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2019 VANGUARD AWARDS

Ear Cleaning Systems

Companies offering ear cleaning systems are designing them to effectively remove dirt and grime while ensuring they do not harm or irritate the pet.

Pura Naturals Pet watches the pet and human market for what is trending. "We look at health issues and social concerns," said Beth Sommers of Pura Naturals Pet. "We are constantly in touch with vendors and customers to find out their needs or concerns," Sommers said. "We are aware of the importance of ear health. We just launched our new USDA Certified Ear Wash and have received terrific results. This is a new option for our Pura Naturals Pet customers," she said. "We wanted to make sure to have a product that could be used daily if necessary, to remove dirt and wax. Our Ear Cleansing System is specifically designed to treat a dog with ear problems that usually reoccur. The Mullein Oil in our serum is terrific for fighting infection and inflammation," she added.

Dan Archetti of Pet King Brands points out for more 20 years, ZYMOX Enzy-



matic Ear Solution and Ear Cleanser has been helping pet parents care for problematic ears for their dogs, cats, other small animals and horses. "While animals suffer from ear conditions year round, our products are promoted around the seasons such as when dogs, horses and other animals are outside more, being worked, swimming, participating in water sports and more; when allergies are prevalent and

when the weather is hot and dry which impacts the skin and coat," Archetti said. "We look at our growth opportunities carefully to identify the 'right' opportunities with our channels and focus on reaching new consumers, not shifting consumers between retailers," he said.

Tomlyn Products researches market trends to understand arising needs and resulting solutions. "We constantly communicate with our sales force who are face to face with retailers, while our social media platforms offer us a direct line to end users," said Brittany Green of Tomlyn Products. "This helps shape the products we develop and release," Green said. "Our intention is to educate retailers and consumers on the importance of ear care and the best products. Our Veterinarian Formulated Ear Cleanser is ideal for cats and dogs as it cleans, dries and acidifies the ear canal while deodorizing and provides an environment which promotes maintenance of healthy ears," she added.

Shampoos & Conditioners

As pet grooming services take center stage, shampoo and conditioner creators are taking cues from the human industry to provide products that address groomer and pet parent needs.

Skout's Honor is constantly innovating. "Our core customer is the specialty retailer. Staying a step ahead of food, drug and mass is a matter of survival for them. Specialty brands have to be category leaders," Skout's Honor's Jenny Gilcrest said. "We need to bring new technology to market and ensure retailers and their customers have access to the latest and greatest. It means modernizing the grooming approach through innovative technologies, like Topical Probiotics to improve the lives of pets and their people. We know we are doing our job when one wash changes the way a consumer looks at grooming their pet," she said. "Every brand is trying to solve odor, shedding, dander, itching and irritation. Skout's Honor Topical Probiotic Skin Care is the only product line that addresses all these problems with a sin-



gle solution," she added. Pura Naturals Pet believes groomers have different needs. "We had a focus group of groomers that worked with us on product development and testing to ensure our products addressed their needs," said Pura Naturals Pets' Beth Sommers, who always watches the pet and human market for trends. "The

company's new Pro-Coat GROOMING line rinses cleanly in their system and we developed SKUs to help with time constraints so they can book more customers," Sommers said.

Paul Armstrong of earthbath points out the company listens to its customers—retailers, buyers, distributors or end users to learn what they want. "We challenge them about what we should do next and how we can improve," Armstrong said. The company's product development and marketing team, comprises its president, marketing director and sales directors, who constantly discuss what they see in the market, trade shows and retail as well as trends in health and beauty on the human side to decide what they should bring to pet parents. "We monitor ingredients, packaging and evolving needs and demands to create solutions to satisfy them," Armstrong said. "We are currently focusing on itch relief and have some great products to address this need that we can expand upon," he said.