

Full speed ahead

The Zoom Room, founded by top dog trainer Jaime Van Wye, opened its doors in 2007 to provide urban dogs with the very first ever Dog Agility Training Center and Canine Social Club. The Zoom Room offers dog training classes including puppy training, dog obedience, tricks training, therapy dog training, and of course our specialty: dog agility training on our custom-designed agility course.

We caught up with Jaime to find out even more about Zoom Room, the dog training and where it is going from here.

How did you become the founder of the Zoom Room? And, what inspired you to establish such a franchise?

I had been running a successful upscale dog hotel for a few years before realizing that I wasn't happy. Daycares and boarding kennels require such extensive staff and facility management, not to mention the burdens of liability and operational costs. There just wasn't any time left during the day to actually interact with the dogs and their owners. At the same time, acting as a consultant to help others start their own kennels and daycares, I saw my same experiences echoed all around me. This was no longer a viable business model for a dog lover who actually wants a joyous hands-on experience. So I went back to the drawing board and took advantage of a gap in the market: high quality dog training in a safe, indoor setting. The result is a business that's a blast to run - what's better than teaching puppies to jump through hoops? - and incredibly fulfilling at the same time, because it enriches the lives of dogs and their owners. It's a more meaningful business, emphasizing the bond between dog and owner and celebrating the social aspect of dog ownership. From the beginning, I knew I wanted to franchise, so from the very inception I developed systems and processes that could be easily replicated, because I believe that every urban area in the U.S. should have a Zoom Room.

One could host a private dog birthday party for their pet and take private classes. What are some of the other services and social canine clubs you offer?

I should first mention that our dog birthday parties aren't strictly for dog's birthdays - equally popular are adoption anniversary parties, which celebrate an even more important date: the day that a dog was rescued from a shelter and placed into a loving, permanent home. A majority of our clients have rescued dogs and don't always know the dog's birthday - but they always know the date that the pup joined their family! During these parties, we offer our special Doggy Disco® which includes not only great music, but a laser light show on the floor for the dogs to chase. As a dedicated, climate-controlled, indoor dog



facility, we're also the perfect destination for breed meet-up groups as well as charitable fundraisers. All of our locations work closely with local and national animal welfare organizations to throw great parties which raise both awareness and much-needed funds.

Is this facility geared towards the overall health of your animal and/or is this an opportunity in which a pet can bond with his/her owner?

All of our activities are designed for you to participate with your dog, and although the emphasis of our center is on agility, we also offer puppy classes, obedience training, a wide range of specialty classes, and private training. All of our methods are positive only, so we teach you how to train your own dog, which in the long run, is more effective since you live with your dog and we don't. We do believe that dogs that are trained are happier, healthier pets. A lot of our activities - like Canine Cross-Training™ and Pup-lates® - are also designed to get your heart pumping as well as your dog's. We even participated in a scientific research study conducted by the Department of Physiology at the University of Massachusetts which explored and confirmed the fitness benefits to humans engaged in agility training with their dog.



How did you come up with these eco-friendly pet products? Do you offer pet foods as well? If so, which brands?

Being green is really important to us so we try to source local, American-made products that are free-range, sustainable, and durable, which is really important in finding "green" dog products. If you go through one dog toy instead of five, that's saving a lot of resources. In addition, since our focus is on dog training, all of our products aim to solve a problem or somehow enhance the bond between you and your dog. We also source our own collars and leashes from Amish craftsmen, produce our own training treats, and buy bones directly from farm co-ops, which eliminates the middlemen and the extra resources (and expenses) that go into getting a great product to our clients.

As for food, we focus on high-quality dry, wet, and raw foods as well as the newer dehydrated foods for owners that are feeding progressive diets. We carry Orijen, Stella & Chewy's, Taste of the Wild, Sojos, Wysong, NRG, Before Grain, Primal, and Merrick.

Your company seems to be integrating into the California market with locations in both Culver City and Hollywood. What are some other markets that you are looking to expand in?

We already have a great location in Austin, Texas - one of the most dog-friendly cities in the country. And 2011 will begin with new location in Milwaukee, Monterey, Boca Raton and Longmont, Colorado. Locations in Chicago and Dallas should follow shortly. We're also eager to expand into the Pacific Northwest - with their rainy seasons there's a great demand for a safe indoor facility where you can exercise your dog. We hope to be in Manhattan, Miami and Denver in 2011, too.

If someone was interested in your brick and mortar franchise, how would one apply?

The best way to get information about our franchise is to visit our website, ZoomRoomOnline.com, and click on the Franchise Information button at the top. Or they could call us at 1-877-ZOOM-ROOM.