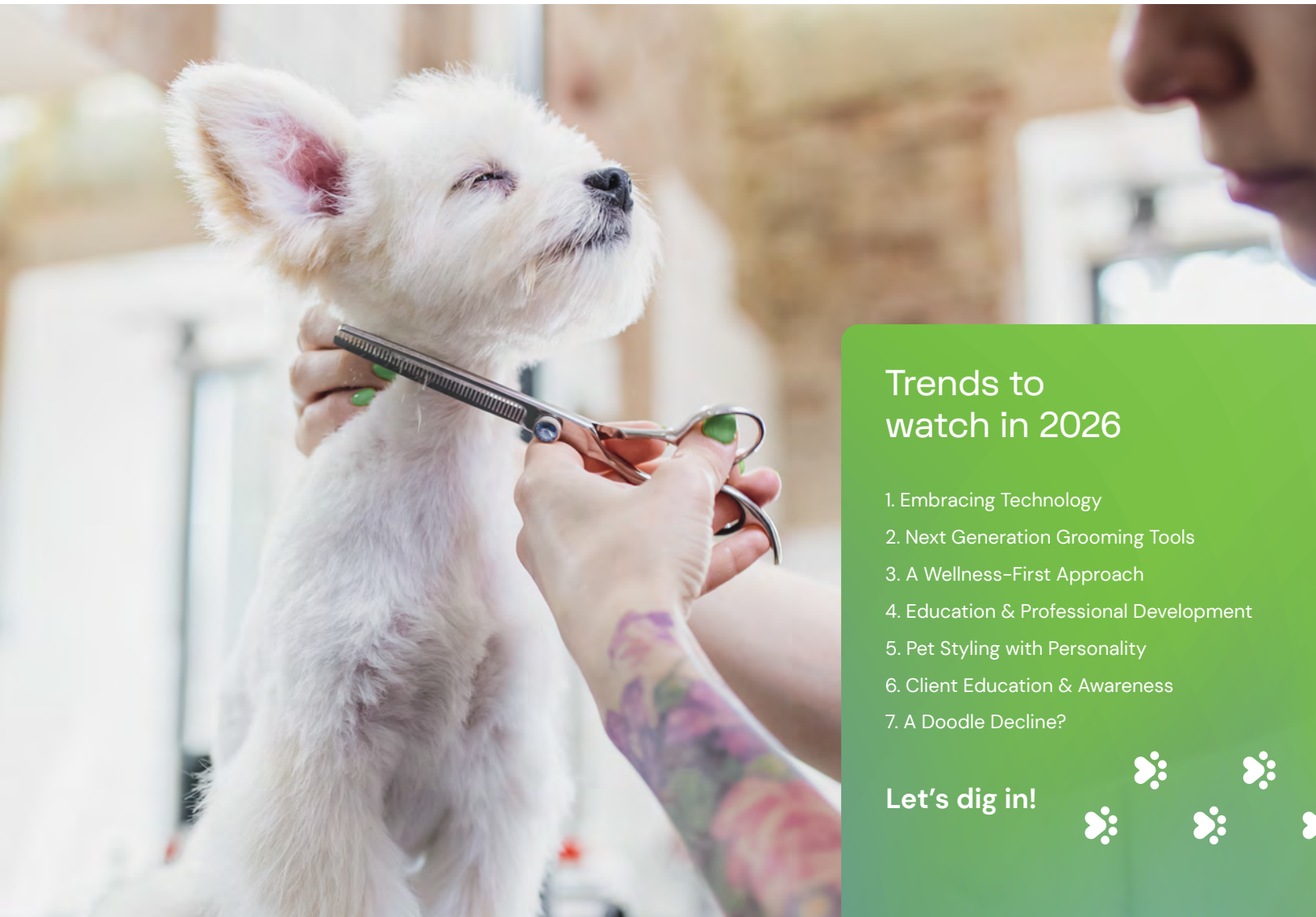


Top Trends for Pet Groomers in 2026



Trends to watch in 2026

1. Embracing Technology
2. Next Generation Grooming Tools
3. A Wellness-First Approach
4. Education & Professional Development
5. Pet Styling with Personality
6. Client Education & Awareness
7. A Doodle Decline?

Let's dig in!



❖ New Year, ❖ New Trends

The pet care industry has seen a lot of change over the past few years, so it's only natural to wonder what's coming next.

In December 2025, we surveyed a group of pet grooming business owners to gather their opinions on emerging trends and unique industry insights. From here, we built this report to give you a closer look at where the pet grooming industry stands today, common challenges pet professionals are facing, and the top trends you can look forward to going into 2026. Let's dive in!

First Things First: Is the Pet Industry Still Growing?

Short answer: yes, but there's a bit more to it than that. While the pet industry as a whole continues to grow, that experience varies from salon to salon:



82%

of respondents
responded business
growth in 2025



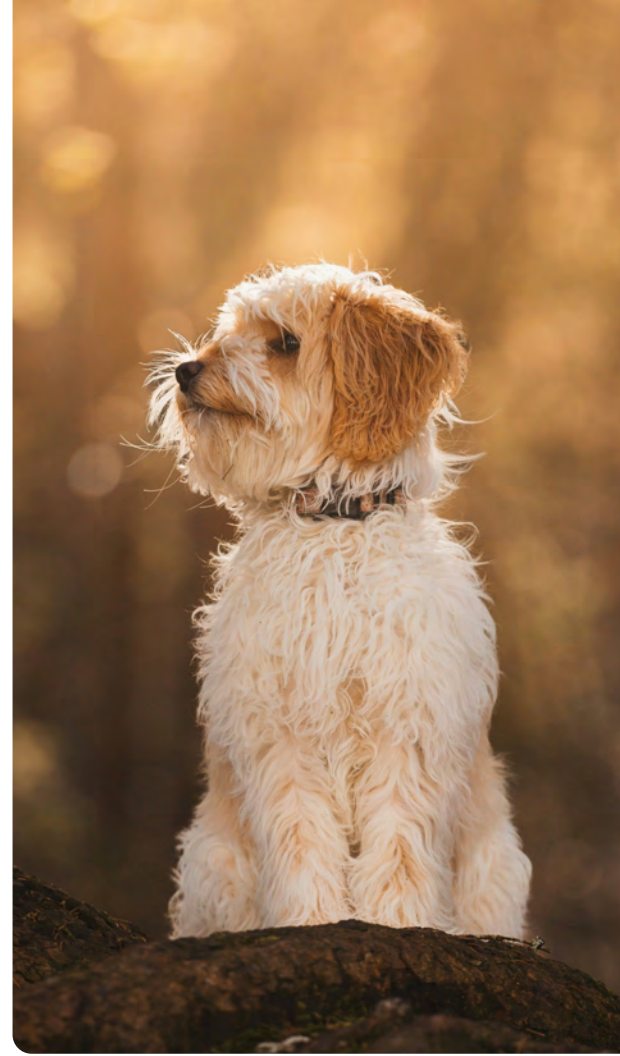
Most growing
businesses saw
revenue increases of:

1-25%



Businesses who did not
grow reported revenue
declines: averaging

1-10%



What's Driving Growth?

When economic pressures are being felt across the board, it's fair to wonder what separates growing businesses from the rest of the pack. From marketing efforts to new technology, respondents pointed to several reasons for their growth, but three main answers stood out among the rest:



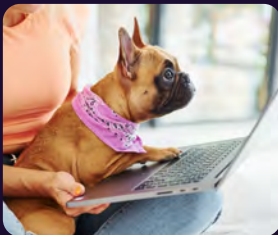
1. Higher Client Satisfaction and Referrals

Businesses that focused on creating great experiences for pets and their parents saw some great payoff. Happy clients are more likely to rebook and spread the word, making referrals one of the most powerful (and affordable) growth tools out there.



2. Improved Client Retention

Respondents shared that keeping existing clients happy is just as important as gaining new ones. Consistent service, good communication, and building trust helps maintain a steady schedule and reliable income.



3. Enhanced Online Presence

Visibility matters! Online booking, active social media, and an up-to-date website made it easy for pet parents to find and connect with them.

Did You Know? 75% of users admit to judging a company's credibility based on its website design. (*kinesis*)



DaySmart Tip

You can build a modern, AI-powered website in under 10 minutes with DaySmart's Website Builder. Customize it to match your brand to shine among your competition and attract more clients (while saving time and money).

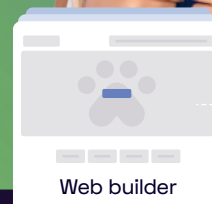
[Learn More](#) →



Max



Roxie

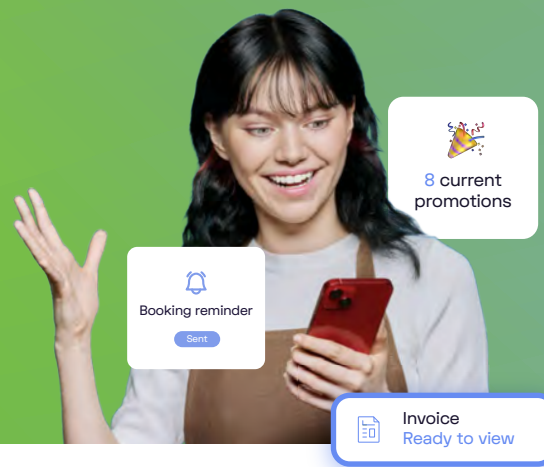


Web builder



Why Growth Isn't Guaranteed

So, if growth is possible, why isn't everyone seeing it? When we asked respondents what they felt was holding their businesses back, a few common themes came up.



Factors Contributing to a Lack of Growth

Economic Downturn

Rising costs and tighter household budgets are affecting both businesses and pet parents.

Increased Competition

With more grooming options available, standing out and maintaining a steady client base has become more challenging.

Staffing Challenges

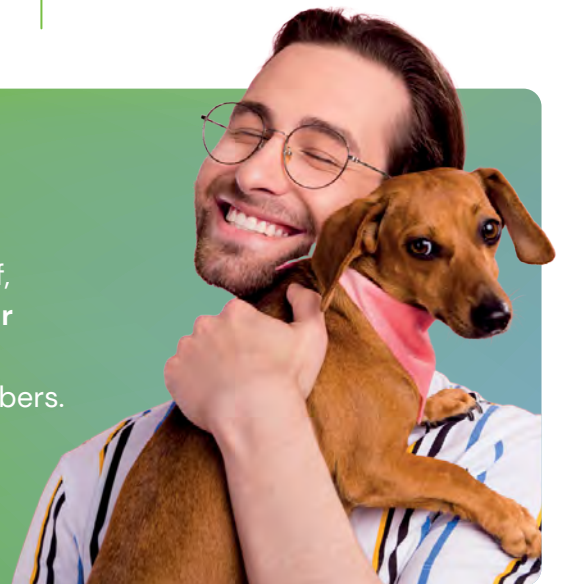
Finding and keeping skilled, reliable staff continues to limit growth for many businesses.



DaySmart Tip

With so many pet groomers struggling to find and keep staff, we created **Beyond the Shears: Building and Retaining Your Grooming Talent**, a free infographic made to help grooming business owners attract, develop, and retain top team members.

[Learn More](#) →



Biggest Challenges Groomers Face Today

Managing Operational Costs

From supplies to utilities, everyday expenses are increasing, making it harder to balance pricing and profitability.

Staffing Recruitment and Retention

Building a reliable, happy team takes time, training, and flexibility, which can be hard in such a demanding industry.

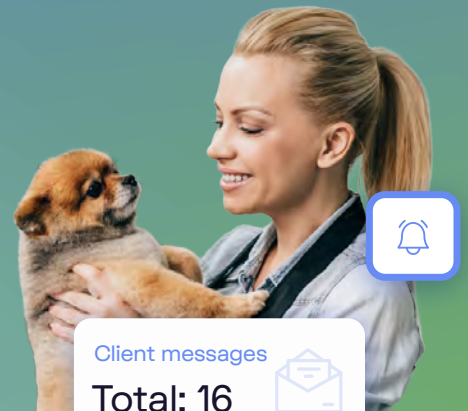
Attracting and Retaining Clients

With more choices available to pet parents than ever, strong communication, excellent service, and lasting relationships are more important than ever.



Looking Ahead to 2026

When asked about their goals, pet groomers made one thing clear: 2026 is all about working smarter, not harder! These goals reflect the real challenges groomers face today and the practical ways they plan to build stronger, more sustainable business plans.



Client messages

Total: 16



Top 5 Goals for 2026



1. Increase Overall Revenue

Groomers can grow income by adjusting pricing, offering add-on services, and increasing retail sales rather than just packing more appointments into the day.



2. Improve Operational Efficiency

Better scheduling, improved tools, and smoother daily processes are top of mind to help save time and reduce stress behind the scenes.



3. Enhance Online Presence

From social media to fresh websites with glowing reviews, groomers are prioritizing a strong online presence so pet parents can easily find and trust their business.



4. Grow Client Base through Marketing

Many groomers plan to lean into local marketing, referrals, and promotions to attract new clients who are the right fit for their business.



5. Improve Client Retention

Clear communication, reliable service, and loyalty perks are helping groomers keep existing clients coming back year after year.



DaySmart Tip

Looking to boost your presence on social media, but don't know where to start? Check out our recent blog where we share 7 Expert Tips to help grow your grooming business and connect with potential clients online.

[Learn More](#) →



Trends to Watch in 2026



The pet grooming industry is constantly evolving, and many of the trends we're seeing now are a direct response to everyday challenges and adapting to client needs.

From tech and wellness to creativity and education, these trends give an insightful snapshot of where the industry is headed.

Here are the top trends we predict will be shaping the pet grooming industry in 2026:

Trend 1

Embracing Technology

Trend 2

Next Generation Grooming Tools

Trend 3

A Wellness-First Approach

Trend 4

Education & Professional Development

Trend 5

Pet Styling with Personality

Trend 6

Client Education & Awareness

Trend 7

A Doodle Decline?

Let's explore them more →





Trend 1

Embracing Technology



Technology is revolutionizing the grooming world. From AI-powered tools and online booking to virtual front-desk assistants, technology is being built with a goal to streamline day-to-day operations and make it easier to keep everything running smoothly.

Why embrace this new technology? The payoff is huge when it helps you run your salon more efficiently and makes your life easier. By combining automation with flexibility, technology is helping groomers save time, reduce stress, and deliver an even better experience for pets and their parents!



DaySmart Tip

We know the right tech can make all the difference. Booking and management software can streamline your day-to-day operations, save you time, and support long-term growth when you choose the right one. To help you get started, we've created a blog that highlights what to look for in the best grooming salon software.

[Learn More](#) →





Trend 2

Next Generation Grooming Tools



Every year, new tools, equipment, and products make their debut. Many are drumming up a lot of interest in the pet care community this year.

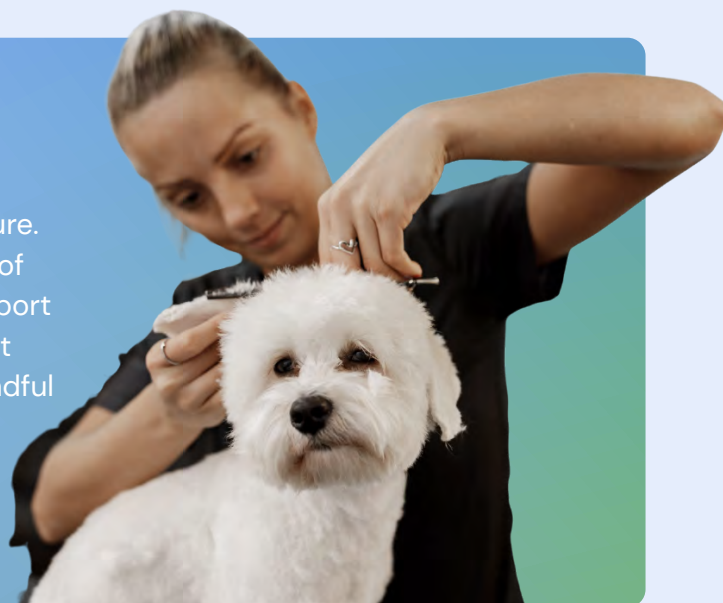
The big focus for 2026 is efficiency, with products designed to help groomers work smarter while maintaining high-quality results. From modern clippers and dryers to thoughtfully designed tools that reduce strain and save time, today's equipment is designed to make the grooming process easier for both groomers and pets.



DaySmart Tip

The tools you use today have an impact on your future. Ergonomics plays an important role in the longevity of your pet grooming career, as the right tools can support your health and well-being over time. Industry expert Chris Anthony shares valuable insight into being mindful of how your grooming tools affect your body.

[Learn More →](#)



These advancements help groomers focus less on fatigue and more on what matters most: the pet on the table.





Trend 3

A Wellness-First Approach



Pet parents are more focused than ever on their pets' overall well-being, treating them like true family members and seeking out care that supports both health and happiness. With this comes interesting trends such as a focus on skin health and allergy awareness in some grooming salons. Groomers are using this knowledge to tailor their services to each dog, creating a more thoughtful, wellness-first experience.

Another trend that's gaining traction is fear-free grooming. The goal is simple: make grooming as calm and comfortable as possible from start to finish. By using gentle handling, patience, and positive techniques, groomers are helping pets feel more at ease and turning grooming into a much more positive experience for everyone involved.

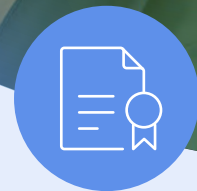


Spa upgrades and enhanced treatments, such as soothing baths, skin-supportive products, and relaxation-focused add-ons, are also becoming more popular and add an extra layer of comfort and care.





Trend 4



Education & Professional Development

The pet grooming industry is bringing more attention to education, accountability, and ethical practices in 2026. There's a push for clear guidelines and certifications to help ensure groomers are properly trained and caring for pets responsibly, with some even advocating for more industry regulation, including licensing requirements.

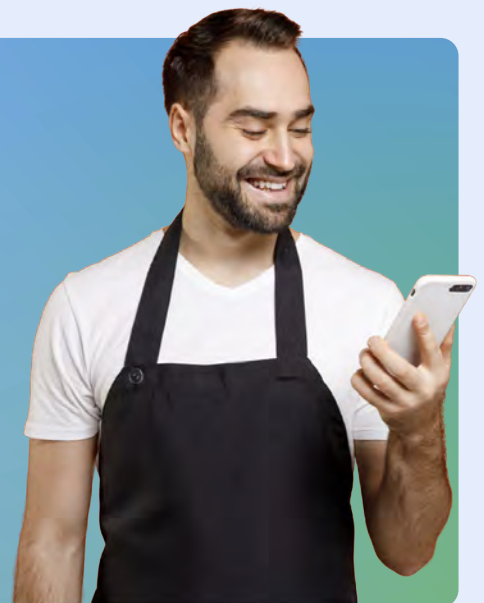
At the same time, salons everywhere are embracing continued education to expand their top-quality services, showing their commitment to growth, professionalism, and the future of the industry.



DaySmart Tip

Whether you're brand new to pet grooming or you've been in the game for years, questions about licensing and certifications are bound to pop up. Requirements can vary and deciding what direction to take may not always be clear. To make things easy, check out The Essential Guide to Pet Grooming Licensing that breaks down everything you need to know and more.

[Learn More](#) →





Trend 5

Pet Styling with Personality



With a new year comes new grooming trends! As we head into 2026, many groomers are excited to see a rise in colorful, creative, and artistic grooms. Pet parents are becoming more open to unique styles and bold pops of color, giving groomers the chance to show off their creativity and skill. From nontoxic coat dyeing to vibrant fashion colors, pets can look forward to some fun looks this year.



Along with color trends, new grooming styles and techniques are gaining popularity. One standout is Asian Fusion grooming (sometimes called Asian Freestyle or Japanese grooming). Originally designed to give dogs a youthful, puppy-like look, this style is all about creativity and cuteness, with grooms inspired by teddy bears, pandas, and more.





Trend 6

Client Education & Awareness



Another trend coming into 2026 is a positive shift in client education and awareness. Many groomers shared that pet parents are starting to understand the importance of regular grooming and maintenance for their pets. This trend could bring a noticeable difference in day-to-day scheduling and client expectations.

As more clients learn what proper coat care actually involves, conversations feel easier and more productive. Better-informed pet parents are more open to recommendations and long-term care plans, which ultimately leads to healthier pets and a smoother experience for everyone involved.

Did You Know? Two-thirds of pet owners now recognize that regular grooming contributes to a healthier pet. (*Dogster*)





Trend 7

A Doodle Decline?

The final trend noted highlights of a familiar challenge (and sore subject) for many pet groomers: **doodles**

While they are loved by many pet parents, their high-maintenance coats require regular grooming, often creating a disconnect between groomer and owner expectations. If those needs are not met, the time, effort, and upkeep involved in maintaining doodle coats can take a toll, leading many groomers to feel overwhelmed by the volume and demands of doodle grooms.

Several respondents reported seeing a general decline in doodle numbers in their area, even noting a return to purebred dogs over doodle mixes. This shift appears to be reflected on a larger scale as well. Rover's annual ranking of the most popular dog breeds in America shows the Goldendoodle dropping from 3rd place in 2024 to 4th place in 2025. So, while doodles remain popular, their once rapid rise may be slowing as groomers and pet owners alike reconsider coat care expectations, long-term maintenance, and overall trend fatigue.



We Hope This Report Helps You Feel More Confident Going Into 2026!

No matter the year, trends will show up and provide valuable insight into where the grooming industry is headed. Successful businesses tend to adapt to these trends and thrive. So, even in times of trouble, growth is still possible for many businesses!

DaySmart Pet is here to support your business year after year. No matter what trend you follow, our software will help your grooming salon thrive with seamless scheduling, client management, and day-to-day operations so you can focus on what you do best.



Discover why thousands of businesses have made the switch with a 14-day free trial

Start Your Free Trial →

no credit card required

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