



# Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

## Pet Services

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Pet Services** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website ([www.bgateway.com/businessplan](http://www.bgateway.com/businessplan)), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **December 2024**.

## What do I need to know about the Pet Services market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ According to Mintel, **the pet food market (retail value sales of cat and dog food) in the UK was worth £4069m in 2024**. Rising prices drove value sales growth in 2024, with volumes down 1.2% year on year. Both volume decline and value growth have slowed in 2024 amid the easing pressure on household income and pet food inflation. Some of the economising habits of 2022/23 have also started to reverse. Volumes are expected to stabilise in 2025 and return to growth in 2026. Real income growth over 2024-2029 is expected to facilitate trading up. More purchasing of snacks and treats will reinvigorate premiumisation and humanisation trends. More value-added opportunities are expected around health, convenience and sustainability. (Mintel, *Pet Food UK*, 2024).
- ◆ IBISWorld forecasts that the number of pets will increase at a compound annual rate of **0.9% to 18.5 million** over the five years through 2029-30. The number of pet cats and dogs is expected to increase to 17.8 million over 2025-26. The rising number of households and bigger population are expected to contribute to the expected growth in the pet population over the coming years. (IBISWorld, *Number of Pets UK*, July 2024).
- ◆ Concerns over the healthiness of ultra-processed food have made manufactured pet food less appealing for **48% of pet owners**, giving a boost to the homemade food trend. (Mintel, *Pet Food UK*, 2024)
- ◆ Online Pet Food and Pet Supply Retailing industry revenue is forecast to grow to £971.4 million in 2024-25. As the levels of pet ownership increase in the UK, the number of e-retailers selling pet food and supplies will grow. Over the five years through 2029-30, industry revenue is forecast to grow at a compound annual rate of 5.5% to £1.3 billion. (IBISWorld, *Online Pet Food & Pet Supply Retailing in the UK*, September 2024).
- ◆ There are 13.5 million dogs and 12.5 million cats in the UK in 2024 - and increase of 1.5m each. ([www.UKPetFood.org](http://www.UKPetFood.org))
- ◆ There are several national organisations for pet services industries, depending on your specific market. You may be interested in [The Pet Industry Federation](#), [The Pet Food Manufacturers' Association](#), [Association of Private Pet Cemeteries and Crematoria](#). Other industry bodies include [The National Association of Professional Pet Sitters and Dog Walkers](#) and [The Association of Professional Dog Walkers](#).



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## Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com).

- ◆ **Mintel – Pet Insurance UK (2024).** Rising veterinary costs and broader inflationary trends have forced insurers to increase premiums. Mintel's research says despite this, just 8% of pet insurance policyholders are considering reducing their coverage in the next 12 months, and just 2% are thinking of cancelling completely.
- ◆ **IBISWorld – Garden Centres & Pet Shops in the UK (October 2024).** Over the five years through 2024-25, Garden Centres and Pet Shops industry revenue is expected to grow at a compound annual rate of 1.3% to reach £6.5 billion. In 2024-25, revenue is slated to expand by 2.8%. The continuation of hybrid working allows younger adults to spend more time at home, propping up pet ownership.

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ The UK Pet Food Manufacturers Association (PFMA) has published their annual report for 2023 ([ukpetfood-reports.co.uk](http://ukpetfood-reports.co.uk)) which gives a broad overview of industry developments and ongoing initiatives, as well as events coming up in the new year.
- ◆ [COBRA Reports](#), Accessed from National Library of Scotland, have several Business Opportunity Profiles on a range of pet services. These contain key market issues and trends, trading, commercial and legal issues and legislation. Titles available include:
  - **Boarding Kennels**
  - **Dog Walker**
  - **Pet Grooming Services**
  - **Pet Sitter/Home Boarding Service**
  - **Pet Dog Trainer**
- ◆ The [PDSA Animal Wellbeing Report 2024](#) has information on pet populations in the UK; trends in pet acquisition; the impact of the cost of living crisis; as well as animal-specific information for cats, dogs, and rabbits (the three most common animals to have as pets in the UK).

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## How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#), [Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com) or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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## What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com) or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

## Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these websites, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.



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## How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

### Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) "[Find a Chartered Accountant](#)" tool

### Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

### Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

### Legal Help

Gov.uk "[Licence Finder](#)" tool

Law Society of Scotland's "[Find a Solicitor](#)" tool

### Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

**Please note:** the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

### Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

### Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

**Last updated: December 2024**

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