

# CAT'S POPULARITY ON THE RISE. HAS IT TAKEN OVER THE DOG MARKET?

Cats have been conquering the world ever since the ancient times. It is evident on the traces that they left in history – from mummies, statues, to paintings.

The *Felis silvestris lybica*, a wild cat where all modern domestic cats descended from, coexisted with humans in the old days by helping them on the farm.

Today, cats don't only serve as farm helpers but also as a permanent fixture in some homes. However, they aren't the only furry companion that humans have. Their biggest competitor on the hearts of people has been with dogs right from the start.

When it comes to raw population, cats outnumber dogs. A lot more cat-themed stores and whatnots are starting to appear too. With that in mind, have cats taken over the dog market?

## WHAT DO THE STATISTICS SAY?

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association's 2012 records, more households own dogs than cats. Although presenting different data, the recent results from the American Pet Products Association say that same.

The records show that 60.2 million households own dogs, while 47.1 million homes have cats.

The cat ownership is also barely progressing in the past years even though the raw population of cats is greater than dogs. This is due to the fact that there are more households that own multiple cats compared to dogs.

It is also because cats are considerably smaller and pet owners are more likely to get companions for their kitties. When it comes to states, cats dominate in the Northeast and Upper Midwest parts as dogs take the South and Southwest areas. Arkansas is hailed to be the most dog-loving state while Massachusetts tops

in the cat-loving department.

How about the other parts of the world? South America and Asia are firmly dog lovers but most of Western Europe seems to love cats more. Although fishes are the most popular pet in the UK, the number of pet cats is steadily going up too.

## CATS AND THE MARKET

Generation Y or the Millennial pet owners seem to be the ones who control the flow of the market. They are more concerned about the overall welfare of their pets. Since there are more Millennials who own cats and dogs, the demand for pet services goes up too.

Remember the households that own more than one cats? They tend to make use of pet services as well as pet safety devices more often. It can range from groomers to pet sitters for their fur babies. In addition to this, cat owners in the urban areas are more likely to pamper and spoil their cats compared to the cat owners in the rural areas. As a matter of fact, things like cat cafes are also starting to boom in several parts of the world. This just shows that although cats aren't the consistent number one when it comes to pets, they'd still stay at the top.

## WHY DO SOME PEOPLE PREFER CATS?

Different people have different preferences and the discourse on what's the better pet is never-ending. However, there are some worthy points about why some people prefer owning cats.

## CATS ARE LESS EXPENSIVE TO OWN

Cats are considerably more affordable to own than dogs. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) says that a minimum of \$300 to \$800 can be saved annually if you own a cat instead of a pup.

There are also shelters that offer discounts if you're getting more than one kitten. The food, supplies, toys, services, as well as veterinary expenses for cats are also cheaper. Since dogs are bigger animals and have a different lifestyle than cats, everything costs more with them.

## THEY ARE EASIER TO MAINTAIN

These animals are more likely to chill indoors. Whereas dogs need frequent walks, cats are happy just jumping over high tops, perching on windows or even just their owner's shoulders.

That doesn't mean that they don't need exercise though. They also need some supervision, especially in the kitchen. Cats are also masters of self-cleaning. Grooming can be just a weekly coat brushing and also nail clipping from time to time. Sites like Purring Pal also help pet owners when it comes to taking care of their feline friend.

Since cats need minimum maintenance, more Baby Boomers prefer having them as pets. In fact, over the last decade, cat ownership in the said generation increased by 43%.

## THE INTERNET LOVES CATS

Videos of cats are considerably more popular than dog videos. There are also a lot of cat personalities that became internet sensations. LOLcats, Lil Bub, Grumpy Cat, and Nyan Cat are only some of the internet's cat mascots. There's something about cats' charisma that makes them more enjoyable to watch and admire. Their stoic and their seemingly uncaring nature, as well as their unpredictability, are only some of their qualities that attract people. ■