

One Dog Can Change the World

TruDog believes pets deserve healthy, all-natural food. Based on its growth figures, pet owners agree.

TRUDOG

#39

2018 INC. 5000 RANKING

1.5

MILLION DOLLARS

MONTHLY REOCCURRING REVENUE

53

NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES, AND HIRING 100 MORE IN 2019

20

MILLION DOLLARS

ANNUAL REVENUE

DO YOU KNOW that saying, “I want to be the person my dog thinks I am?” Well, Lori R. Taylor is that person. She is the founder and CEO of TruDog, a family-owned pet food company committed to helping dogs live longer. TruDog, and its parent company, TruPet LLC, make it easy for owners to feed their pets healthy, raw food without having to freeze and thaw it. Products include freeze dried and dehydrated raw dog food, toppers, treats, chews, and supplements.

After learning that her Great Dane, Truman, was battling cancer, something dawned on Taylor: She had embraced healthy eating habits, like choosing unprocessed food, for her family, but why not for her pets? She believed “in the correlation between diet and disease,” and she was well-versed in the science, having lost her mother to leukemia. After some more research, she began feeding her dogs raw meat, since that is what they would have had in the wild. But frankly, feeding raw was time-consuming and messy. She had to store, freeze, and thaw the meat, and she knew not every pet owner would go to such lengths. TruDog, named in tribute to Truman, was born in 2013 after Taylor discovered a small processor that would freeze-dry fresh meat, making it easy to create dog food from raw meat.

Taylor notes that most dog food products are heavily processed, so serving them to your pet is akin to serving them fast food at every meal. She is passionate about spreading this message, and it certainly helps that she is a marketing whiz. Taylor, founder and CEO of REV Media Marketing, a digital marketing strategy based agency in Cincinnati, has won numerous awards for her work building brands. Using her power for good is what she believes has helped TruPet, TruDog’s parent company, land the #39 spot on the 2018 Inc. 5000.

TruPet expects to hit \$20 million in revenue in 2018. It is in the midst of a Series A funding round to support next year’s revenue goal of \$40 million.



The company is also recruiting heavily, with plans to grow its team of 53 employees to more than 150 in 2019. This headcount includes a significant expansion of its marketing department so TruPet can continue “to educate pet parents on the positive results of feeding raw and all natural.”

But, like most brands, TruDog has had its share of growing pains, Taylor says candidly. The company experimented with a subscription model early on, but its real growth began in December 2016 when it pivoted to building a Shopify Plus store. Demand picked up—and they ran out of stock 19 times. (“So fun,” jokes Taylor.) Now, Taylor and her team are experts at managing key performance indicators (KPIs) and at calculating how marketing, specifically their significant investment on Facebook, will affect purchases.

TruPet is growing because it is serving a real need for furry friends and the owners who care for them. But Taylor knows her sincere commitment to helping dogs live longer and better, combined with her heart’s desire to honor the late Truman’s memory, also play a big role in the company’s success. The moral of the story? When expertise and hard work meet vision and passion, big things—or, better yet, good things—happen. ■