

[FIND A JOB](#)
[FIND A RIDE](#)
[FIND REAL ESTATE](#)
[ADVERTISE](#)
[E-EDITION](#) | [MANAGE YOUR ACCOUNT](#) | [SUBSCRIBE](#)


FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2009

## Business

[news-journalonline.com](#)
**FREE VIDEO GAME RENTALS  
TRY BEFORE YOU BUY**

**GF GAMEFLY  
FREE TRIAL  
Start Now**
[HOME](#) [LOCAL](#) [BUSINESS](#) [SPORTS](#) [RACING](#) [ENTERTAINMENT & LIFESTYLE](#) [OPINION](#) [COMMUNITY](#) [CLASSIFIEDS](#) [VIDEOS](#)  
[HEADLINES](#) [DATADIRECT](#) [DEEDS & PERMITS](#) [STOCKS](#) [MARKET SUMMARY](#) [MARKET MOVERS](#) [LOCAL WATCHLIST](#) [MUTUAL FUNDS](#) [YOUR PORTFOLIO](#)

August 02, 2009

### Pet-care industry going strong despite recession

**By BOB KOSLOW**  
Staff Writer

Jan Castro of Palm Coast gets her hair professionally styled every five weeks.

So does her 3-year-old Daisy, an adorable, pocketbook-sized, brown and tan female Yorkshire terrier.

"We think of her as one of the family. She still gets her treats and special dog food and everything else," Castro said while on a recent shopping trip to the new Woof Gang Bakery in Flagler Beach. Jan and Ed Castro are retired and, like millions of other pet owners, have curtailed their personal spending in many areas because of the recession but not on their pets.

"We may not go out to dinner as much now, but we feed (Daisy) good. She sees the vet and gets her shots as she is supposed to. If you take care of your dog, they live longer," Jan said. "They don't talk back. They give hugs and kisses and love you. They are part of the family."

Pet care, including food, accessories, veterinary services and grooming, is big business. More than 65 percent of American families have a pet, and 64 percent of them own more than one, according to WSL Strategic Retail, a retail research firm.

Spending on pet care has steadily been going up and is expected to surpass \$45 billion this year, according to the American Pet Products Association. In 2008, it was \$43.2 billion; in 2007, \$41.2 million; and in 2006, \$38.5 billion.

A recent WSL survey found that 81 percent of respondents are spending the same amount or more money on their pets despite the tough economic times.

Of 18 percent who admit to spending more, 68 percent said they treat pets as their children, half said it makes them happy to buy nice things for their pets and a third buy top of the line products.

The survey indicates an opportunity for retailers and manufacturers to benefit from a niche of devoted consumers.

"Americans consider their pets as members of the family, making businesses that cater to our four-legged friends a stable, growing market," said George Van Horn, senior analyst at IBISWorld, an industry and market research firm.

Woof Gang Bakery is one such company. The Orlando-based franchiser started with two South Florida stores in late 2007, and now has four independently owned stores preparing to open in the coming weeks to join nine established outlets scattered around the state, including Flagler Beach.

Natural dog treats baked on site are the featured items along with bags and cans of premium dog and cat foods. Toys, bowls, leashes and other accessories also are sold.

"Right now the pet industry is growing as people see their pets as their children and family. We do with our two dogs," said Paul Allen, Woof Gang Bakery founder with his wife, Cara. "We used to go into pet stores and they weren't very friendly. We always wished we had a friendly store and when we came across one while in Europe, we knew what we had to do."

The franchise fee of \$70,000 is relatively low and comes with help for build out, signage, product selection, marketing and management, Allen said.

The franchise is popular. Allen reports receiving 300 inquiries a month. He tosses aside about 95 percent, focusing on building only in Florida. His aim is 24 new stores this year.

Pam Mann of Flagler Beach bought the rights to build about a dozen stores in northeast Florida. She and her daughter, Samantha Mann, a May graduate of the University of Florida with a marketing degree, opened their first in early July in the Beach Village shopping center on State Road 100.

"We have three dogs, and we wanted to do something we liked and that we enjoyed," said Pam, an elementary school teacher for 12 years. "My daughter was pushing for a dog shop. We did a lot of research and found the pet industry is one or two in growth potential."

Pet stores are expected to have \$11.45 billion in revenue this year, mostly from the sale of food, supplies and medicines,

#### PAGE TOOLS

[CHANGE TEXT SIZE](#) [ShareThis](#)
[PRINT THIS](#) [E-MAIL THIS](#)
[RSS feeds](#) | [Reprint permissions](#)

#### MOST POPULAR STORIES

- Judge clears teacher of student-sex allegation
- 2 struck by lightning during afternoon storm
- Victim's dad fights to end plea bargains in violent crimes
- Judge faces discipline for friendship with career criminal

#### AP BREAKING NEWS

- CIT draws down credit, suspends preferred divs
- Schering-Plough shareholders OK purchase by Merck
- FBI sting sheds negative light on NJ development
- Telco companies to provide data for broadband map

#### AP VIDEO


[HOMES](#) [JOBS](#) [AUTOS](#) [STUFF](#) [SHOP](#)


according to IBISWorld research.

Veterinary services accounted for \$22.3 billion in revenue in 2008 and is expected to grow 4.3 percent over the next five years. Pampered pets can expect expanded services in chiropractic, ophthalmology, dentistry and dermatology.

Pet food production generated \$15.2 billion last year with an estimated 30 percent growth in five years. Natural and organic products account for \$54 million in 2007, up from \$41 million in 2006 and \$30 million in 2005, according to the Organic Trade Association.

IBISWorld also says pet grooming and boarding generated \$2.69 billion in 2008. Growth of 5 percent over five years is expected in pet care, training and pet sitting.

Chris Atkinson of New Smyrna Beach can attest to the growth.

She is a full-time beach patrol officer and EMT, but started Chris' Critter Sitters in 2005 with just herself and a couple of employees. She now has 10 employees during peak summer days, holidays and weekends, including an office manager who answers the phone and schedules sitters.

Atkinson is licensed, insured, bonded and a member of Pet Sitters International, she said.

"It used to be clients were mostly on vacations," Atkinson said. "But lately it's more people with second jobs who can't get home at lunch to walk their dogs or can't get home to feed their pets at night because they are headed to a second job."

Services for more than 370 clients between Holly Hill and Edgewater feature in-home pet care. That includes feeding, walking and playing with many kinds of pets, including birds, ferrets, rabbits and farm animals. Bringing in the mail and newspapers, turning lights on and off, watering plants and simple pool care are additional services offered along with field trips to local parks and the beach.

"People hire lawn care, pool care and maids, this is just another thing for their family," Atkinson said.

[bob.kaslow@news-jrnl.com](mailto:bob.kaslow@news-jrnl.com)

## BackTalk

A place for readers to comment

Welcome to BackTalk, where our readers have an opportunity to discuss the news of the day. Please keep it civil and treat each other with respect. Readers can report individual comments as offensive by clicking on the link below the comment. Comments that are offensive, contain personal insults or profanity, are off topic, or contain web links are subject to deletion.

**NEW: Hover over 'Reply to' text to see original comment.**

### [Comment on this article](#)

Displaying #1 to #1 of 1 comments from other readers:

#1 **Zero** - DeLand - 8/2/2009 10:42:00 PM

Then again look at the animals that are suffering because Vet costs are so high.

[Reply to this](#) | [Report as offensive](#) | [Post new comment](#)

<b>NEWS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Front page</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Local</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Florida</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Nation/World</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Deaths</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Politics</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Beach / Environment</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Weather</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Noticias en Español</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Corrections</a></li> </ul>	<b>MULTIMEDIA</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Photos</a>   <a href="#">Videos</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Beach cam</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Special Reports</a></li> </ul> <b>DATADIRECT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Map of local murders</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Missing children alerts</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Traffic cams</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Area gas prices</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">More...</a></li> </ul>	<b>BUSINESS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Headlines</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Stocks</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Market Summary</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Local Watchlist</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Mutual Funds</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Your Portfolio</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Deeds &amp; Permits</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Technology</a></li> </ul>	<b>SPORTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Headlines</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Racing</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Prep sports</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">College</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Salt &amp; Sun</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Today in Sports</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Sports Columns</a></li> </ul>	<b>ENTERTAINMENT &amp; LIFESTYLE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Headlines</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">TV Listings</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Movies</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Music</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Events Calendar</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Crosswords</a></li> </ul>	<b>OPINION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Food &amp; Dining</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Dining Guide</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Health</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Religion</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Home &amp; Garden</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Travel</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Editorials</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Letters</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Cartoons</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Columns</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Blogs</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Podcasts</a></li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> <input type="text"/> </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Search our site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Advanced search</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Online &amp; print archives</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Site index</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Buy photos</a></li> </ul>
<b>NJ YOUR WAY:</b> <a href="#">Subscribe to the Print Edition</a>   <a href="#">E-Edition</a>   <a href="#">E-mail</a>   <a href="#">RSS</a>   <a href="#">Mobile</a>   <a href="#">MySpace</a>   <a href="#">Twitter</a>   <a href="#">Facebook</a>						

© 2009 News-Journal Corporation | [news-journalonline.com](http://news-journalonline.com) (SM) | [Our privacy policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Subscriptions](#) | [Archives](#) | [Help](#) | [Contact Us](#)

### [Pure All-Natural Dog Food](#)

Free range meat & organic veggies. No additives. Better than homemade.

[www.DarwinsNaturalPet.com/Homemade](http://www.DarwinsNaturalPet.com/Homemade)

### [VPI Pet Insurance](#)

Your pet insurance authority. Learn why 9 out of 10 vets recommend VPI.

[www.PetInsurance.com](http://www.PetInsurance.com)

Ads by Google