



19 Ways to Increase Sales for Your Online Pet Shop

Executive Summary

For any entrepreneur who loves animals, owning and operating a pet shop can be one of the most satisfying endeavors. The beauty of the pet industry is that it is already established and there are many different types of retail stores serving the public and solving their pet-related problems. And the best part is that the pet care industry is expected to continue growing.

This growth also means that the pet industry is extremely competitive with every player pulling all the stops to stay in business. So how, as a pet store owner, do you ensure that you grow your business?

There are many ways and strategies in which you can execute that will position your business favorably - when the market is doing well or even when things are dire -- for instance, during a crisis.



Image source: Technavio¹

¹ <https://www.technavio.com/report/global-pet-care-market-analysis-share-2018>

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Introduction

With so many businesses already operating within the pet industry, competition keeps intensifying with each passing day. As such, pet shop owners, and especially those that have an online presence, must do everything possible to gain competitiveness, and hence, maintain a steady increase in sales and profitability.

Just like any other business, marketing is a critical aspect when running a pet shop, whether offline or online. A pet store owner and their team must always come up with new marketing ideas capable of improving the sales performance of their stores, as well as profitability.

At times, you might exhaust creativity and wonder what next. Do not worry; you have come to the right place. This whitepaper is solely about new marketing ideas that you can implement to grow sales substantially.

Top Tips to Increase Sales for Your Online Pet Shop

1. Free samples

Have you ever tried giving out free samples²? How did you go about it, and what was the outcome? By giving free samples of pet foods or other new pet products, you encourage new customers to try them out.

If, hopefully, they love the product, they will continue to buy that item from your store and, in the process, become loyal customers.

Pro Tip: Identify rescue organizations or animal shelters and partner with them to hold pet adoption days. Use such opportunities to offer free samples. It is an incredible way of promoting your business, and at the same, fulfilling your corporate social responsibility duty.

2. Coupons and contests

Never underestimate the power of coupons³ and contests⁴ when it comes to increasing the sales of your pet shop. Assess the economic status of your business and determine how often you can send out newsletters with discount coupons for the new pet products you would want to promote.

² <https://smallbusiness.co.uk/seven-benefits-of-giving-out-free-samples-2453977/>

³ <https://writology.com/blog/benefits-of-using-coupon-code-marketing.html>

⁴ <https://www.americanexpress.com/en-us/business/trends-and-insights/articles/4-reasons-why-contests-should-be-part-of-your-marketing-strategy/>



Image Source: Godfather Style⁵

Have you always wanted to include pet grooming in your business but didn't know where to begin? How about you introduce that new service with a bang by offering discount coupons (announce them via newsletter and other reliable channels) for the pet grooming service?

Another effective way of attracting customers to try it out is to invite people to participate in a contest where they vie for free pet grooming services.

Contest marketing checklist

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choose contest objectives | <input type="checkbox"/> Set goals and metrics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Define your audience | <input type="checkbox"/> Select contest prizes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pick a type of contest | <input type="checkbox"/> Build urgency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Determine contest rules | <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor, track, and test |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Qualify your participants | |

Submittable 

Image Source: Submittable⁶

⁵ <http://godfatherstyle.com/the-increasing-trend-of-discount-coupons-what-are-the-benefits/>

⁶ <https://blog.submittable.com/contest-marketing/>

Should you decide to offer coupons⁷, attach a specified expiration date and state the terms clearly to avoid possible conflicts that can chase your loyal or prospective customers away.

3. A dog/cat fashion show maybe?

People love fashion shows. Now, you can imagine their reaction if they get invited to come and showcase their dogs or cats at a fashion show. They'd be delighted! Now that sounds like a brilliant idea, right?

Such fun marketing activations can really make your pet store popular - a not-so-expensive move that can generate sales of your business.



Image Source: Arizona Humane Society⁸

To bring the most out of pet fashion shows, take advantage of holidays such as Halloween. For instance, you could organize a pet costume contest right around that date.

One way of approaching this is to invite pet owners to take their decked out pets to your pet shop and then request incoming customers to give their votes for the

⁷ <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/contests-effective-marketing-tools-61299.html>

⁸ <https://www.azhumane.org/2018/11/dog-fashion-show-at-bentley-scottsdale-polo-championship/>

best costume. Announce the prize of the winner from the beginning, which is something from your pet shop.

It could be a toy or other treats. Use the photos of the entire experience on your e-newsletter or business blog to create even more buzz around your brand.

Pet fashion shows offer a fantastic way of putting your business in the limelight for all and sundry to become aware of its existence, understand its values, know what you offer, and how it can help them in improving the care they accord their pets. Don't let such opportunities pass you by.

4. Feature pet of the month or week on your blog/newsletter

If you don't have a blog, or a newsletter, you've been missing fantastic opportunities for growing your sales. But you're a savvy marketer who's got all that figured out already, right? (If not, there's no time like the present!)

Use your blog and newsletter⁹ to provide your readers/customers with valuable pet-related content. Email marketing can come in handy in keeping your customers informed and entertained.

However, for this to work, you need a robust email marketing integration solution such as Mailchimp for 365 or Constant Contact for Salesforce that will enable your business to easily automate your Customer Relationship Management workflows and track customer touchpoints seamlessly.



Image Source: SyncApps by Cazoomi¹⁰

⁹ <https://www.smartinsights.com/email-marketing/newsletter-marketing/10-email-marketing-newsletter-software-features/>

¹⁰ <https://www.cazoomi.com/integrates-industries/pets/>

This is the first step: making sure that you can leverage your email database to the fullest. Now that you have all that in place, we can get to the organizational part.

Each time a client brings their pet to your shop, take a photo, and with their permission, post it on your e-newsletter or blog.

No brick-and-mortar shop? It can be even easier! Invite your customers to send you their favorite photos of their pets for you to post on your pet store's blog or newsletter.

You will be surprised at the amount of loyalty you get from this simple gesture. They will hardly visit another shop for their pet products, and this means more sales for your business.

5. Perform customer satisfaction surveys

Do you have a program capable of monitoring your customer service level routinely? If not, create one as soon as possible as it can help you detect problems before they escalate.

Phone surveys are one of the best ways to find out how your customers really feel about your shop and whether their experience¹¹ can be improved or not.

An external organization can make those phone calls on your behalf, and you can bet that your customers will not shy away from giving an account of their recent experiences in your pet shop.

The beauty of outsourcing this service is that it helps you overcome various challenges associated with surveys, as explained in the image below.



Image source: Paperform¹²

¹¹ <https://blog.smartsurvey.co.uk/the-advantages-of-conducting-customer-satisfaction-surveys>

¹² <https://paperform.co/blog/customer-satisfaction-survey>

After gather all these customer survey¹³answers, how you address the problems identified by them makes all the difference. Offer a solution to the challenge and see how easy it is to convert an unhappy customer, who is on the verge of switching brands, into a loyal one.

6. Optimize video marketing

Besides providing the speediest means of putting a name to your brand, videos¹⁴ are great driving traffic to your website. Videos help increase the engagement level of your customers with your content and, more importantly, they can help you sell a lot more.



Image source: Social Media Today¹⁵

Whether you are doing product overviews, or offering pet training and handling tips, videos give your content a significant boost when it comes to attracting new customers and gaining the loyalty of existing ones.

Of the utmost importance is to go out of your way to make them sound and look professional – even if it means outsourcing video recording and editing services.

¹³ <https://blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-satisfaction-survey-examples>

¹⁴ <https://www.digital22.com/insights/benefits-of-video-marketing-for-growing-businesses>

¹⁵ <https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/the-benefits-of-video-marketing-9-reasons-your-business-needs-video-infog/521595/>

7. Call customers who haven't purchased anything during the past one month

This strategy is easy for pet stores that have rewards programs. With this in place, you can generate a report showing the last purchase date of the customers who have enrolled in your reward program.

Consider running these reports once per month and then distribute the reports to respective managers so they can assign team members to make a follow up of customers¹⁶ who haven't purchased anything during that period.

One of the things that you need to find out is if your customers are sourcing their products from another pet shop, and if yes, seek to understand why.

Is your pet shop service-based? Always make calls to remind your customers when it is appropriate for them to schedule their next appointment.

Upon scheduling an appointment, send them a message via text or message to remind them. This proactive approach is one of the easiest ways of growing sales from your existing customers¹⁷.

8. Participate in community activities

The worst thing that a business can do, and even more so a pet business, is to isolate itself from the community. Where else do you think you will get clients if not from the community within which your pet store operates?

Even in times of social isolation, you can still be an active member of your community.

You need to let your community know that they can count on you. Besides, getting involved in community activities¹⁸ is one of the most significant ways of meeting customers face to face, and of positioning your company as an expert in pet supplies as well as care. Such interactions are good at creating new businesses and helping you enhance the reputation of your brand locally.

¹⁶ <https://cm-commerce.com/blog/reactivate-past-customers-increase-sales-and-revenue>

¹⁷ <https://www.businessknowhow.com/marketing/lostnew.htm>

¹⁸ <https://ducttapemarketingconsultant.com/community-involvement/>

There are many things you can do including;

- Sponsoring local events and
- Setting up informational booths in fairs and other community outdoor gatherings. Spaces in these events aren't usually overpriced. Bring brochures, other company materials, as well as free giveaways for prospective customers to become aware of what your business offers.
- What do the guidelines of the event stipulate? Are the attendees of the community events allowed to bring their pets? If yes, prepare ahead of time with packaged treats that carry the name and logo of your pet store. That's a fantastic way to kick off a conversation, and attract new customers.

9. Partner with other pet professionals

It is always advisable to collaborate with other experts in your field. In this case, reach out to pet sitters, trainers, groomers, and even vets – one or two in each category. Seek to know how you can work together to assist them in enhancing their customer service and widening client base for each other.

For instance, you can consider giving a referral fee for every customer they send to your shop. Alternatively, help them in getting more sales by offering their customers special discounts at your pet shop.

Pro tip: cross-promotions are all the rave! Send a newsletter to your list mentioning their services and they can do the same for you.

10. Enhance the product display of your online pet shop

How often do you attend to the display of products in your pet store? Is it appealing? The pictures of your shop that you post on your website and on your social media profiles should be attractive.

You need to realize that the appearance of your product display matters a lot to your online clients. As such, make sure that the best-selling products occupy the prime shelf spaces.

You may think that an online shop has infinite shelf space¹⁹, but the truth is that positioning matters just as much as it matters in brick-and-mortar shops.

11. Introduce pet grooming services

Do you have a room at your physical pet store? If yes, you may want to consider introducing pet grooming services²⁰. However, if in-store grooming is not a viable product, collaborate with a good groomer, and then refer your customers to them.

12. Seminars and classes

Pick topics that pet owners will find exciting and organize seminars or a series of classes. Possible topics include dog training, fish tank maintenance, how to teach birds to talk, and so on.

This approach adds to the loyalty that customers²¹ have on your business. It gives them a sense of belonging, and they begin to feel that you care about their needs and that of their pets. Seminars and classes benefit your customers, which means that your sales will grow exponentially.

Pro tip: hold these seminars online. Live streaming on your Facebook page is a great place to start.

13. Pay attention to your website

We live in an era where you cannot ignore the importance of having an optimized business website²². It isn't just about creating a website²³ and generating content. You need to keep upgrading it to cater to the ever-growing needs of your target market.

For instance, modern customers are so accustomed to shopping online that they will prefer a pet store where they can buy products via the website. Have you made this possible?

¹⁹ <https://loosethreads.com/research/2018/07/31/the-fallacy-of-infinite-shelf-space/>

²⁰ <https://www.workspace.co.uk/community/homework/entrepreneurs/starting-a-pet-grooming-business>

²¹ <https://hrdailyadvisor.blr.com/2017/07/14/benefits-training-customers-partners>

²² <https://www.lyfemarketing.com/blog/web-design-tips/>

²³ <https://www.impactbnd.com/blog/tips-for-improving-your-web-design>

14. Stay up to date with trends

Pet store owners must consistently increase their awareness of the trends within the pet industry. One effective way of doing it is to subscribe to trade magazines as well as newsletters.

Through them, you will get useful information, especially about the best-selling pet shop products. This way, you can stock your store with relevant products, which will go a long way in increasing your sales performance.

15. Position yourself as the go-to expert within the pet industry

A privately-owned and run pet store comes with numerous advantages that are unavailable to the big box, general merchandise stores that sell pet products.

Among the liberties that you get is being able to select unique pet products and supplies. You can start by stocking products that people cannot find elsewhere in your locality or region.

Possible products that you may consider include natural foods or care products for pets, special combs, solutions for fast-eating pets such a slow feeder bowl or pet video cameras. The objective is to become the go-to expert²⁴ for common and rare pet problems.

16. Do you have a social media plan?

Devise a social media strategy²⁵ that provides regular and valuable information about pet care to pet parents and caregivers.

Utilize social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, customer relationship management program, or online survey programs to send notifications to pet parents related to the solutions you offer instead of simple product adverts.

Engage your vendors to help you generate prizes that you can give away during contests. Be on the lookout for manufacturers' coupons as they are great at stimulating sales.

²⁴ <https://lifestylebusinessmag.com/10-ways-to-position-yourself-as-the-go-to-expert-in-your-industry/>

²⁵ <https://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2020/02/strategic-social-media-plan/>

17. Paid advertisements

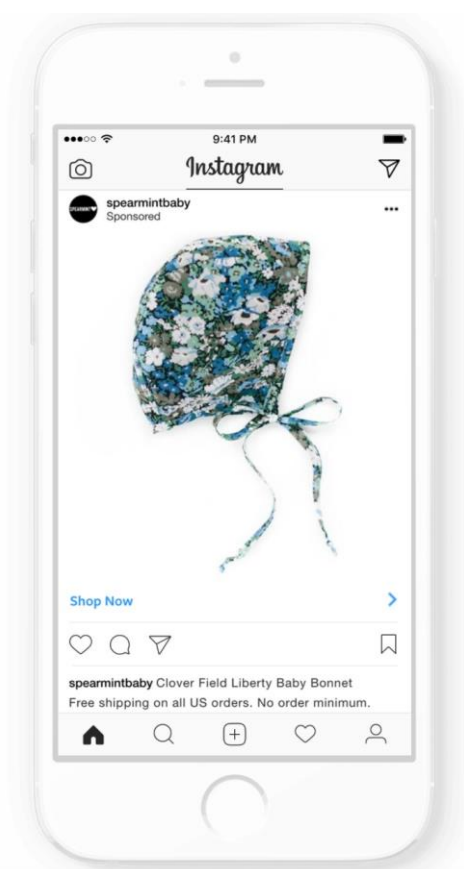


Image source: Big Commerce²⁶

Creating a social media profile for your business is a good thing to do, but don't leave it at that. Consider paying for advertisements on these platforms. Paid adverts are one of the best ways of getting your products and store seen on these platforms by as many pet owners as possible.

While it can appear like a costly affair, the higher the number of times that people see the collections of your pet supplies, the higher their chances of clicking, and the rest, as they say, will be history. Note that paid adverts²⁷ are more visible than free ones.

²⁶ <https://www.bigcommerce.com/blog/social-media-advertising/>

²⁷ <https://www.thoughtshift.co.uk/pet-food-and-supplies-ecommerce-digital-marketing-strategies/>

18. Integration is a must-have

Successful implementation of marketing ideas in an online shop is quite a demanding affair. It entails proper record keeping of the customers and client segmentation to ensure effective targeting.

Product invoicing is yet another critical function that must be performed with the highest level of accuracy. If you already have a customer relationship management system, you need to find a way of seamlessly sharing information between it and other systems.

The only way to do this is to automate the various roles and then look for a suitable integration platform to ensure seamless workflow.

Organizations in the pet industry such as PetCure Oncology, Bakers Dog Training, and Pets Lifeline, among many others have been working with Cazoomi for years to integrate their systems using SyncApps²⁸.

19. Consistency and persistency

Very few marketing strategies will make your pet shop the town's favorite overnight. Building a brand and, more importantly, building trust takes time.

Allow yourself that time. Be patient and work at building a community of pet parents and pet lovers around your shop -- online and offline.

²⁸ <https://www.cazoomi.com/integrates-industries/pets/>

Conclusion

As in any industry, marketing for pet stores has to be focused on the customers' needs and wants. The good part about this industry is that you're catering to two different types of customers, both in the same home. While the humans are obviously the ones who make purchase decisions, the wants and needs of the pets themselves come first.

As a marketer in the pet industry, your main job is to find the perfect balance between the needs of both. Show that you care about your furry and non-furry customers with products, promotions and campaigns that offer pets the treats and toys they want at prices that don't scare their humans away. Or toys that entertain them both.

Not sure what those products and campaigns are? No problem, this whitepaper offers you plenty of ideas on how to find out. Chief among them -- the integration of your mission-critical marketing software, an indispensable tool of surveying your audience and of getting valuable insights into what they *really* need.



About Cazoomi

Cazoomi allows companies in the pet industry to integrate critical everyday business data through our SyncApps integration platform. Integrate CRM, marketing automation, eCommerce, financial, and support software to the software you use today. We offer more than 150+ integrations and help you set up, explore your options, and guide you through usage.

SyncApps by Cazoomi enables companies in the pet industry to deploy software as a service for their financials, handle support, CRM, eCommerce, and marketing integration with ease and at a price point built for any organization.

For more information, visit <https://www.cazoomi.com/>