

# Healthy Choice

Dogswell promotes happy, healthy pets with its all-natural food and treats.

**M**arco Giannini always knew he was meant to own a company. In 2004, inspired by his father's background in medicine, his grandfather's background in business and his love for animals, the Los Angeles-based entrepreneur began working with a team to manipulate premium, meat-based dog treats for a line called Happy Hips. That year, the company made their first sale, and thus began Dogswell, a brand of "premium treats for your dog's well-being."

Over the last four years, the company has grown tremendously. Dogswell products are now sold in 100 stores in northern California, plus several independent pet stores and natural food stores. There are 22 employees helping to bring in eight-figure revenues. "It has just exploded," Giannini says.



Marco Giannini



quality food when they're young, and they'll live longer." Sometimes, it's as simple as that.

## Life Support

Dogswell supports the retailers with a dedicated sales team that hits the streets and ensures that retailers have everything they need to effectively sell the products. The company also gives away over 100,000 samples a month.

When the Dogswell team isn't busy selling products, they are running, biking, training and donating. This month, the majority of the Dogswell staff will be participating in the Malibu Triathlon. "It's a really spectacular thing," says Giannini. "We promote a really great environment, not just in our products, but in our own personal lifestyles."

The company is also highly involved with the Amanda Foundation in Los Angeles and has donated more than \$1 million in retail products. "Oh My Dog" is Dogswell's own annual charity calendar, which helps raise thousands of dol-

lars for charity.

## Simple Minds

Giannini attributes the success of Dogswell to the "no fuss" attitude of the product packaging. "It's about simplicity," he says. "It's a simple product line with easy-to-read ingredients. We make everything easier for the customer, even the product names. The Breathies are for a dog's breath. The Hippies are for a dog's hips—it's very self-explanatory, and that's what people appreciate."

Another simple reason for the company's success is the recent health craze. Los Angeles, which is a hotbed of healthy trends, such as steam beauty treatments and organic take-out restaurants, was a perfect place to establish an all-natural pet food company. And as the number of health-based businesses continues to grow, much of the country has caught up. Nowadays, pet owners want their pets to be just as healthy as they are.

"Maintenance and prevention is what we're about," says Giannini. "People want their dogs to live longer. They're spending more time in taking care of their dogs. Feed dogs better-

## Canned Heat

Giannini believes the trend in healthier food and treats will eventually cover the entire retail store. "When it comes to better quality, I don't see any reason for it not to. Even fast-food chains are getting healthier, and that will continue with pet foods," he says.

Dogswell will soon be launching a line of canned food, which will include its original product, Happy Hips, made with chicken, duck and lamb. Even more foods will be introduced in the fall and spring.

"We're just a very energetic, youthful company, and we really stand for how we operate on a daily basis," Giannini says. "We provide customers firsthand with helpful staff members and quality products, and we think that's what is most important." **PB**