

## From GPS tracking collars to heated coats: how the “pet” market has changed

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In this interview with **Giacomo Brusa (foto)**, an entrepreneur in the garden and animal sector, and owner of a well-known garden centre on Lake Varese, we retrace the evolution of the “pet” sector, through the eyes of someone who supplies increasingly sophisticated and demanding consumers with increasingly specific and hi-tech products and accessories.

**On the one hand, there is the all too evident danger of excessively “humanising” our four-legged friends, and on the other, the pets reflect in all aspects the evolution of the life- and consumption styles of their owners.** Essentially living in symbiosis is the natural order of things. In Italy, the pet market is **a rapidly expanding sector**, with considerable figures in terms of volumes, both in terms of basic needs, such as food and health, and of the playful, sporting and even frivolous aspects.

In Italy, the economic “weight” of the food sector for dogs and cats alone exceeds €2 billion per year. Italy is the European country with the highest animal/human ratio, with an average of 50,3 pets for every 100 inhabitants, according to the latest Assalco-Zoomark report, beating even France. Beyond the clichés, one of the positive effects of this greater attention, with a resulting increase in general quality, was the increase in the average lifespan of our pets over the years, thanks also to research and to the availability of “medical” foods.

**Of course, a coat with a heating system incorporated, that is controlled remotely using a**

**smartphone is certainly surprising**, but modern technology also allows us to follow, and find, Rover using the same smartphone, in case he gets lost, thanks to transponders that can be inserted into his collar. The fact remains that even though many sectors in our economy are in dire straits, the animal sector does not seem to know what crisis means, which is welcome news for our friends, whether they have two or four legs, paws, fins or wings.

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