



Raised Kennel Runs: Increase Revenue Without Costly Construction

By Wendy Biondolillo; TriStar Vet |Direct Animal Products

In the April 2012 issue of *Veterinary Economics*, Gary Glassman, CPA says about Boarding & Grooming “Every square foot of your hospital, if not used for storage, needs to produce income. From a financial standpoint, boarding makes great sense. The most profitable veterinary practices I work with are those that offer significant boarding and grooming.”

You already pay for the space so you might as well use it. You’ll pay wages and benefits for boarding staff, but the rest of the income goes straight to your bottom line. With grooming, the numbers aren’t quite so easy, but boarding and grooming do nicely go hand-in-hand. No one wants to send a dog home from boarding without being bathed or groomed and grooming as a service can lead to a boarding opportunity as well as medical opportunities. To make boarding and grooming work for you, you must market appropriately. Offer luxury boarding suites at premium rates, and you’ll be surprised how quickly they book up. Always offer complimentary pre-

board exams, and assign a technician to the boarding kennel each day to check for medical issues.

A lot of veterinarians see boarding and grooming as a management headache, and just want to stick to practicing medicine, but there are many great business opportunities in offering services that will benefit your clients as well. Find the right person to manage these services and you’ll reap great rewards for your practice and your patients. We’ve heard this for a few years now in the design conferences we have participated in, and one of the obstacles veterinarians face in offering boarding in an existing facility is how to incorporate kennel runs without costly renovations to the floors; and if you’re in a leased strip center, a lot of times you can’t make the changes needed to add a few boarding kennels. If either of these situations apply to you, you might consider looking into raised floor kennel runs. This type of run can be easily incorporated into an existing practice without the expense

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of ripping up the floors to accommodate trough drains, etc. Our raised kennel is a true self-contained unit, with numerous options (stainless steel, 1/4" solid HDPE, glass doors, rod doors, doors that clear glass at the top and patterned glass at the bottom, swivel bowl feeders, isolation panels, ventilation panels and so on) What is unique about our raised floor kennels is that we include a collection pan (without a collection pan the urine and fecal matter that is hosed down goes directly onto the floor. We also have sub-flooring which elevates the dog up off the floor and out of their own waste, keeping them clean and dry. Underneath the sub-floor is the base floor that has cross breaks that move fluids down toward the drain to a nipple that connects to PVC that then takes the fluids away.

One last thing, when purchasing a kennel of any kind, it's important to find out exactly what each component is made of. For example if a kennel has flooring that is fiber glass, a dog could dig at the flooring, removing the protective coating and get fiberglass in his paws. You want to make sure that any surface that has to be cleaned and disinfected is made of a material that can withstand proper maintenance. Offering boarding services is an excellent way to add value for your existing clients and bring in new clients too.



View of the nipple that attaches to the pipe.



All Stainless Raised Floor Kennel, featuring Collection Pan, Sub-flooring and floor with cross breaks.

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