

From Indulgence to Intelligence: The Four Forces Reshaping Pet Care

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Introduction

North American pet care growth will likely remain moderate in the near term. Ongoing political tensions, global economic uncertainty, and climate-related disruptions are influencing consumer confidence and spending behavior. As a result, many pet owners are becoming more intentional about how and where they spend, seeking ways to balance quality care for their pets with tighter household budgets.

This shift is accelerating demand for multifunctional products and blurring traditional category lines—such as treats that also deliver health benefits or grooming products with wellness claims. Consumers are prioritizing premium products at accessible price points, preventative health solutions that help extend their pets' lifespans, and digital shopping and discovery experiences. Leveraging these trends can help pet care brands succeed in an increasingly crowded marketplace.

*The brands mentioned in this report are trademarks of their respective owners. Inclusion of these brands in this report is not meant to imply an association with or endorsement from the respective trademark owners.

Affordable Premium

The ongoing humanization of pets continues to fuel premiumization in pet care. According to Euromonitor, 68% of global respondents consider their pets beloved family members, reinforcing a willingness to invest in higher-quality products. However, this emotional commitment is increasingly at odds with economic reality. Euromonitor notes, “Price increases, which are building from already high bases, are straining pet owner resilience.” In response, consumers are becoming more strategic in their purchase decisions. [NielsenIQ](#) reports that “in response to inflation, consumers are actively deal-hunting, turning to discount stores, and closely monitoring brand prices to stretch their budgets.” Ultra-premium pricing can limit reach, creating an opportunity for brands that deliver elevated quality at more accessible price points—appealing to aspirational, value-conscious consumers.

“Brands that limit themselves to the higher-priced tiers risk confining themselves to a narrow niche.” (Euromonitor)

Packaging plays a critical role in communicating a premium positioning. Minimalist aesthetics, clean labeling, and thoughtful material choices are strongly associated with quality and trust, particularly when paired with transparent ingredient stories. Maximizing the impact of minimal design requires nuance; Studio One Eleven’s designers specialize in striking the right balance between simplicity and shelf impact. Custom structural design can further differentiate brands, reinforcing a sense of uniqueness and premium value.



Proactive Pet Health

Pet owners increasingly want to support longer, healthier lives for their pets, driving demand for preventative health care solutions. Many consumers now approach pet wellness in the same way they approach their own healthcare—focusing on early intervention, daily maintenance, and functional benefits rather than reactive treatment. This mindset is fueling growth in functional pet food and supplements, with pet dietary supplements growing at a 20% CAGR between 2020 and 2025 (Euromonitor). Calming products have also become a core component of modern pet care, especially among Gen Z and Millennial pet owners, according to the American Pet Products Association ([APPA](#)).

“A preventative approach is considered a way to mitigate the risk of future diseases and, by extension, [costly] vet visits.” (Euromonitor)

Clear, credible on-pack communication around ingredients, functionality, and health claims is essential to earning trust in this space. At the same time, labels must avoid becoming overly complex. Clean, minimalist design reinforces a health-forward positioning. Meanwhile, smart technologies—such as QR codes—can extend product information beyond the package, redirecting consumers to a company’s website for detailed product education and personalized wellness guidance.

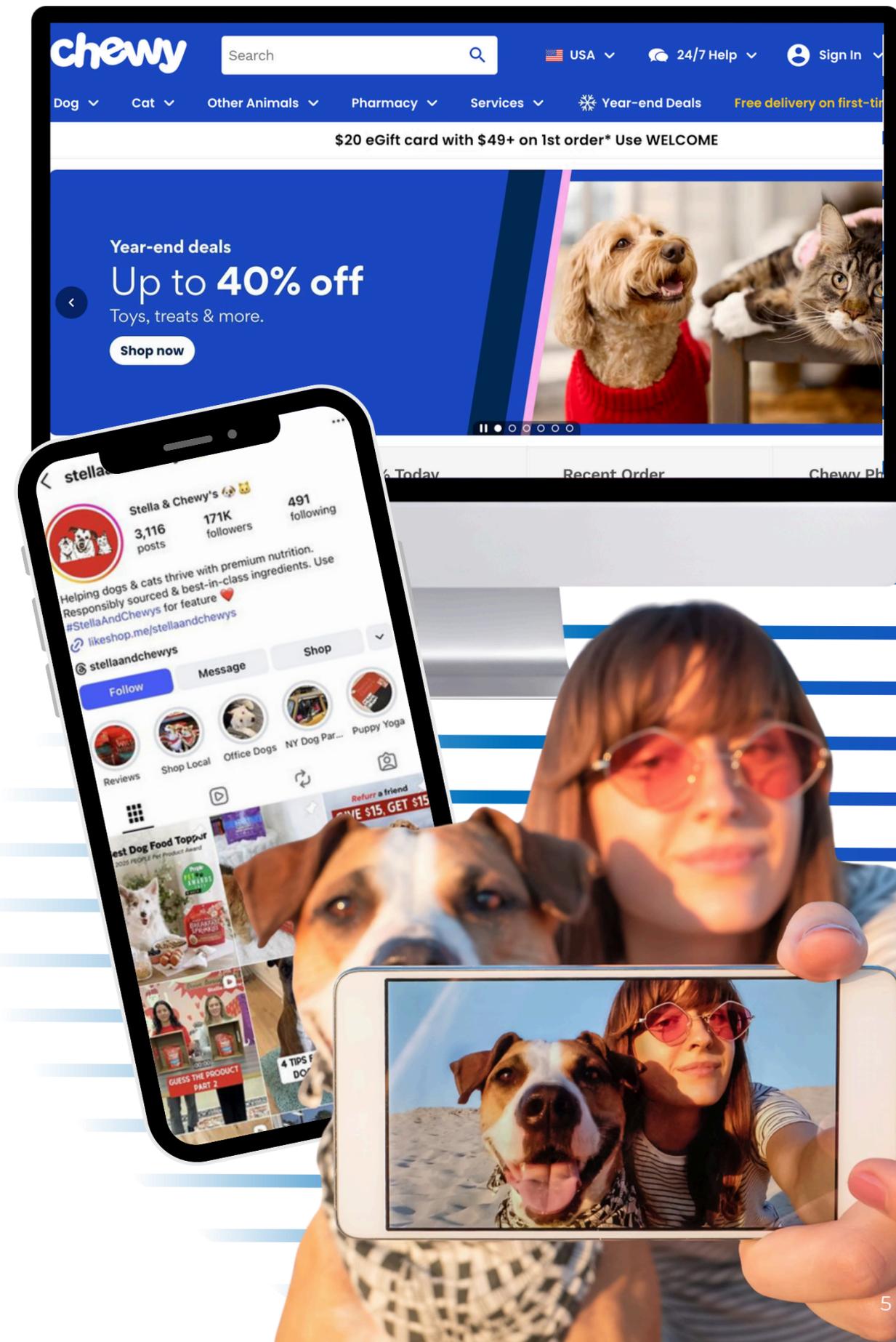


Digital Engagement

Digital engagement is now essential within the pet care industry. The rise of digitally native pet owners, combined with increased brand investment in online channels, is accelerating the expansion of pet e-commerce and reshaping how consumers discover and evaluate products. Gen Z is a key driver of this shift. APPA reports that Gen Z shows significant growth in pet ownership and is the generation most likely to own multiple pets, with 70% of Gen Z pet owners having two or more pets. Equally important is how younger consumers engage with brands. “Social media platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram play a crucial role in their purchasing decisions,” APPA notes, making visual, digital-first strategies essential.

“TikTok has emerged as a powerful force in the pet care space, influencing product discovery and driving direct purchases.” (NielsenIQ)

Euromonitor emphasizes that “as brands look to cater to a growing segment of younger pet owners, it’s imperative to establish a connection with these digital natives in the online world.” Beyond e-commerce, online platforms like TikTok and Instagram are central to discovery, engagement, and conversion. Strong visual identity is critical—products that are aesthetically compelling, distinctive, and shareable are more likely to perform well online. Unique structures, bold silhouettes, and Insta-worthy design can help brands stand out both on the shelf and in social feeds. Studio One Eleven specializes in creating buzz-worthy packaging and brand systems that thrive across physical and digital touchpoints.





Clean & Safe

Demand for clean, safe, and sustainable pet products continues to rise. Valued at \$43.65 billion in 2024, the global market for eco-friendly pet products is projected to reach \$85.9 billion by 2035, driven by increased awareness of sustainability and demand for non-toxic options ([Dogtopia](#)). At the same time, concerns around product recalls, food safety, and transparency remain top of mind. Euromonitor notes that “fears over recalls, and at times misinformation or confusion over conflictive information on ‘safe’ formats, have been exacerbated by online trends.” As a result, pet food brands face ongoing challenges around consumer loyalty and trust.

“Environmentally conscious pet parents are actively seeking natural, biodegradable, and plastic-free products.” (Pet Union)

Brands must lead with transparency through substantiated on-pack claims, detailed ingredient disclosures, expert endorsements and certifications, and scientifically validated benefits. Sustainable packaging is also becoming a critical trust signal, particularly when supported by credible data rather than generic language. Berlin Packaging’s sustainability team conducts lifecycle analyses (LCAs) to help brands quantify environmental impact across the entire product lifecycle. These validated insights enable clear, defensible claims that reduce confusion, build credibility, and foster long-term loyalty.

Looking Ahead

As the pet care landscape continues to evolve, brands that succeed will be those that respond thoughtfully to changing consumer priorities—balancing emotional connection with economic reality. Affordable premium offerings, proactive health solutions, digital-first engagement, and transparent commitments to safety and sustainability are essential to staying competitive. In a crowded and cautious marketplace, strategic packaging, clear communication, and strong visual identity can help brands build trust, stand out across physical and digital shelves, and foster long-term loyalty. By aligning product innovation and brand design with these emerging expectations, pet care companies can create meaningful value for both pets and the people who care for them.

Berlin Packaging has access to tens of thousands of stock packaging components, award-winning custom design capabilities, a dedicated team of sustainability experts, and more to help pet care brands with effective packaging strategies that succeed in today's marketplace. We're more than a packaging supplier; we're a full-service business partner positioned to help pet care brands win in 2026 and beyond.



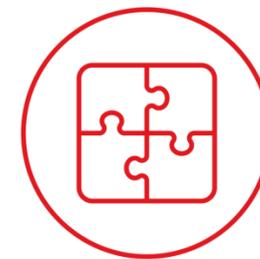


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Our Business Model

Berlin Packaging combines the best elements of manufacturing, distribution and logistics, and value-added service providers to deliver cost-effective packaging solutions to our customers. Our mission is to improve our customers' net income through packaging products and services. We are the world's largest Hybrid Packaging Supplier[®].



Best Elements of a Manufacturer

+



Distribution & Logistics

+



Value-Added Specialty Services

Value-Added Specialty Services

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