

Focus On: Petcare, publishing 20 October

Online Listicle to go live on 19 October

Contact Daniel Selwood (Daniel.selwood@wrbm.com)

Submissions deadline: 1 October

Advertising deadline 8 October

The Story

Petfood is getting personal. As our furry friends get ever more sophisticated in their tastes, brands are responding with tailored nutrition. Petfood players are upping their focus on a specific audience, with all-natural lineups and hypoallergenic petfood ranges. Personalisation is now a trend truly worth noting with investment in direct-to-consumer dog nutrition offering 'food as unique as your dog'. So what is the future of tailored nutrition? And where does this leave standard petfood brands?

Key themes:

Premium: Prices are up across the board as consumers buy into more luxury options. What are they paying more for?

Natural: Demand for natural food has now crossed over into the petfood sector. Small players are entering the market with offers of high meat content and natural credentials. How is this attracting consumers and how many are prepared to pay a premium?

Treats: Pet snacking is on the up. As treats are more expensive than standard fare, this is helping to push up value. Which formats/brands are winning?

Big brands: How are the big brands responding to the growth of smaller start-ups and DTC businesses in the petcare arena?

Own label: Retailer brands are leading the way in growth. Aldi in particular has seen a double digit value increase bolstered by three significant new SKUs including dog treats and two types of cat food. Who else has struck gold in petcare and what are they doing?

Direct-to-consumer: Tails.com is the most high-profile, thanks to the Nestlé Purina deal. But there are plenty of other start-ups looking to make their mark on the petfood market, including Perfect Fit and Thrive. What do they offer that is resonating with consumers? To what extent do they have the potential to steal share from the retailers?

Innovation: Key to this feature will be a discussion of the latest NPD from the category's brands and own label players, large and small. The feature will explore the market trends that have inspired recent innovations and weigh up which new launches are most likely to encourage future growth in the market. We will profile 8 of these in separate innovations panel including launch date, RSP and an image.

Key questions the feature is likely to address:

- What consumer trends have impacted the category over the past year?
- How have promotional strategies (both in terms of price and marketing) evolved?
- How has merchandising changed in the market?