Pet Population and Ownership Trends in the U.S.

Description: Pet Population and Ownership Trends

Facing a leveling pet population and an aging human population, the pet industry may do well by looking to the U.S. Hispanic population as the source of growth opportunities in the coming years.

This and other insights can be found in Packaged Facts new report, Pet Population and Ownership Trends. Recognized as the leader in pet market research publishing, Packaged Facts offers authoritative data, analysis and perspective on where the pet market is today, and where it's headed in the future.

Pet Population and Ownership Trends offers comprehensive analysis of Hispanic pet owners, a crucial consumer segment to the future health of the pet industry. Latinos are disproportionately important to the pet industry as bird owners. Hispanics have also made significant contributions to maintaining ownership rates among dog and cat owners.

And that's important, because in the last five years the growth of pet ownership has plateaued: there are more than 200 million pets of all species that reside in about 65 million households in the U.S. Dogs remain the most commonly owned pet (in 45 million households), followed by cats (30 million households) and other pets.

But maintaining a robust pet population requires a robust and health human population, and here's the trouble spot. In between 2015 and 2020, as the baby boomer sector keeps shifting into their late 60s and further, the number of Americans inside the 65+ age sector is projected to grow about four times faster than the growth in the overall adult population. This quick growth in the aging of the U.S population has signaled an alarm in the pet industry due to pet ownership generally falling off with increasing age. There are 53% of 65 to 69 year old individuals that are pet owners, yet only 34% of Americans falling inside the 70+ age group actually own a pet. One of the most important questions within the pet industry is if baby boomers will continue in the paths created by other older generations or if, as usual, they will develop their own rules and continue to own pets well into their older years in life.

Why are Latinos a key driver in buttressing pet ownership rates in America in the future? Packaged Facts expects that as U.S.-born generations of Latinos grow in numbers, dog ownership rates will increase dramatically among within the Latino demographic. As Latinos become more acculturated, the have been found to be more likely to own dogs. The most acculturated Latinos (those who have relatively low attachment to their original culture and who are English-dominant or bi-lingual) are even more likely than U.S. adults on average to be dog owners (43% vs. 41%).

Pet Population and Ownership Trends takes an in-depth look at these and other trends affecting the future of the pet industry. Including within the report are detailed estimates of the size of the American pet population today as well as projected growth totals in the dog and cat population. Also contained with the report are demographic and attitudinal profiles of owners of dogs, cats and other pets, such as fish, birds and reptiles.

Scope and Methodology

Pet Population and Ownership Trends analyzes trends in the growth of the pet population and highlights the demographic and psychographic characteristics of pet owners. The report is based on two primary data sources. The first source of data is compiled from Packaged Facts National Online Consumer Surveys conducted in January/February, April/May and July/August 2014. These surveys reflect a panel of 2,000 U.S. adults (age 18+) balanced to the national population on the primary demographic measures of gender, age bracket, race/ethnicity, geographic region, marital status, presence or absence of children in the household and household income.

The other source of primary data is Simmons National Consumer Study (NCS) for Spring 2014 from Experian Marketing Services. This survey was fielded from April 2013 through June 2014. (The report uses the Spring 2004 NCS in the case of 10-year-trend tables and figures and Spring 2009 for 5-year-trend tables and figures.) Experian Marketing Services regularly conducts booklet-based surveys of a large and random
sample of consumers (approximately 25,000 for each 12-month survey compilation) who in aggregate represent a statistically accurate cross-section of the U.S. population. The report also is based on a review of industry sources.

The report is organized in terms of the categorization of pet population data collected by Simmons NCS. In addition to capturing information on dog and cat ownership, Simmons NCS asks respondents to identify the number of pets they own in the following categories: fish, birds, reptiles, rabbits, hamsters and other pets. Small animals such as gerbils, ferrets and guinea pigs are the primary pets accounted for in the other category. Other pets also include animals ranging from horses to poultry.

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