



Hosting National Pet Shop Day Events

Retail events can take different forms, but the most popular in-store events include free workshops, classes, or meetups. They can help retailers demonstrate how their products address the needs of the community. However, to ensure success, it is crucial to align your event with customer interests and the products and services you provide.

They can be a fantastic way of spending quality time with your existing customers whilst giving them something back for their continued loyalty. Often, events aren't just about selling a product or service but creating genuine relationships with those who use your services, therefore encouraging repeat visits and/or purchases.

Events can have the dual benefit of creating a non-pressurised environment for potential new customers too. By throwing open the doors of your business, and laying on activities or incentives that might stimulate curiosity, you remove the barriers for trial, and may just encourage additional footfall that could be converted into custom.

National Pet Shop Day presents a prime opportunity for hosting a gathering or event on your premises. It needn't be complex or costly, but it can yield a number of long-term benefits in terms of networking, content creation, revenue generation and relationship building. Here are some ideas about the kinds of events you could look to host in celebration:

- **Pet paw-traits:** Partner with a local photographer or artist to take some photos, draw or paint pictures on the day (this could either be a free service with the potential for upselling additional products, or there could be a small charge for prints or digital download).
- **Kids activities:** Pester power is a wonderful thing for retailers. Most parents will be open to attending any kind of free event if it entertains the children for a short while. This could take many forms:
 - Animal balloon modelling
 - Face painting
 - Animal handling sessions (from bunnies to reptiles, this is an opportunity to educate the younger generation)
 - Puppet shows
 - Entertainment
- **Pet pamper sessions:** Partner with a local groomer to offer in-store pampering sessions for pets or give talks or advice on pet care – especially for the more unusual breeds. This presents a wonderful opportunity for cross-selling.
- **Pop-up pet healthcare advice hubs:** If you should you have an SQP or RAMA in your shop, you may wish to set-up and advertise a 'free' instore advice hub where local pet owners can come along to get specialist face-to-face advice on any minor problems or health concerns. This is a great way of showcasing any existing instore expertise, and the service levels potential customers can expect when visiting in the future.

- **Discounts & offers:** Are there any discounts or promotional offers you can share with customers on day itself? This could be on select hero products, new products you wish to push, or where there is surplus stock you would like to shift. Consider how effective the notion of Black Friday is amongst consumers. Everyone loves a bargain, one day only opportunity to snap one up can prove to be a very enticing incentive for savvy shoppers and could well help boost footfall.

Remember, the idea is to do something that will pique the interest of pet owners locally, giving them a reason to pop in, but this needn't be anything big, or expensive. Keep it simple, but relevant to your customers. Use your existing contacts, or relationships with neighbouring businesses to cross-sell services and boost awareness – it's important to try to maximise of the skills you already have, and to try and engage more supporters where appropriate.

Above all – have fun and enjoy the day! Happy brands are far more appealing, and much more likely to build lasting, loyal relationships with their customers – and that will ultimately bring about many commercial benefits.

