

Animal Care Business

Thinking back to your childhood, can you recall a warm and fuzzy memory of a four-footed or winged companion in whom you confided your deepest secrets? Or have you ever considered buying a sweater for your horse, some galoshes for your cat or some Armor All for your armadillo? If so, then you understand what it means to be a pet lover and that's probably why you're interested in starting a career in the pet-care industry. In 2004, Americans spent \$34.5 billion on their cats, dogs, birds, fish, horses and other pets. In 2005, that figure is expected to jump by another \$1.4 billion, continuing a decade-long trend of pet-spending increases.

This is good news for aspiring pet-care business owners like you. No matter whether you're interested in providing hands-on pet care or selling pet products like toys, food and treats, the prospects for success in a pet-care business are excellent. It's obvious why pets are so pampered and integral to people's lives. They, to name a few advantages, fill the aching void left when children leave the nest or a spouse dies, while for childless couples, a pet is "someone" on whom to shower with affection and gifts.

This love of pets is also often the reason why people decide to start pet-care businesses. In the Pet Businesses start-up guide, you'll find the advice you need to start one of several types of pet-products and pet-service businesses that are in high demand these days: pet sitting/dog walking, dog training, pet grooming and pet-food sales.

Pet Sitting/Dog Walking

If you are charmed by all things furred, feathered and finned, this is the profession for you. As a professional pet sitter, you will care for people's pets while they're away, either for the day or for longer periods of time like during vacations or business trips. Pet sitters play with their charges, feed them, brush them, and possibly administer their medication or injections. They often render other services to make life easier for their customers, like cleaning up accidents and changing cat litter boxes, bringing in newspapers and mail, watering plants and taking out trash.

Dog Training

Part instruction, part psychology, the field of dog training requires great people skills as well as a love of canines. Dog trainers will tell you that you're not just training the pooches-you're also training the folks who live with them. So you have to be able to talk to them kindly, deal with them patiently and reinforce their behavior, then do the same with their furry friends. While a background in psychology can be helpful, a true love of both people and pets and a desire to help them goes a long way to ensure success in this career.

Pet Grooming

From bathing and clipping to tying bows and cleaning ears, the nation's approximately 50,000 to 70,000 pet groomers do more than just change pets' appearance, they also make them feel better both physically and psychologically. The loving touch of a groomer can calm a skittish pet, reassure a frightened pet, and make a well-adjusted pet wriggle with pleasure. In addition, groomers are often the first to notice that a pet has a skin condition, ear mites or other medical issues that should be brought to the attention of a veterinarian.

Pet Food/Treats

Whether it's brick-and-mortar or virtual, a pet store that specializes solely in pet food and treats can be a great moneymaker. Many pet owners today are willing to spend top dollar to buy the best of everything for their "fur children," including food and treats. Your challenge, then, is to find a niche, such as all-natural food products, and offer a wide assortment so you can position yourself as a leading provider of these items.

Adapted from www.americanexpress.com

Ex. 1 Find the words or expressions in the text which mean the following:

- 1) to remember sth: _____
- 2) to think about doing sth: _____
- 3) a number: _____
- 4) practical: _____
- 5) emptiness: _____
- 6) someone you have to take care of: _____
- 7) dogs: _____
- 8) people: _____
- 9) only: _____
- 10) a product that brings in a lot of revenue: _____
- 11) to advertise your business as ... : _____
- 12) to tell sb a secret: _____

Ex. 2 Match the expressions from the two columns into logical collocations:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) to start | a niche |
| 2) prospects | stores |
| 3) to leave | in psychology |
| 4) sth is | condition |
| 5) to administer | of success |
| 6) to render | the nest |
| 7) a background | a career in an industry |
| 8) a skin | in high demand |
| 9) brick-and-mortar | sb's medication |
| 10) to find | a service |

Ex. 3 Provide English equivalents of these expressions:

1) rozpieszczony	7) specjalizować się w czymś
2) małżonek / małżonka	8) słono za coś zapłacić
3) zapewnić sukces w danym zawodzie	9) szeroki asortyment
4) pielęgnacja	10) wiodący
5) jako pierwszy coś zauważyć	11) stanowiący integralną część czegoś
6) zwrócić czyjąś uwagę na coś	12) obecnie

Grammar corner...

In the text you found a sentence: „Have you ever considered ...” and the answer to it: „If so ...” What does that *if so* mean? It means *if you have ever considered*. This nice stylistic trick helps us avoid lengthy repetitions. For example:

A: Would you like to go to the movies with me?

B: I'd love to [go to the movies with me].

A: Let's have some people over for dinner.

B: Yea, let's [have some people over for dinner].

A: I bought you something.

B: Oh, you shouldn't have [bought me anything].

You must wear a seatbelt at all times, otherwise [if you don't wear a seatbelt at all times] you may get hurt in an accident.

A: I don't like candy.

B: Me neither [I don't like candy as well].

A: I prefer going to the seaside than to the mountains.

B: So do I [I prefer going to the seaside rather than to the mountains as well].

A: Do you mind if I open your mail?

B: Actually I do [mind if you open my mail].

A: Have some more beer.

B: I'd rather not [have any more beer] because I'm driving.

Ex. 4 Answer the questions so that you avoid lengthy repetitions.

1. Do you mind me asking how much you earn? (you don't wanna tell) ...
2. Please, help yourself to some more champagne. (negative answer) ...
3. I don't like this new guy from accounting. (opposite answer) ...
4. I colour-coded your files. (appreciate what sb's done) ...
5. Let's begin the meeting, shall we? (agree) ...
6. Can I offer you some coffee? (you want the coffee) ...

GLOSSARY	
to recall sth	przypomnieć sobie coś
to consider doing sth	rozważać zrobienie czegoś
a figure	liczba / cyfra
hands-on	praktyczne (np. doświadczenie)
a void	pustka
a charge	podopieczny
canines	psy
folks	ludzie
solely	tylko / wyłącznie
a moneymaker	dobre źródło dochodu
to position yourself as	spozycjonować się jako
to confide in sb	zверить się komuś
to start a career in an industry	rozpocząć karierę w branży
prospects for success	perspektywy sukcesu
to leave the nest	wyfrunąć z gniazda
sth is in high demand	na coś jest duży popyt
to administer sb's medication	podać komuś jego leki
to render a service	świadczyć usługę
a background in psychology	wykształcenie psychologiczne
a skin condition	schorzenie skórne
brick-and-mortar stores	tradycyjne sklepy
to find a niche	znaleźć niszę rynkową
pampered	rozpieszczony
a spouse	małżonek / małżonka
to ensure sth	zapewnić coś
grooming	pielęgnacja
to be the first to notice sth	jako pierwszy coś zauważyć
to bring sth to sb's attention	zwrócić czyjąś uwagę na coś

to specialize in sth	specjalizować się w czymś
to pay top dollar for sth	słono za coś zapłacić
a wide assortment	szeroki asortyment
leading	wiodący
integral to sth	stanowiący integralną część czegoś
these days	obecnie
furred, feathered and finned	z sierścią, z piórami i z płetwami
revenue	przychód
lengthy	przydługi

ANSWER KEY:

Ex. 1

- 1) to recall sth
- 2) to consider doing sth
- 3) a figure
- 4) hands-on
- 5) a void
- 6) a charge
- 7) canines
- 8) folks
- 9) solely
- 10) a moneymaker
- 11) to position yourself as ...
- 12) to confide in sb

Ex. 2

- 1) to start a career in an industry
- 2) prospects for success
- 3) to leave the nest
- 4) sth is in high demand
- 5) to administer sb's medication
- 6) to render a service
- 7) a background in psychology
- 8) a skin condition
- 9) brick-and-mortar stores
- 10) to find a niche

Ex. 3

- 1) pampered
- 2) a spouse
- 3) to ensure success in the career
- 4) grooming
- 5) to be the first to notice sth
- 6) to bring sth to sb's attention
- 7) to specialize in sth
- 8) to pay top dollar for sth
- 9) a wide assortment
- 10) leading
- 11) integral to sth
- 12) these days

Ex. 4

- 1) (Actually) I do.
- 2) I'd rather not.
- 3) (Actually) I do.
- 4) Oh, you shouldn't have.
- 5) Yes, let's.
- 6) I'd love some.