

Getting Cat Clients

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With estimates of over 90 million owned cats in the US alone, there are plenty of felines running around this planet that are in need of some type of professional grooming. Many owners have no idea that their cat CAN be professionally groomed (cats groom themselves, remember) and have no idea the tremendous difference it can make for them and their cat to have this service performed on a regular basis.

So how do you get those cat owners on the phone, scheduling an appointment with you?

To begin with, advertise your cat grooming services at local veterinarian offices and with other grooming salons that do not groom or do not WANT to groom cats. Remember that some groomers are only taking cat clients because they are asked to, but do not really want to perform this type of service.

Make a personal visit to these establishments to introduce yourself. Bring a small, inexpensive gift of candy, candles, bath and body products, or flowers, along with a stash of business cards, brochures, or any other marketing material you may have explaining the cat grooming services you offer. Both "Got Hairballs" and "A Groomed Cat is a Happy Cat" customer brochures are excellent for this purpose. Both are available through the NCGIA in packs of 50 or 100. The brochures were created to help cat groomers solicit new clients through a variety of venues.

If you have some "before & after" photos of cats you have groomed, be sure you use those to demonstrate the value of your skills. A picture is worth a thousand words.

Be sure that your website is up and running with useful information that markets your business effectively and efficiently. We live in a day and age when potential customers are more apt to visit a website before actually making a phone call. They want to check you out before that initial contact. If your website provides a poor first impression, you are probably losing customers that you didn't know you had. First impressions play a vital role in securing that first appointment. When your web presence is the first impression you make on the public, it must sell you in the best way possible!

As you obtain new clients, find out how they learned about your business. If the referral came from one of the veterinarian offices or other grooming establishments, be sure to send them a personal "thank you" note. Follow up with each place of business on a monthly basis to thank them for referrals as well as restock marketing material. In time, they will get to know you and trust you. In time, they will see the results of your grooming as their patients and customers return with a transformed kitty or news of what a great job you have done with their cat. Thus begins the building of a great reputation!

We will explore other ways to market your business to new clients in coming issues of the NCGIA newsletter. Stay tuned for next time!



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