

## Making Your Pet Facility Vision a Reality

Susan Briggs



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## A Good Personal Fit

"Success is getting what you want. Happiness is wanting what you get."

Dale Carnegie



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## Know Yourself

- Personality Profile
  - Will you enjoy the reality of your vision?
  - Do you have passion & dedication?
  - Does the operation fit your strengths?
  - Can you cope with the "worst case scenario"?
- Do you know what you don't know?



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### Skills You Need

- Communication
- Organization
- Project Management
- Attention to details
- Basic accounting, financial & legal knowledge
- Basic technical skills & knowledge
- Human resources
- Staff Management
- Sales & marketing
- Outsource Options



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### A Small Business Owner is...

- Decision maker
- Works with people
  - Clients
  - Employees
- Jack of all trades
- Works holidays & weekends
- Resourceful, adaptable & must persevere
- Responsible for precious lives in pet care



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### Support System

- Partners
- Immediate Family
- Extended Family
- Friends
- Local Business Networking Groups
- Pet Industry Colleagues
  - Local
  - Online discussion groups
  - Trade associations
  - Professional Seminars



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## Good Business Fit

"What counts is not necessarily the size of the dog in the fight - it's the size of the fight in the dog."

General Dwight Eisenhower



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## Know Your Market

- Marketing Niche
  - How is your vision different from the competition?
  - Why will customers choose you over the competition?
- Potential customer base demographics
- Excellent customer service
- Excellent pet care



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## Finding A Niche

- Service Mix
- Pet Type
- Pet Size
- Your Passion



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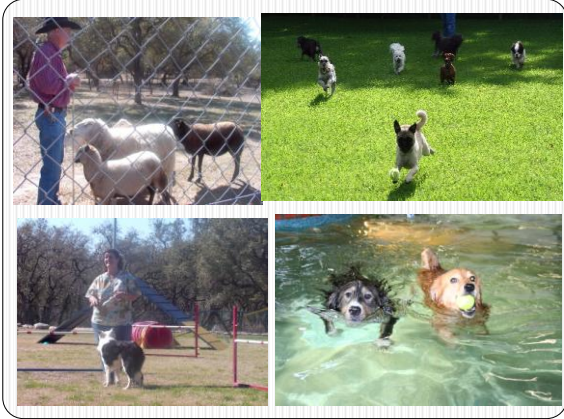
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### Theme



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### Location, Location, Location

- Regulations
  - State, County, City
- Zoning
  - Research
  - Special Use
  - Comply
- Licensing
  - Future Plans



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Leased Facility - Urban

Front

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Build - Suburban

The Palms Pet Resort, Helotes, TX

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Custom Touch

The Palms Pet Resort, Helotes, TX

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New Building on Original Property - Rural

K9 Country Club, Bulverde, TX

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Custom Touch

K9 Country Club, Bulverde, TX

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New Building on Existing Site - Suburban

Fondren 5 Star, Houston, TX

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Urban Tails Building When Leased

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Urban Tails Building After Renovation

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Urban Tails – New Mural

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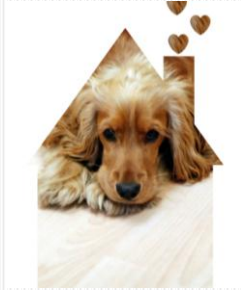
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### Location

- Neighbors
  - How Close?
  - Future Development
  - Friend or Foe?
- Visibility
- Entry & Egress
  - Flow of Traffic
  - Highway Access
  - On Way to Somewhere




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### Service Mix

- Dog Boarding
- Cat Boarding
- Dog Daycare
- Dog Training
- Bathing & Grooming
- Special Services




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### Dog Boarding

- Necessity - Stable Revenue Source
- Large Market
- Boarding Options
  - Traditional Kenneling
  - Indoor/Outdoor Enclosures
  - Luxury Suites
  - Cage-free Sleepovers
- Dog Health & Staff Safety
  - Stress Management
  - Monitor Eating & Eliminations
  - Aggression
- 24/7




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### Cat Boarding

- Necessity – Good Revenue Source
- Less labor intensive
- Compliments Other Boarding
- Optional Activities
- Cat Health & Safety
  - Upper Respiratory
  - Critical to Monitor Eating & Eliminations
  - Cat Bites
- All Cat Boarding Facilities
  - Must be Devoted to Cats
  - Onsite Operator
  - Grooming Required



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### Dog Daycare

- Growing Service, Luxury
- Markets Vary
- Space & Labor Intensive
- Technical Knowledge
  - Dog Language
  - Group Dog Behavior
- Physical & Emotional Health of Dogs
- Service Options
  - Community Play for Boarding Dogs
  - Daycare
  - Off-Leash Playgroups with Owners
  - Private Dog Parks



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### Grooming & Bathing

- Necessity & Competitive
- Pet Styling – Technical Expertise
- Equipment Investment
- Basic Bath Services
  - Nail Trims
  - Ear Cleaning
  - Teeth Brushing
  - Packages
- Skills
  - Dog Handling & Control
  - Proper Brushing & Dematting Techniques & Tools
  - Shampoo selection
- Self Dog Wash
- Massage, Aromatherapy



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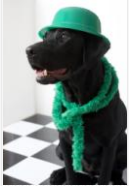
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## Good Money Fit

"Many an opportunity is lost because a man is out looking for four-leaf clovers."

Anonymous



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## Know Your Finances

- Business Goals
  - How much money do you need to make?
  - How many owners to support?
  - How soon is income required?
- Financial Realities
  - How much money is required for your vision?
    - Initial investment?
    - Operating funds?
  - Do you have a source of capital?
- Create a Business Plan



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## Design for Dogs



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## How Much Revenue Required?

- Capacity cover costs & provide a profit
- Cost Categories
  - Facility – Rent or Loan Payment
  - Payroll – Wages plus Taxes & Insurance
  - Advertising & Marketing
  - Utilities
  - Supplies – Each Service Category
  - Security & Other Facility Services
  - Repairs & Maintenance
  - Licenses, Fees & Permits
  - Taxes – Property, Income, State & Local
  - Owner Draws/Salary




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## How Many Pets Required?

- Monthly Expenses / Average Rate Charged / 30 = # pets
- \$20,000 / \$25 / 30 = 27 pets/day to break even
- \$50,000 / \$25 / 30 = 67 pets/day to break even
- Confirm capacity is feasible for amount of space
- How long will it take to grow to target breakeven?




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## Staffing

Service Area	Technical Skills	Productivity
Dog Boarding	Moderate - Basic Dog Handling & Health	6-10 dogs – potty walks 11-15 dogs – indoor/outdoor
Dog Daycare	High – Dog Language & Group Behavior	1:15 average
Grooming	High – Pet Groomer Certification/Experience	7 – 10 Finishing 5 – 7 Bathe & Finish
Training	High – Dog Behavior & Training Certification or Experience	N/A

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## Large Multi-Service Business

- Requires Significant Capital/Debt
- Permit/Construction Delays Impact Cash Flow
- Pressure to Grow Quickly
- Requires Multiple Staff
- Operating Multiple Businesses at Start-up
- Find Key Referral Sources



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Rover Oaks  
Houston, TX

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## Starting Small

- Less Capital/Debt Required
- Lease
- Initially Focus on 1-2 Core Services
- Less Staff Required
- Reinvest Profits



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**You Lucky Dog**

Houston, TX

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**Dog Daycare**

You Lucky Dog, Houston, TX

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**Dog Boarding**

You Lucky Dog, Houston, TX

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### Future Expansion

You Lucky Dog, Houston, TX

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### Expansion #1

Outdoor play yard added in parking lot

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## Lease or Buy?



### Lease Space

- **Pros**
  - Requires Less Capital
  - Provides Flexibility
  - Build-out Contributions
- **Cons**
  - Landlord
  - Less Control
  - LHI – lost \$'s
  - Small Landlord Allowances
  - Less Business Value

### Buy, Build & Renovate

- **Pros**
  - More Business Value
  - Flexibility to Modify
  - Control
- **Cons**
  - Requires More Capital
  - Business Debt

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## Buy Existing Business or Franchise

### Existing Business

- Pros
  - Existing Client Base
  - Operational Procedures & Resources
  - Trained Staff
- Cons
  - Requires More Capital
  - Business Debt
  - Image Changes & Client Retention

### Franchise

- Pros
  - Operating Procedures
  - Industry Training
  - Marketing Tools
  - Name Recognition in Some Markets
- Cons
  - Loss of Control
  - Shared Profits
  - Large Investment




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## Multiple Locations

- Give First Location Time to Mature
  - Client Demand
  - Reputation & Name Recognized
- Replicate Facility & Operating Procedures
- Management Time Split
- Minimal Economies
- Quality Assurance




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Rover Oaks

Houston, TX

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## Franchise

- Buying a Franchise
  - Provides Model to Follow
  - Requires Same Start-up Steps
  - Operating Procedures & Training Provided
  - Minimal National Brand Recognition in Pet Industry
  - Loss of Control in Operating Business
- Creating a Franchise
  - Need to Provide Unique Value Added to Buyer
  - Build Brand Recognition
  - Significant Legal Investment
  - Quality Assurance



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## My Dream Pet Center

- Multi-service Pet Care Center
- Niche service Pet Care Center
- Facility Options
  - Build new from ground up
  - Purchase a building & renovate
  - Lease space & renovate
- Purchase an Existing Center
- Purchase a Franchise



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## Be Flexible!



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The worst days of those who enjoy what they do are better than the best days of those who don't.

Jim Rohn

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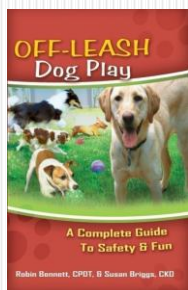
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