

## Title:

Is It Time To Consider A Pet-Related Business?

## Word Count:

560

## Summary:

If you read up on trends in business or home business, then you've probably seen quite a few articles recently on the pet industry. To put it briefly, more and more people are owning more and more pets. The figures are amazing, both in terms of numbers of pets owned and amounts spent on pets.

According to the APPMA (the American Pet Products Manufacturer's Association), pet spending has more than doubled from \$17 billion in 1994 to about \$38.4 billion in 2006. And spendin...

## Keywords:

pet, pet business, pet industry, small business, home business, home-based business, entrepreneur

## Article Body:

If you read up on trends in business or home business, then you've probably seen quite a few articles recently on the pet industry. To put it briefly, more and more people are owning more and more pets. The figures are amazing, both in terms of numbers of pets owned and amounts spent on pets.

According to the APPMA (the American Pet Products Manufacturer's Association), pet spending has more than doubled from \$17 billion in 1994 to about \$38.4 billion in 2006. And spending is not just on basics like food or routine veterinary care.

APPMA's National Pet Owners Survey shows 27% of dog owners and 13% of cat owners buy their pets birthday presents, and 55% of dog owners and 37% of cat owners buy their pet holiday presents. High-end retail goods and services such as pet spas and hotels, pet therapy and expanding veterinary services such as joint replacement surgeries and delicate eye procedures are becoming more common.

Baby boomers (whose children have grown up) and young professional couples (who delay having children in favor of careers), are fuelling much of the growth in spending. They turn to pets to fill the void and often consider their furry

companion a best friend or member of the family.

So what does this mean for you?

Maybe not much, unless you also consider the continuing growth of and interest in self-employment and home based business. For many people, corporate downsizing, reduced pension plans or health care coverage, outsourcing and the sheer desire for financial independence are good reasons to consider starting a full or part-time business venture.

It's this combination - the booming pet industry and the need for supplemental or replacement income - that makes it worth your while to examine the pet industry. After all, if you're going to start a business, it makes sense to start one with a growing customer base and high demand.

Not that a pet-related business means you have to work directly with pets. Or get a degree in veterinary science. Or pay thousands of dollars in fees to open up a pet store franchise. When you consider that many pet owners have higher-than-average disposable incomes and full time careers too, products or services that go beyond the traditional can be surprisingly profitable.

For example, if you do like to work directly with cats, dogs or small animals, dog grooming and pet sitting continue to be viable businesses. But they're just the beginning. If you prefer less competition, consider pet photography, or becoming a pet massage therapist, or raising one of the popular new crossbreeds such as Puggles or Labradoodles. A doggie day care might be fun. There are even people who conduct parties for pets, to celebrate birthdays and other events like graduation from obedience school!

But you can start a pet-related business even if you can't stand dogs or are allergic to cats. Remember, pet owners today spend a lot of money both to pamper their pets and to make owning a pet more convenient.

So you could sew designer clothes for dogs or designer dog carriers. You can fulfill an ongoing need of pet owners by starting a pet food delivery service, or take care of animal waste through a pooper-scooper enterprise. You could write a newsletter focused on the care of tropical fish, or design and sell dog houses.

It's a purr-fectly great time to start a pet business!