five to 10 times more soluble than soft gels and tinctures.

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www.cbddoghealth.com





Charlotte's Web Hemp Extract for Dogs

Charlotte's Web hemp extract products with CBD were designed with your dog's best life in mind. Want to help keep your dog calm and relaxed? Promote healthy hips and joints? Support their skin health? This newly expanded pet line includes botanical blends, chicken-flavored oils and topical balm to support your pup—mind, body and soul.

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True Leaf Supplements

True Leaf has launched new product innovations, including advanced formulas of its popular hemp-based chews and oil supplements. The proprietary formulations combine therapeutic hemp with active ingredients such as Omega-3, DHA and EPA from seafood

and plants to help maintain and optimize pets' health during their active

and healthy years. Calming Support, Hip + Joint Support and Everyday Omega are available in small, medium and large format chews (from puppies up to large dog breeds), and as a hemp seed oil that can be used as a healthy and tasty kibble topper.

www.trueleafpet.com



Tater's Sweet Potato Tots



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> veterinary treatments. www.treatibles.com



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www.wildebeest.com

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www.petmate.com

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www.huxleyandkent.com

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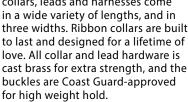
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www.handicappedpets.com





www.upcountryinc.com











WHAT'S IN STORE

OPEN the nautical dog



A GROWING VOYAGE

Small beginnings led to a successful pet-filled experience.

Pet Age recently spoke with Amanda Wilbourne, owner of The Nautical Dog in Williamsburg, Virginia, to learn more about her journey in the pet retail market.

What can you tell us about the origin of The Nautical Dog?

I originally opened Nautical Dog in October 2006 at the age of 20. I had my first dog as an adult (a Corgi named Roxy), and I was constantly looking for fun new things for her and became kind of obsessed. My whole world revolved around her, and one day I woke up and said, "I want to open a dog boutique," and so I did it-with the support of family, friends and my fiancé (now my husband). I knew nothing about running a pet store-in fact, my first location was very small, and I sold an array of dog merchandise and gifts. I learned everything on my own since I didn't know anyone in the pet industry. I was young, naïve and had a no-fail attitude, which I think contributed to the success of The Nautical Dog. I moved the store to a larger location and bigger town (Williamsburg, Virginia) in 2008 while my husband was deployed to Iraq serving in the Marines. That was the best decision I ever made.

O How would you describe your typical customer?

Our typical customer is someone who is conscious about the quality of their pet's food, treats, supplements and even their toys. Our customers want to know where their pet's food comes from, and they know that whenever they purchase a product from us that we stand behind it. Our customers love our bone bar, which has over 75 different types of bones and chews to pick from in addition to our famous cookie bar that has 14 rotating flavors of biscuits. Some of other popular items that our customers look for is CBD products and tough toys like Fluff and Tuff and West Paw. Being in a tourist town, we also have many customers traveling with their pets or pet parents looking to take back a gift. We stock a lot of gift items such as shirts, artwork, breed gifts and more for customers that are looking for gifts for the pet lovers in their lives.

What is your pet food philosophy?

A If I wouldn't feed it to my pets, you won't find it at Nautical Dog. I want my customers to be able to come in and pick anything from our shelves or freezers and feel confident that they are feeding a quality and healthy pet food. Whole foods, fresh ingredients and quality sourcing are a must.

Q How do you educate the customers of The Nautical Dog?

First and foremost, the staff at The Nautical Dog are always up to date on pet nutrition, and they are a direct source of information for our customers seven days a week. We also have seminars, movie nights and guest speakers frequently in the store to help educate customers on different aspects of the pet industry, including labeling, raw food and industry regulations. These events help our customers learn about the pet food industry and what to look for in food for their pet. We also regularly give out samples of foods with brochures and encourage customers to do their own research to keep educating themselves. These brochures can be about a particular food or supplement, or about general ingredients included in pet food so that the customer is aware of what the FDA thinks is OK.

What do you look for in a new product to add to your inventory?

A Is it safe, healthy and tasty? Is it fun? Is it interesting and unique? It is a good value for the customer? If so, you'll probably find it at The Nautical Dog. **PA**

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CALENDAR

February

February 7-9 Super Pet Expo, New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center, Edison, New Jersey www.superpetexpo.com

February 8 Bay Area Pet Expo, Craneway Pavilion, Richmond, California www.bayareapetexpo.com

February 8-9 Reptilian Nation Expo, Cow Palace, Daly City, California www.reptiliannationexpo.com

February 8-9 New Orleans Pet Expo, Alario Center, Westwego, Louisiana www.neworleanspetexpo.com

February 8-9 Repticon Exotic Pet Expo, Williamson County Expo Center, Taylor, Texas www.repticon.com

February 9 NY Metro Mega Reptile Expo, Westchester County Center, White Plains, New York www.reptileexpo.com

February 9-10 PATS Sandown, Sandown Park, Esher, England www.patshow.co.uk

February 15 Bird Expo, Lenexa Community Center, Lenexa, Kansas www.beaknwings.org

February 16-19 WVC (Western Veterinary Conference), Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nevada www.wvc.org/conference

February 16-17 Anido, Kortrijk Xpo, Kortrijk, Belgium www.anido.be

February 20-23 Groom Expo West, Pasadena Convention Center, Pasadena, California www.groomexpowest.com

February 20-23 Midwest Veterinary Conference, Greater Columbus Convention Center, Columbus, Ohio www.mvcinfo.org February 21-23 World of Pets Expo, Hampton Roads Convention Center, Hampton Roads, Virginia www.worldofpets.org

February 21-23 Pet Fair Beijing, China National Convention Center, Beijing, China www.petfairasia.com

February 22-23 Reptilian Nation Expo, Denver Mart Pavilion, Denver, Colorado www.reptiliannationexpo.com

February 23 Monty's Home Pet Expo, Coastline Conference and Event Center, Wilmington, North Carolina www.montyshome.org

February 26-28 Global Pet Expo, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida www.globalpetexpo.org

February 28-March 1 Music City Veterinary Conference, Embassy Suites Hotel, Murfeesboro, Tennessee www.tvmanet.com

March

March 4 Pet Sitter World Online www.petsit.com/conference

March 5-7 Iberzoo + Propet, IFEMA Feria de Madrid, Madrid, Spain www.ifema.es/en/iberzoo-propet

March 6-8 Oregon Veterinary Conference, Oregon State University's CH2M Hill Alumni Center, Corvallis, Oregon www.oregonvma.org

March 7-8 Long Island Pet Expo, Suffolk Community College Expo Center, Brentwood, New York www.familypetshows.com

March 7-8 Reptilian Nation Expo, Wyland Center—Del Mar Fairgrounds, Del Mar, California www.reptiliannationexpo.com

March 7-8 Repticon Knoxville, Kerbela Shriners Knoxville, Tennessee www.repticon.com March 12-15 Atlanta Pet Fair & Conference, Georgia International Convention Center, Atlanta, Georgia www.atlantapetfair.org

March 13-15 All American Columbus Pet Expo, Ohio Expo Center, Columbus, Ohio www.columbuspetexpo.com

March 13-16 China Pet Expo, China International Exhibition Centre, Beijing, China www.cpse-expo.com/en

March 19 Digital Animal Summit, Chevron Auditorium, International House, Berkeley, California www.digitalanimalsummit.com

March 20-22 Chicagoland Family Pet Expo, Arlington International Racecourse, Arlington Heights, Illinois www.petchicago.com

March 20-22 Super Pet Expo, Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly, Virginia www.superpetexpo.com

March 22-24 Animal Care Conference, Hilton Long Beach, Long Beach, California www.calanimals.org

March 28 Morgantown Pet Expo, Morgantown Center, Morgantown, Pennsylvania www. familypetshows.com

March 28-29 Reptilian Nation Expo,

Ontario Convention Center, Ontario, Canada www.reptiliannationexpo.com

March 29 Long Island Reptile Expo, Suffolk Community College, Brentwood, New York

www. reptileexpo.com

April

April 2-5 Intergroom, Meadowlands Exposition Center, Secaucus, New Jersey www.intergroom.com

April 3-4 Healthy Dog Expo, Red Lion Hotel, Albany, New York www.healthydogexpo.com April 4 Northwest Pet Expo, Spokane County Fairgrounds, Spokane, Washington www.northwestpetexpo.com

April 4-5 Animal Expo, Adelaide Showground, Wayville, Australia www.kjex.com.au

April 5 OHPA Bird Fair, Garden City Hall, Monroeville, Pennsylvania www.ohpabirdfair.com

April 4-5 Three Rivers Pet Expo, Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick, Washington www.threeriversconventioncenter. com

April 5 Baw Baw Pet Expo, Burke Street Park, Warragul, Australia www.biglittlemarkets.com.au

April 10-12 Pet Fiesta Expo, Setia City Convention Centre, Shah Alam, Malaysia www.petfiesta.com.my

April 11-12 Atlanta Pet Expo, Gwinnett County Fairgrounds, Lawrenceville, Georgia www.atlantapetexpo.com

April 16-19 For Pets, PVA Expo Praha, Prague, Czech Republic www.tradefairdates.com

April 17-19 Pet Expo, Singapore Expo Hall 7, Singapore www.petexposg.com

April 18-19 Nashville Exotic Pet Expo, Nashville Fairgrounds, Nashville, Tennessee www.nashvilleexoticpet.com

April 20-21 Austin Vet, Palmer Events Center, Austin, Texas austin.vetshow.com

April 24-26 Colorado Springs Pet Expo,

Colorado Springs Pet Expo, Colorado Springs, Colorado www.rjpromotions.com

April 25-26 Chicago Pet Show, Oak Lawn Pavilion, Oak Lawn, Illinois www.chicagopetshow.com

April 26-28 America's Family Pet Expo, OC Fair & Event Center,

Costa Mesa, California www.petexpooc.org

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BACK STORY - + healthy dog chews

ANSWERING THE CALL

Healthy Dog Chews makes personal touch a priority.

et Age recently spoke with John Parrottino, CEO of Healthy Dog Chews, to learn how the family-owned and operated company has evolved over the years to remain in the forefront of the competitive dog treat sector.

What sort of growth have you seen since launching your company in 2007?

Since starting in 2007, we have seen significant growth in our business. We started with only four bully stick SKUs, and now we have grown to over 100 all-natural SKUs. My wife and I started selling out of our garage to local stores in 2007. We now have two warehouse facilities and cover all the states throughout the United States.

How would you describe your mission statement?

Our mission statement is to pro-Avide the independent retailers with the highest quality products at direct prices. We don't sell our products through distribution, which eliminates an additional touch point and the additional cost. We pride ourselves on a very personal high touch model that creates very loyal customers. When you call us, you'll get a real person that typically will pick up within the first few rings. We also typically ship the same day or next day.

Where do you source the meats for your chews and treats?

Our bully sticks are primarily A from South America [which] is known for its free-ranging stock. We source many of our other beef products like trachea, hooves and bones from Midwest facilities that offer hor-



mone and antibiotic free. The moose, elk and deer antler are a renewable resource, as they are collected once the animals shed them yearly. We have facilities in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming that collect the sheds, cut them and ship them to our central warehouse in Michigan.

Which of your products are most Q popular with retailers?

Our bully sticks are always pop-Aular, and besides the traditional straight odor-free bully sticks, we offer fun shape and sizes for all dogs. This would include a range of products from braided bully sticks for the heavy chewers to small 3-inch bully stick circles and bully stick spirals, Antler is right there with the bully sticks, and we sell three kinds of antler elk, deer and moose. Our moose is cut into basically a 4x6 panel and is typically more dense than the elk and deer. In our beef line, the trachea, cow ears and ox tails are always a hit. For the dogs that have beef allergies, our lamb and poultry lines offer a great alternative to beef. Within our beef line, the hottest item right now is the cheek rolls, which are from the softer part of the animal and easier to chew than a traditional rawhide product however.

What process do you use to create your odor-free bully sticks?

A Our bully stick products are not chemically treated to reduce the odor. However, we drain our bully sticks vertically then spin dry them, which allows as much of the moisture and liquids to be removed naturally. While the straight bully sticks go



through this process, the braided and shaped bully stick items have to be formed prior to the baking. These items will tend to have more of an odor to them, which the dogs like but owners sometimes don't care for. It's important to know that while the straights are "odor-free," they are a natural product and not chemically treated, so they will have a slight smell to them.

What unique products are you I planning to launch this year and beyond?

Most recently, we launched wild boar hide chips. These are from Texas, where the invasive species is destroying the ecosystem by over-foraging. We are excited to launch some really unique products in 2020. We will be launching a bone line that will be from the United States and will complement our knee caps and knuckle slices. We will also be launching some other all natural USA chews such as dehydrated chicken tenders, flat and round turkey tendons and a dental turkey tendon chew. Stay tuned! PA

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