



Pet Waste Removal Franchise Actively Seeking Acquisitions

By Rebecca Wenzel

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DoodyCalls, a Charlottesville, Virginia-based pet waste removal franchise, is actively seeking pet waste acquisitions in the consolidating pet industry, said CEO Jacob D’Aniello.

The privately held company is interested in targets that it can convert into both corporate and franchise locations to expand its US footprint, he said. DoodyCalls is looking for acquisitions to expand its corporate model in the Northeast as well as California, which it would integrate into its branded system.

The company, which has 40 locations in 23 states, plans to add 15 locations this year and 20-25 locations next year both through new locations and acquisitions, he explained. It is seeking targets that offer similar pet cleanup services and ones that could benefit from its branding, support and marketing, its lime-green fleet of vehicles and its involvement in local charities.

The pet industry is already consolidating, but the consolidation among pet waste companies, in particular, has not started yet, and DoodyCalls would like to kick this off, said D’Aniello.

DoodyCalls is receiving interest from private equity players seeking to invest in pet service companies as the industry continues to boom, he said. The company will entertain these approaches and has had discussions with potential investors. However, the company has not found the right fit yet as it needs an investor that is committed to growing the brand without sacrificing the founders’ vision.

DoodyCalls also sees the possibility of merging operations with another pet services company as the pet services industry starts to consolidate to create “one-stop shops” for pet services and products, said D’Aniello. DoodyCalls has spoken to other pet service companies about these options previously and it is “not a bad idea” as a way to complement its existing services by offering pet grooming, daycare, or dog walking services. DoodyCalls is interested in this option as long as it does not dilute the brand.

According to earlier reports by this news service, Camp Bow Wow, a Boulder, Colorado-based overnight and doggy day camp franchise, and Pet Butler, a Dallas, Texas-based pet waste clean-up franchise, are both interested in merging with complementary pet services companies to fuel growth. Camp Bow Wow expects 2009 revenues of USD 40m.

Another option could be to merge with another convenience-based service franchise such as cleaning, lawn care or window washing, he said. From a business perspective this makes sense because it would provide a cross over in clientele as well as expand its US footprint. The clientele would benefit from a company that offers numerous convenience-based services.

The company has not hired M&A advisors yet, but it plans to hire counsel in the event of an acquisition, private equity or merger, D’Aniello said. The company is interested in approaches. It switched from DLA Piper to Faegre and Benson for its legal counsel.

D’Aniello and his wife, Susan, are 100% owners of the company which they founded nine years ago and started franchising in 2004. DoodyCalls removes pet waste for residential yards, apartment communities and Home Owner Associations.