



The Art of the Giveaway

Promotions That Keep Customers Coming Back

Independent pet store owners have something truly special: a chance to build genuine relationships with customers in ways big supermarkets and online retailers simply cannot. Your personal touch, knowledgeable advice, and real connection to your community and their beloved pets, that's your superpower. National Pet Shop Day is the perfect opportunity to celebrate it.

Strategic giveaways and promotions are powerful tools for turning that initial excitement into lasting loyalty. It's the psychology of reciprocity in action: when you give customers something meaningful, they feel appreciated and want to return the favour by supporting your business. And here's what research shows: 67% of pet owners say independent pet shops are important to their community and 57% would be upset if their local shop closed. Your community already values you. Giveaways are about activating loyalty that already exists, giving customers a way to show the support they genuinely feel.

Designing Promotions for Long-Term Engagement

National Pet Shop Day is your store's moment to shine, and the magic doesn't have to end after the day. The real opportunity lies in turning that initial excitement and foot traffic into an ongoing relationship with your community. Here's how you can design promotions that create lasting connections and keep customers engaged long after the event.

Upgrade Your Goody Bags

Goody bags are a wonderful way to create immediate delight and show your customers you genuinely care. That's why we offer National Pet Shop Day branded paper bags in our promo packs, the perfect canvas for your carefully chosen goodies and a helpful reminder to support your store once they leave.

To extend the joy and give customers a genuine reason to return, include a "bounce-back" voucher inside the bag. A simple discount like 10% off a particular product or range (valid for the following month) gives them something to look forward to and keeps the excitement alive between visits.

Use Competitions and Raffles Wisely

Competitions and raffles are brilliant for creating buzz and building genuine connections with your customers. A bundle of pet products, a selection of goodies for the whole family or even money to spend in store, these are all attractive raffle and competition prizes. When people enter, ask for their contact details so you can continue the conversation through monthly newsletters and exclusive offers. Just ensure you're GDPR compliant and that

customers clearly understand they're signing up for marketing communications from you.

Just do a quick check of the Gambling Commission website to ensure your raffle stays within the law, most activities don't require a licence, but it's good to double check.

Focus on Brand Alignment

The most successful giveaways reflect your shop's unique personality and values. When you give away high-quality, relevant pet items such as branded poo bag holders, small toys for cats, treats for rabbits and other small furrries, you're attracting people who genuinely love pets and will become real supporters of your business. These are the customers who'll come back again and again.

Real-World Inspiration: Marks Tey Discount Petfoods

To see how this works in practice, we need look no further than Marks Tey Discount Petfoods. As a third-generation, family-run business based in Essex, they know a thing or two about community connection. In 2025 they hosted an incredibly successful event to celebrate National Pet Shop Day, demonstrating exactly how to turn a giveaway into a major local attraction.

Instead of just handing out a few free promotional items, they took a multi-faceted approach to their promotions. Visitors were treated to carefully curated goody bags and premium free samples. But the team did not stop there. They hosted a charity cake sale, ran a children's colouring competition, organised a raffle, and even offered free portraits from a professional pet photographer.

Their most unique community draw was the introduction of live animals. Visitors had the chance to meet guinea pigs, tortoises and snakes, creating a lively, engaging atmosphere that captivated children and adults alike.

Why was this event such a massive success? It transformed a retail promotion into a genuine community event. It brought families and their pets together, successfully raised money for the East Anglian Children's Hospice, and fostered a deep, emotional bond between the shop and its local customers.

Build a Promotion That Keeps Them Coming Back

Meaningful giveaways are a brilliant way to build your local community. Thoughtful design prevents one-off freebie hunting, and tracking your success through bounce-back vouchers and email sign-ups ensures long-term business growth.

As you plan your next event, remember that the ultimate goal is to showcase the face-to-face advice that only an independent shop can offer. A free sample might bring a customer in the door, but your welcoming smile and tailored pet care advice are what will keep them coming back for years to come.

Are you ready to put these ideas into practice? Start planning your promotional strategy now and register your store for National Pet Shop Day. By getting involved, you can take full advantage of free promotional packs and national visibility to make your next event your most successful one yet.