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NEWS

UPDATE

PETS CORNER – A TAIL OF SUCCESS



In this week's edition of Concession News, we look at how Pets Corner, the UK's largest independent Pets retailer, have developed their presence in garden centres and explain how their unique way of retailing is capturing the customers who are looking for a better standard of customer service.

The first Pets Corner store opened in 1968 when an independent pets shop was purchased by Mark and Sandra Richmond in Haywards Heath. Their continued growth saw the opening of new stores in Hove and Brighton until, in 1989, their son Dean joined the business. In 1998 with business partner Steven Charman, Dean purchased the seven store chain and set about developing the brand.

They met with then Country Gardens CEO, Nicholas Marshall who, in 1999, worked with them to start opening their garden centre concessions. Pets Corner continued their roll out of specialist pets stores into both garden centre locations and stand alone shops and they now trade from 77 locations across the UK, 45 of which are in garden centres. The growth of the company has been supported by their 20,000sqft distribution centre which supplies the network.

In order to set themselves apart from large corporate chains and small independent pets shops, Pets Corner identified that they needed to create a niche offer that would engage their customers and grow their reputation.

Dean Richmond, Pets Corner, Managing Director says of their expansion *"We went through a very exciting time opening new stores and developing new ranges and we were keen to create a unique proposition in every store, whilst maintaining our core values and attention to service."*



Knowing that a pet is not just a pet, they are part of the family, Pets Corner create an environment in each of their stores where pet owners can meet with the friendly, trained staff, explain their pets requirements and have the solution tailored to their individual requirements.

Dean Richmond added *“We know that every pet is different. ‘Off the shelf’ solutions are limiting for pet owners, so we wanted to create a more bespoke approach by offering unique foods which are explained by our excellent staff, to our customers, to educate them about the right food for their pet.”*

70% of the Pets Corner range is own branded, enabling them to identify the right foods and accessories for their customer’s requirements and controlling the supply chain enables them to quickly introduce new market trends and invest in the quality of their ranges.

The quality of staff advice and excellence of specialist ranges have contributed heavily to the success of garden centres. As a result, having an equally specialist pets operator like Pets Corner complements the offer perfectly and enables site owners to create a unique, service driven retail proposition with specialist product ranges tailored for a more discerning customer base.

Each Pets Corner, garden centre concession is fitted to an excellent standard and can be found within the main garden centre building or within standalone units. Pets Corner are committed to their environmental responsibilities and their ‘no fossil fuels’ and recycling programmes, ensures that every location is a ‘Zero Carbon Store.’



Chris Roberts, Chairman and Managing Director of Van Hages, who host Pets Corner within their Great Amwell Garden Centre adds *“Pets Corner have a standalone store within our restaurant courtyard and have an excellent range of bespoke pet products. Their staff are always very attentive and knowledgeable, and their proposition adds something to the whole site experience.”*

As garden centres continue to look to develop their business to ensure regular footfall, Pets Corner have established themselves as the perfect partner for garden centres, as they work with their hosts to create the ultimate repeat visit destination.

Keith McIntyre, Managing Director of First Franchise Ltd comments, *“Working with Pets Corner provides garden centre owners with a unique pet destination store. Their customer service is exceptional and the unique products they introduce through their own branded ranges, ensure their customers are provided with the right solution for their individual needs.”*