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SAMPLE REPORT · FICTIONAL CLIENT

GO-TO-MARKET STRATEGY

Calm Coat Mobile Grooming

Attractive as a profitable owner-operated business, conditionally: lead with clinical expertise, charge like a specialist, and buy the van only after paid house calls prove the rebooking rate.

Prepared for	Market	Date	Reference
Dana Okafor	**Westerville, Worthington and Lewis Center, Ohio (north Columbus)**	**October 22, 2026**	**LP-SAMPLE-V2-01**

ABOUT THIS REPORT

How to read this strategy

This report sets out the most attractive commercial opportunity for Calm Coat Mobile Grooming, how to compete, what it is realistically worth, and what to do next. It opens with the conclusions; the supporting analysis follows section by section, each ending with a strategic implication.

Every material claim is labelled so you can see how much weight it can bear. Bracketed references such as [S3] point to the numbered sources in Appendix B.

VERIFIED	CLIENT DATA	ESTIMATE	ASSUMPTION
Confirmed in a cited public source.	Provided by you in your intake.	Derived by calculation from verified or client inputs.	Our judgment — must be validated (see Section 15).

All market sizing and financial figures are calculated by a deterministic model from the drivers shown in Sections 4, 9 and 11 — the calculations are reproduced in full. Projections are scenarios, not promises.

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EVIDENCE PROFILE OF THIS REPORT

35 verified · 15 client-provided · 32 estimates · 34 assumptions · 17 sources cited

1 Executive summary

North Columbus is an affluent, dog-dense suburban market where at-home grooming is already established: at least three franchised mobile brands operate in or near Dana's service area. Demand for gentle grooming of older dogs is growing — more than half of U.S. dog-owning households now have a senior dog — but 'calm, one-on-one, cage-free' is already how competitors sell. The opportunity is real; the original differentiation is not.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

Launch Calm Coat as the clinically led grooming option for senior, anxious and medically fragile dogs — sold through veterinary referral, priced at a premium to franchise mobile groomers, and validated with paid house calls before committing to a van. At one-groomer capacity the realistic prize is $111K revenue in Year 3 (base case) and $62K operating profit before owner pay. Commit to a van only when Gate 1 is passed.

SERVICEABLE MARKET (SAM)
$1.9M/yr
ESTIMATE Senior-dog households likely to pay for at-home grooming

OBTAINABLE WITH ONE VAN (SOM)
$114K/yr
ESTIMATE Capacity-constrained

YEAR-3 REVENUE (BASE)
$111K
ESTIMATE

YEAR-3 OPERATING PROFIT BEFORE OWNER PAY (BASE)
$62K
ESTIMATE

CASH BREAK-EVEN (BASE)
month 12
ESTIMATE

START-UP INVESTMENT
$23K–$40K
ESTIMATE Excludes van purchase price; includes down payment

Key findings

1. 'Calm and cage-free' is table stakes, not a differentiator: Zoomin Groomin's North Columbus franchise already markets one-on-one, cage-free grooming for anxious and older pets in Worthington and Westerville. Dana's defensible edge is 12 years of veterinary-technician handling and her ability to win vet referrals — that, not calmness, must lead the brand. VERIFIED [S8, S9]
2. Dana's planned prices ($95–$130) undercut the local market. A Central Ohio mobile competitor publishes starting prices of $110–$190 by size, and experienced mobile groomers report charging $115–$125 per hour for senior and difficult dogs. A premium of roughly 15–25% over her plan is supportable. VERIFIED [S10, S13]
3. Capacity, not demand, is the binding constraint. At senior-dog pace (about 4–5 grooms a day) one groomer serves roughly 120 regular households; the obtainable one-van market is $114K a year against a serviceable market of about $1.9M (5.9%). ESTIMATE [S17]
4. The van assumption is understated. A new purpose-built grooming van lists at about $129,000; Dana's $40,000–$70,000 figure only holds for a used or entry-level unit. Financing structure is the single largest financial decision in this plan. VERIFIED [S12, S13]
5. Demographics are a tailwind: 53.5% of dog-owning households had a senior dog in 2022 (up from 41.6% in 2012), and median household incomes in the service area range from about $92,000 to $155,000. VERIFIED [S3, S4, S5, S6, S7]

Recommended path to market

Prove (Days 1–90)
Clear employment and licensing blockers; run 15–20 paid house-call grooms with a portable kit; sign three non-employer vet clinics as referral partners.

Commit (Months 4–6)
Pass Gate 1, then secure a used or financed van; reprice to the premium architecture; build a pre-booked recurring calendar.

Scale to capacity (Months 7–12)
Fill one van to ~85% utilisation through vet and customer referrals; decide on reducing clinic shifts at Gate 2.

Expand (Year 2–3)
Raise prices annually; consider a second groomer only once the waitlist and utilisation justify it (Gate 3).

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- Converting clinical credibility into a steady flow of veterinary referrals
- Pricing at a premium from day one rather than discounting into a crowded mid-market
- Pre-booked recurring appointments (every 6–8 weeks) to keep the van full
- Disciplined van financing tied to proven demand, not optimism

BOTTOM LINE

Attractive as a profitable owner-operated business, conditionally: lead with clinical expertise, charge like a specialist, and buy the van only after paid house calls prove the rebooking rate.

2 Business overview & strategic context

Calm Coat Mobile Grooming is a pre-launch, owner-operated grooming service for senior, anxious and special-needs dogs in Westerville, Worthington and Lewis Center, founded by a veterinary technician with 12 years of clinical experience. Appointments are one dog at a time, 60–90 minutes, with a written health-observation note for the owner.

THE CUSTOMER PROBLEM

Older and anxious dogs find busy salons stressful and physically difficult; owners respond by skipping grooming, paying for sedation at the vet, or tolerating repeated distress. Busy owners also lose time to drop-off and pick-up.

BUSINESS MODEL

Per-visit service revenue from recurring household customers, delivered in the customer's home (initially house calls, later a mobile van). Revenue quality depends on rebooking frequency.

Offerings

OFFERING	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
Full groom	Bath, blow-dry, haircut, nails, ears, teeth, health-observation note	$95–$130 by size (client's current plan) CLIENT DATA
Extended 'calm session' (proposed)	Additional time and breaks for dogs with mobility, cognitive or anxiety needs	Proposed in Section 9 ESTIMATE

Objectives

- Prove there is enough paid demand to justify a van within 90 days
- Build a waitlist of real customers
- Replace clinic income within 18 months

Current position

Pre-revenue, no legal entity, no equipment beyond personal tools. Strong informal demand signal (about 12 clinic clients have asked about the service) that cannot be monetised while employed because of non-solicitation obligations.

Launch readiness

DIMENSION	SCORE	ASSESSMENT
Service capability	5	Twelve years of handling difficult and fragile dogs is the strongest asset in the plan.
Market evidence	2	Encouraging conversations but no paid transactions yet; the people asking are off-limits clinic clients.
Commercial readiness	2	Pricing below market, no booking system, brand or legal entity.
Capital	3	$5,000–$25,000 to invest over 12 months, from savings, salary and possibly a loan; not enough for a van without financing.
Time and capacity	2	Three 12-hour clinic shifts a week limit availability to 10–20 hours.

Key assumptions — and where we challenge them

ASSUMPTION	OUR CHALLENGE	HOW TO VALIDATE
Owners will pay a premium for calm handling. CLIENT DATA	Competitors already sell calm handling. Owners will pay a premium for clinical expertise and vet endorsement, not for calmness alone — test messaging accordingly.	Paid house calls at the recommended prices; track acceptance and rebooking.
A van costs $40,000–$70,000. CLIENT DATA	New purpose-built vans list near $129,000 (S12). Plan around a used or financed unit and price the payment into fixed costs.	Obtain three written quotes (new, used, lease) by Month 4.
Existing mobile groomers are booked 6+ weeks out. CLIENT DATA	Plausible but anecdotal; long lead times are a timing advantage only while they last.	Call the three franchise operators for their next available senior-dog appointment.
Independent vets will refer clients. ASSUMPTION	Vets are cautious about liability; a written handling protocol and insurance certificate will matter.	Approach 10 clinics with a referral kit; target 3 active partners by Day 90.

Grooming in customers' homes is a workable bridge before a van. CLIENT DATA	Workable for small and medium dogs; large senior dogs may need a van from the start.	Track time per groom and customer feedback across the first 10 house calls.

Strategic challenges

- Differentiating against well-capitalised franchises that already claim the calm/cage-free position
- Building demand while legally barred from approaching the clinic's existing clients
- Sequencing a large van commitment against limited proof and part-time capacity
- Senior-dog customers have naturally limited lifetimes, requiring continuous replenishment

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

The business is service-ready but commercially unproven. The next 90 days should buy evidence — paid grooms, rebooking and vet partners — before any capital is committed, and the brand must be rebuilt around clinical credibility rather than calmness.

3 Market landscape & industry analysis

Professional dog grooming services in the north Columbus suburbs, spanning big-box and independent salons, mobile (van-based) grooming, in-home bath-and-nails services, and grooming under sedation at veterinary clinics.

MARKET STRUCTURE

Fragmented and local. Mobile grooming in the service area is led by franchise brands (Zoomin Groomin, Bark & Mane — formerly Aussie Pet Mobile — and Furry Land), alongside salons and partial-service mobile providers. Franchise economics (e.g. a $45,000 fee and 8% royalty plus 2% ad fund for Zoomin Groomin) push operators toward volume. VERIFIED [S8, S9, S10, S16]

Growth trends

- U.S. pet industry spending reached $158 billion in 2025 (+3.7%) and is projected at $165 billion in 2026. VERIFIED [S1]
- Dog ownership is rising: APPA reports 53% of U.S. households owned a dog in 2025 (71 million), up from 51% in 2024. AVMA's survey-based estimate is lower at 45.5% (59.8 million households, 2024). This plan uses the lower AVMA figure. VERIFIED [S1, S2]
- The dog population is ageing: 53.5% of dog-owning households had a senior dog (7+) in 2022, up from 41.6% in 2012. VERIFIED [S3]
- Franchise mobile grooming is scaling: Zoomin Groomin alone reports 257 franchised units. VERIFIED [S16]
- Animal care employment is projected to grow 11% from 2025 to 2035, much faster than average, which implies continued competition for skilled groomers. VERIFIED [S14]

Demand drivers

- Ageing dogs with mobility, cognitive and anxiety issues that make salon visits difficult. VERIFIED [S3]
- High-income, time-poor suburban households willing to pay for convenience. VERIFIED [S4, S5, S6, S7]
- Recurring need: coated breeds require professional grooming every 3–6 weeks. VERIFIED [S15]

Purchasing behaviour

- Owners choose groomers largely on trust and word of mouth; for fragile dogs the vet's opinion carries unusual weight. ASSUMPTION
- Once a dog settles with a groomer, owners rebook habitually, making the first appointment the main acquisition hurdle. ASSUMPTION
- Price comparison is by dog size and service; mobile providers commonly add travel or distance fees. VERIFIED [S10, S11, S13]

Opportunities and market gaps

- A clinically led niche: none of the competitors reviewed positions on veterinary-grade handling or medical observation as its core promise. ESTIMATE [S8, S9, S10]
- Referral channel from independent veterinary clinics that currently default to sedation or salons for difficult dogs. ASSUMPTION
- Price headroom: published local mobile prices start above Dana's planned range. VERIFIED [S10]

Forces shaping the market

FORCE	TYPE	EFFECT	DIRECTION
Ageing dog population	Social	Expands the senior and special-needs segment VERIFIED [S3]	Tailwind
Franchise expansion	Competitive	Raises awareness of mobile grooming but crowds the generic 'calm and convenient' position VERIFIED [S8, S16]	Mixed
Vehicle and financing costs	Economic	High fixed-cost hurdle for an independent operator VERIFIED [S12, S13]	Headwind
Online booking and reminders	Technological	Low-cost tools make recurring scheduling and rebooking easy for a solo operator ASSUMPTION	Tailwind
Groomer labour market	Economic	Hiring a second groomer later will be competitive VERIFIED [S14]	Headwind

Barriers to entry

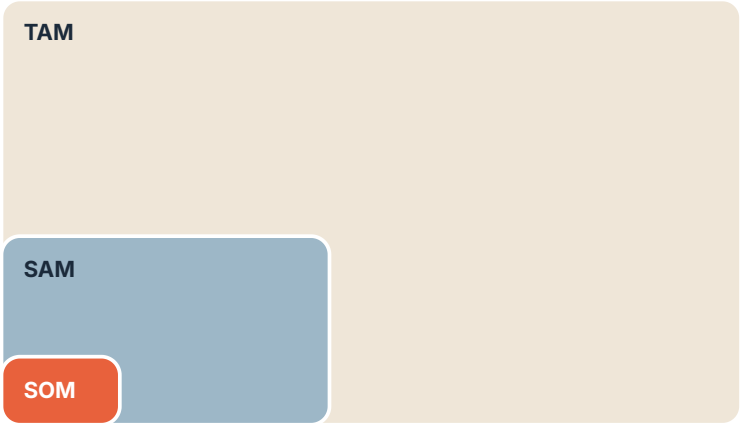
BARRIER	SEVERITY	NOTE
Vehicle capital cost and financing	High	New purpose-built vans list near $129,000 (S12).
Skilled labour and physical capacity	Medium	Throughput is limited by one groomer's time.
Brand trust and reviews	Medium	Franchises arrive with national brands; a new independent starts with zero reviews.
Licensing, insurance and local rules	Low	To be verified with local authorities; see Section 15.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

The market is growing and the senior segment is expanding, but mobile grooming is no longer novel locally. Calm Coat should not compete as 'another mobile groomer'; it should claim the clinically led, vet-referred niche that franchises are not built to own.

4 Market sizing & opportunity assessment

Bottom-up, built from Census household counts for the service area, national dog-ownership and senior-dog rates, and stated assumptions on grooming usage, frequency and price. TAM is all professional grooming spend by service-area dog owners; SAM narrows to senior-dog households likely to pay for at-home service; SOM is what one groomer with one van can realistically deliver.



TAM · $9.8M

SAM · $1.9M
19.7% of TAM

SOM · $114K
5.9% of SAM

Area of each block is proportional to its value.

Total addressable market (TAM): $9.8M

Annual professional grooming spend by dog-owning households in Westerville (43081, 43082), Lewis Center (43035) and Worthington

	FACTOR	VALUE	RUNNING TOTAL	BASIS
	Households in service area (26,825 + 12,089 + 11,209 + 6,140) ZIP 43081 extends into Columbus; treated as part of the service radius.	56,263 households	56,263	VERIFIED [S4, S5, S6, S7]
×	Share owning a dog (AVMA, conservative vs APPA 53%)	45.5%	25,600	VERIFIED [S2]
×	Dogs per dog-owning household (89.7M ÷ 59.8M)	1.5 dogs	38,399	ESTIMATE [S2]
×	Share of dogs professionally groomed To validate; many short-coated dogs are groomed at home.	50%	19,200	ASSUMPTION
×	Professional grooms per groomed dog per year Coated breeds every 3–6 weeks; blended down for short coats.	6 grooms	115,198	ESTIMATE [S15]
×	Blended average price per groom (salon and mobile) Between a $70 salon price (client) and $110+ mobile prices (S10).	$85	$9.8M	ASSUMPTION
	TAM		**$9.8M**	

Serviceable available market (SAM): $1.9M

Spend from senior-dog households likely to pay for at-home grooming, at mobile price levels

	FACTOR	VALUE	RUNNING TOTAL	BASIS
	TAM	$9.8M	$9.8M	ESTIMATE
×	Share of dog households with a senior dog	53.5%	$5.2M	VERIFIED [S3]
×	Share of those willing to pay for at-home grooming Key assumption; validate through house-call conversion.	25%	$1.3M	ASSUMPTION
×	Mobile price uplift vs blended price ($125 ÷ $85)	1.47×	$1.9M	ESTIMATE [S10]
	SAM		**$1.9M**	

Serviceable obtainable market (SOM): $114K

Annual revenue one groomer with one van can deliver at senior-dog pace

	FACTOR	VALUE	RUNNING TOTAL	BASIS
	Grooms per working day at senior pace Franchise vans schedule 5–8 dogs/day; slower for senior dogs.	4.5 grooms	4	ESTIMATE [S17]
×	Working days per year	220 days	990	ASSUMPTION
×	Sustainable utilisation	85%	842	ASSUMPTION
×	Average ticket at recommended prices Mix of sizes plus extended-session add-ons (Section 9).	$135	$114K	ESTIMATE
	SOM		**$114K**	

POTENTIAL VS. ACHIEVABLE

The serviceable market is many times larger than one groomer can serve. Demand will not cap Calm Coat's revenue; capacity will. That changes the strategy: the goal is not reach but filling a finite calendar with the right customers at the right price, then deciding deliberately whether to add capacity.

Most attractive pockets

- Lewis Center (43035) and northern Westerville (43082): about 23,000 households with median incomes near $148,000–$155,000. VERIFIED [S5, S6]
- Dogs referred by vets after surgery, or with arthritis or cognitive decline — highest need and lowest price sensitivity. ASSUMPTION
- Households with doodles and other coated breeds that need grooming every 3–6 weeks, which drives frequency. VERIFIED [S15]

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

Calm Coat needs roughly 120 regular households — a small fraction of the serviceable market — to fill one van. Marketing should go deep in two or three high-income ZIP codes and referral networks rather than broad.

5 Customer segmentation & ideal customer profile

Segments scored 1–5 on need intensity, reach, willingness to pay, strategic fit and competitive intensity (inverted: less competition scores higher). Maximum 25.

SEGMENT	NEEDS & BEHAVIOUR	NEED	REACH	WTP	FIT	COMPET.	TOTAL	RANK
Senior-dog households PRIMARY VERIFIED [S3, S4, S5, S6, S7]	Gentle handling of stiff joints, shorter sessions, someone who notices health changes Loyal once trust is earned; some have stopped professional grooming altogether · Purchasing power: High — affluent suburban owners · 53.5% of dog households nationally have a senior dog (S3)	5	4	4	5	3	21	#2
Vet-referred medical and post-surgical dogs ASSUMPTION	Grooming without stress or sedation; handler trained to spot problems Follows the vet's recommendation; low price sensitivity · Purchasing power: High · Unknown — validate with partner clinics	5	3	5	5	1	23	#1
Anxious or reactive dogs (any age) CLIENT DATA	Quiet, one-on-one environment; patience May have been turned away by salons; owners research carefully · Purchasing power: Medium–high	5	3	4	4	3	19	#3
Busy convenience-seekers ASSUMPTION	Skip drop-off and pick-up Compare on price and availability; switch easily · Purchasing power: High	2	4	3	2	5	12	#4

WHY SENIOR-DOG HOUSEHOLDS

Senior-dog households combine scale, need intensity and affluence, and they are where clinical handling is most obviously worth paying for. Vet-referred medical dogs score highest on willingness to pay and lowest on competition, but are harder to reach at first; they become the premium tier as vet partnerships mature. Convenience-seekers are where franchises compete hardest and should be accepted, not targeted.

Ideal customer profile: The protective owner of an ageing dog

Location	Lewis Center, northern Westerville, Worthington
Household	Homeowner, typically 40–70, dual income or retired, median household income above $120K
Dog	8+ years, often a coated breed; arthritis, anxiety, hearing/vision loss or recent surgery
Current behaviour	Salon visits are getting harder; considering sedation or skipping grooming
Values	Safety, gentleness, and someone who 'gets' older dogs; price secondary
Influencers	Their veterinarian; neighbours and local Facebook/Nextdoor recommendations

Purchase triggers

- The salon reports the dog was too stressed to finish
- The vet suggests sedation for grooming or nails
- Coat becomes matted after grooming is postponed
- A new diagnosis (arthritis, heart condition) makes salon visits risky

Decision criteria

Handler's experience with fragile or old dogs	High
Vet recommendation or trusted review	High
Safety protocol and insurance	Medium
Convenience and availability	Medium
Price	Low

Objections and responses

OBJECTION	RESPONSE
“Why pay more than the mobile franchise?”	Because your dog will be handled by a veterinary technician with 12 years of clinical experience, and you get a written health note after every visit.
“What if something goes wrong medically?”	Show the written handling protocol, emergency plan, insurance certificate and the vet partner list.
“My dog hates being groomed.”	Offer a meet-and-greet and an extended calm session with breaks; stop if the dog is distressed.

Buying journey

STAGE	CUSTOMER	OUR MOVE
Trigger	Salon visit goes badly or the vet raises concerns	Be the name the vet hands them (referral card)
Research	Asks neighbours and checks reviews	Google Business Profile with clinical credentials and reviews
First contact	Calls with worries about their dog	15-minute consult; health intake form; meet-and-greet
First groom	Watches nervously	Unhurried session; health note; photos
Habit	Wants not to think about it again	Pre-book the next 6–8 week slot before leaving

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

Calm Coat should market to the owner's anxiety about an ageing dog and to the vet's referral instinct, not to convenience. Every touchpoint — referral card, profile, consult, health note — should reinforce clinical trust.

6 Competitive landscape

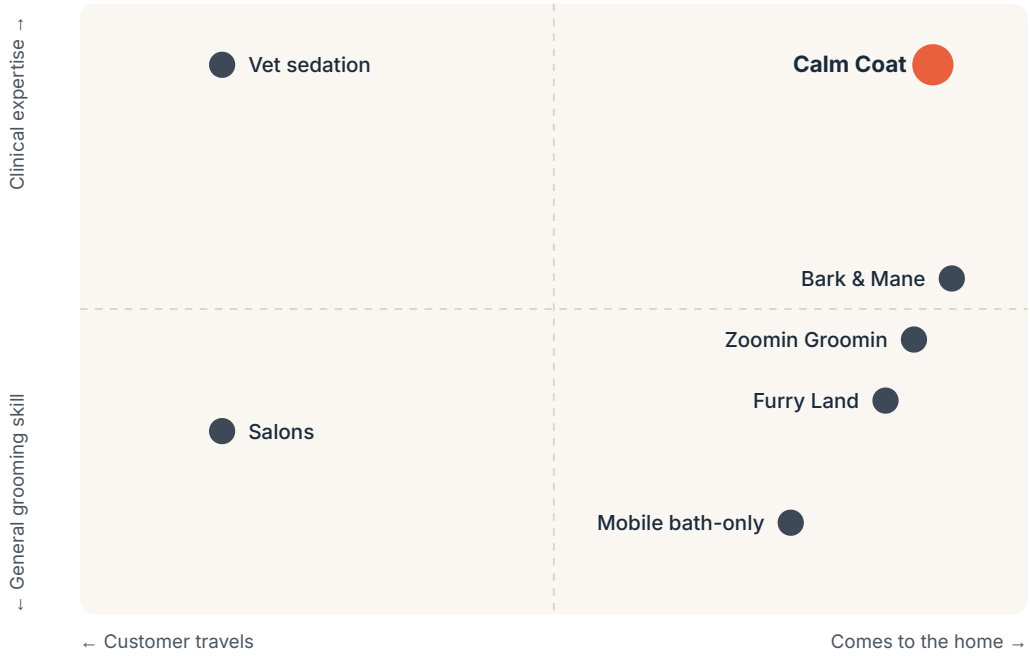
COMPETITOR	TYPE	OFFERING & POSITIONING	PRICING	STRENGTHS / WEAKNESSES
Zoomin Groomin (North Columbus) [S8, S16]	Direct	Mobile van grooming for dogs and cats One-on-one, unrushed, cage-free; calm methods for anxious, older and challenging pets	Not published (quote on request) VERIFIED	+ National brand and systems; already claims the calm/senior message in Dana's area – Franchise royalty of 8% plus a 2% ad fund pushes toward volume; no clinical positioning
Bark & Mane (Northwest Columbus) [S9]	Direct	Mobile van grooming with 'Well-Being WrapUp' Certified experts; long-term well-being partner	Not published VERIFIED	+ Wellness framing, serves Lewis Center and Westerville – Wellness claim is generic; brand recently changed from Aussie Pet Mobile
Furry Land Mobile Grooming (Central Ohio) [S10]	Direct	Cage-free mobile grooming for dogs and cats 'Big or small, we groom 'em all'; fear-free approach	From $110 small, $140 medium, $165 large, $190 XL VERIFIED	+ Transparent pricing; broad coverage – Generalist positioning; service area in Dana's ZIPs not confirmed
Furball Fitness Pet Care [S11]	Indirect	Mobile baths and nails; full grooming in salon Convenient add-on services	Mobile bath from $45; nails $25; $2/mile beyond 10 miles VERIFIED	+ Low price for basic care – No full grooming at home
Big-box and independent salons	Indirect	In-store grooming Price and availability	About $70 (client's reference) CLIENT DATA	+ Cheap and familiar – Noise, crating and waiting — the problem senior dogs struggle with
Grooming under sedation at a vet	Substitute	Medically supervised grooming Safety for very difficult dogs	Unknown — verify with two local clinics ASSUMPTION	+ Medical supervision – Sedation risk and cost; owners prefer to avoid it

Competitive matrix

	LOW-STRESS HANDLING	CLINICAL/MEDICAL EXPERTISE	COMES TO THE HOME	PRICE ACCESSIBILITY	AVAILABILITY	BRAND RECOGNITION	TOTAL
Calm Coat (proposed)	5	5	5	2	4	1	22
Zoomin Groomin	4	2	5	2	3	4	20
Bark & Mane	4	3	5	2	3	4	21
Furry Land	3	2	5	2	3	3	18
Salons	2	2	1	5	4	4	18
Vet sedation	3	5	1	1	2	3	15

Ratings 1–5 are analyst estimates based on each competitor's public positioning (sources cited above) and the client's intake.

Positioning map



Underserved needs

- Grooming for medically fragile dogs without sedation, by someone trained to recognise distress and health changes. ASSUMPTION
- A groomer who communicates with the owner's vet (with consent) about observations. ASSUMPTION
- Transparent, published senior-dog pricing — two of three franchise competitors reviewed do not publish prices. VERIFIED [S8, S9]

WHITE SPACE

The top-right corner of the map — at-home grooming with genuine clinical expertise — is unoccupied. Competitors claim calmness and well-being; none claims veterinary-grade handling. That space is narrow but defensible for a founder with Dana's background.

DEFENSIBILITY 3

Moderate. A credential and relationships with vets cannot be copied quickly by a franchise operator, but they depend on Dana personally and do not transfer to future hires without training and protocols. Reviews and vet relationships compound over time; the brand promise must be codified before adding staff.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

Compete where franchises structurally cannot: clinical credibility and vet relationships. Avoid generic 'calm and cage-free' claims, which are already owned locally, and publish clear pricing to stand out from quote-on-request competitors.

7 SWOT analysis

Strengths

- **12 years as a veterinary technician with difficult and senior dogs**
  CLIENT DATA
  → A credible, rare differentiator — lead every message with it
- **Existing relationships with local veterinarians**
  CLIENT DATA
  → Lowest-cost, highest-trust acquisition channel
- **Willingness to start with house calls**
  CLIENT DATA
  → Capital-light validation path

Weaknesses

- **No paid transactions or reviews yet**
  CLIENT DATA
  → Credibility must be borrowed from credentials and vets
- **Part-time capacity while employed**
  CLIENT DATA
  → Slow ramp; schedule is the first constraint
- **Business depends entirely on the founder**
  ESTIMATE
  → Limited scalability and key-person risk

Opportunities

- **Growing senior-dog share of households**
  VERIFIED
  [S3]
  → Expanding core segment
- **Unoccupied clinical positioning**
  ESTIMATE
  → Room to own a defensible niche
- **Price headroom versus published local rates**
  VERIFIED
  [S10, S13]
  → Premium pricing improves profit per scarce hour

Threats

- **Franchises already marketing calm, senior-friendly grooming**
  VERIFIED
  [S8]
  → Generic messaging will be drowned out
- **High van costs and financing rates**
  VERIFIED
  [S12, S13]
  → Fixed-cost risk if demand ramps slowly
- **Employment obligations (non-solicitation, outside work)**
  CLIENT DATA
  → Could delay or constrain launch

Strategic responses (TOWS)

USE STRENGTHS TO CAPTURE OPPORTUNITIES	FIX WEAKNESSES TO CAPTURE OPPORTUNITIES	USE STRENGTHS TO COUNTER THREATS	MINIMISE WEAKNESSES & THREATS
• Build a vet referral programme around the clinical credential • Publish premium, transparent senior-dog pricing	• Use house calls and vet endorsements to earn the first 20 reviews before buying a van	• Differentiate on clinical handling and health notes rather than calmness • Tie van financing to Gate 1 demand evidence	• Resolve employment-agreement constraints first • Write a handling and emergency protocol to reduce key-person and liability risk

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

The strategy should combine the strongest internal asset (clinical expertise) with the clearest external gap (no clinically led mobile competitor) while sequencing capital to protect against the biggest threat: fixed costs ahead of demand.

8 Strategic positioning & value proposition

RECOMMENDED MARKET POSITION

The clinically led at-home grooming specialist for senior and fragile dogs in north Columbus.

Positioning statement

> *For owners of senior, anxious and medically fragile dogs in north Columbus, Calm Coat is the at-home grooming service led by a veterinary technician. Unlike franchise mobile groomers and salons, every appointment is handled with clinical training and ends with a written health note — so ageing dogs stay comfortable, clean and watched over.*

VALUE PROPOSITION

Vet-trained grooming at home for dogs who find grooming hard — with health observations you can take to your vet.

WHY CUSTOMERS CHOOSE US

- Handled by a veterinary technician with 12 years' clinical experience
- Referred and trusted by local veterinarians
- A written health-observation note after every groom
- One dog, unhurried, at home — with extended sessions for dogs who need breaks

Supporting value propositions and proof points

PROPOSITION	PROOF POINT
Clinical expertise	Credentials and years of experience stated on every channel; handling protocol available on request CLIENT DATA
Vet endorsement	Names of partner clinics (with permission) on the website and referral cards ASSUMPTION
Health observation	Sample health note (anonymised) published on the booking page CLIENT DATA

Commercial messages

AUDIENCE	MESSAGE
Owners of senior dogs	“Gentle grooming for dogs who've earned it — from a vet tech, at your home.”
Veterinarians	“A grooming option for your fragile patients that doesn't need sedation, with health notes you can trust.”
Owners of anxious dogs	“No crates, no crowd, no rush — and a handler who knows when to stop.”

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

Messaging must move from 'calm' to 'clinical'. This justifies premium pricing and opens the vet channel — two things a calm-only position cannot do.

9 Commercial & revenue strategy

Per-groom pricing by size with a premium extended-session option; pre-booked recurring appointments; annual price review.

Recommended price architecture

TIER	PRICE	INCLUDES	FOR
Full groom	$115 small / $140 medium / $165 large	Bath, dry, cut, nails, ears, teeth, health note	Senior and anxious dogs
Extended calm session	+$30 (adds up to 30 minutes)	Breaks, mobility support, cooperative-care pacing	Arthritic, cognitive or highly anxious dogs
Tidy visit	$65	Nails, face, feet, sanitary between full grooms	Dogs on 4–6 week cycles

PRICING RATIONALE

Aligns with published local mobile starting prices ($110–$190) and practitioner rates of $115–$125 per hour for senior dogs, while staying below the top of the market. Because capacity is fixed, every $10 on the average ticket adds roughly $8,400 a year at full utilisation (≈840 grooms). ESTIMATE [S10, S13]

Unit economics

REVENUE PER CUSTOMER / YR	GROSS PROFIT PER CUSTOMER / YR	LIFETIME GROSS PROFIT (LTV)
$945	$803	$2,410

ACQUISITION COST (CAC)	LTV : CAC	CAC PAYBACK
$50	48x	0.7 mo

INPUT	VALUE	BASIS	NOTE
Average order value	$135	ESTIMATE	Blend of size tiers and add-ons
Orders per customer per year	7	ASSUMPTION [S15]	Every 6–8 weeks for most senior coated dogs
Gross margin	85%	ESTIMATE	Supplies $8–10 (client), card fees ~3% and travel ~$6 per groom
Customer lifetime (years)	3	ASSUMPTION	Shorter than typical because senior dogs age out; partly offset when households get another dog
Blended acquisition cost	$50	ASSUMPTION	Referral cards, partner kits, referral credits

Revenue streams

STREAM	TIMING	POTENTIAL
Recurring full grooms Core revenue; target 6–8 week cycles	Now	High
Extended sessions and add-ons Raises average ticket without more appointments	Now	Medium
Tidy visits Fills short schedule gaps	Year 1	Medium
Second groomer (expanded capacity) Only after Gate 3	Year 3+	High

Profitability levers

- Raise the average ticket (extended sessions) rather than adding appointments
- Cluster appointments by ZIP to cut drive time
- Pre-book the next appointment at every visit to keep utilisation high
- Annual price increase of 5–10%, in line with practitioner norms (S13)

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

Unit economics are strong — each customer is worth $2,410 in gross profit over their lifetime against an assumed $50 acquisition cost — so the commercial priority is price and utilisation, not cheaper acquisition.

10 Route-to-market & distribution strategy

Channels scored 1–5 on impact, cost efficiency, scalability and feasible (max 20).

CHANNEL	ROLE & COST VIEW	IMPACT	COST EFF.	SCALE	FEASIBLE	TOTAL	RANK
Veterinary and pet-professional referrals ASSUMPTION	Primary acquisition and credibility Very low; mainly time and printed materials	5	5	3	5	**18**	#1
Customer referrals and pre-booked rebooking ASSUMPTION	Retention and word of mouth A referral credit per new household	5	5	2	5	**17**	#2
Google Business Profile and reviews ASSUMPTION	Capture people searching for a groomer Free; requires reviews	4	5	4	4	**17**	#3
Neighbourhood groups (Nextdoor, local Facebook) CLIENT DATA	Early awareness in target ZIPs Free; time-intensive	3	5	2	5	**15**	#4
Paid local search ads ASSUMPTION	Optional top-up once capacity is available Unknown — test with a small cap	3	2	4	3	**12**	#5
Lead marketplaces (e.g. Thumbtack) ASSUMPTION	Not recommended Pay-per-lead; attracts price shoppers	2	2	3	4	**11**	#6

Recommended channel mix (share of effort)

Veterinary and pet-professional referrals	50%	Highest trust and best fit with the clinical position
Customer referrals and rebooking	25%	Keeps the calendar full at near-zero cost
Google Business Profile and neighbourhood groups	25%	Captures active searchers in target ZIPs

Strategic partnerships

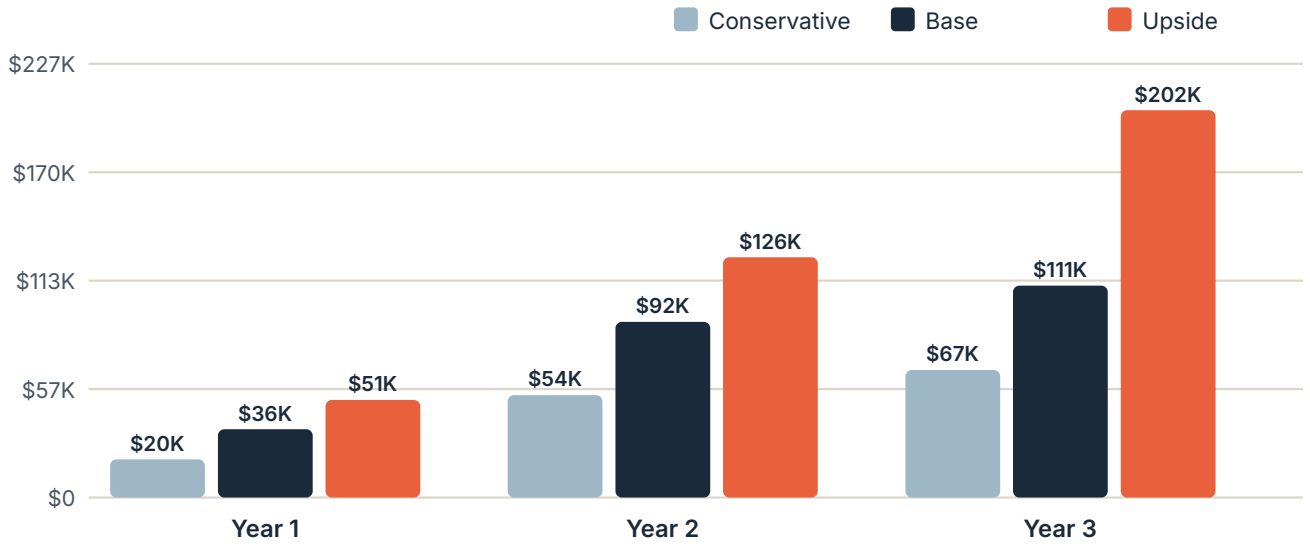
PARTNER TYPE	VALUE EXCHANGE	EXAMPLES / NEXT STEP
Independent veterinary clinics (not the employer)	A safe, non-sedation grooming option for fragile patients, plus health notes; Calm Coat receives referrals	Identify 10 clinics in 43035, 43082 and Worthington
Canine physiotherapy and rehabilitation providers	Shared senior and mobility-impaired clients	To be identified locally
Senior-dog and breed rescue groups	Discounted grooms for adopters; visibility with committed owners	To be identified locally

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

Half of all marketing effort should go to building vet referral relationships. This channel is cheap, defensible and on-brand, and it reaches dogs at the moment of need.

11 Size of the prize: three-year commercial forecast

Three scenarios built from explicit drivers. Revenue = active customers × revenue per customer; active customers = prior-year customers × retention + new customers. Operating profit is before owner pay and tax.



Conservative case

Slow vet-partner uptake and a part-time Year 1; the van arrives late and utilisation stays near 60% by Year 3.

DRIVER / OUTPUT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
New customers	40	35	30
Active customers	40	63	74
Revenue per customer	$500	$850	$900
Revenue	**$20K**	**$54K**	**$67K**
Gross profit	$17K	$45K	$56K
Acquisition spend	$2,400	$2,450	$2,400
Contribution	$15K	$43K	$54K
Contribution margin	73%	79%	80%
Fixed operating costs	$9,000	$28K	$30K
Operating profit	**$5,600**	**$15K**	**$24K**
Cumulative cash (after upfront investment)	–$13K	$1,632	$25K

Upfront investment: $18K · **Break-even:** month 23 · **Peak cash need:** $18K · **Retention:** 70% / 70% · **Gross margin:** 85% / 84% / 84% · **CAC:** $60 / $70 / $80

What must happen: House calls continue for 6+ months; Van financed with a smaller down payment; Clinic shifts reduced only in Year 2.

Base case

Three vet partners by Day 90; van from about Month 9; one groomer reaches about 85–90% utilisation by Year 3.

DRIVER / OUTPUT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
New customers	65	50	35
Active customers	65	102	117
Revenue per customer	$550	$900	$950
Revenue	**$36K**	**$92K**	**$111K**
Gross profit	$31K	$78K	$94K
Acquisition spend	$2,600	$2,500	$2,100
Contribution	$28K	$76K	$92K
Contribution margin	79%	82%	83%
Fixed operating costs	$9,000	$28K	$30K
Operating profit	**$19K**	**$48K**	**$62K**
Cumulative cash (after upfront investment)	$645	$48K	$110K

Upfront investment: $18K · **Break-even:** month 12 · **Peak cash need:** $18K · **Retention:** 80% / 80% · **Gross margin:** 86% / 85% / 85% · **CAC:** $40 / $50 / $60

What must happen: Pass Gate 1 by Day 90; Van operational by Month 9; Move to full-time grooming in Year 2 (Gate 2); Pre-book 80%+ of customers.

Upside case

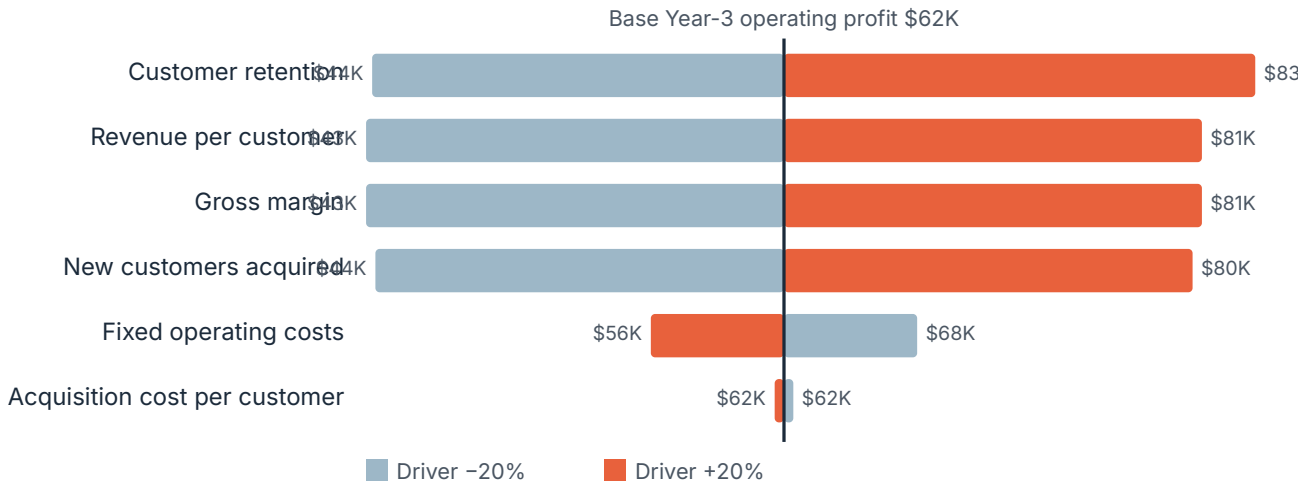
Strong referrals create a waitlist; a second groomer and van are added in Year 3.

DRIVER / OUTPUT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
New customers	85	60	90
Active customers	85	132	202
Revenue per customer	$600	$950	$1,000
Revenue	**$51K**	**$126K**	**$202K**
Gross profit	$44K	$107K	$168K
Acquisition spend	$2,975	$2,700	$4,500
Contribution	$41K	$104K	$164K
Contribution margin	80%	83%	81%
Fixed operating costs	$9,000	$30K	$75K
Operating profit	**$32K**	**$74K**	**$89K**
Cumulative cash (after upfront investment)	$13K	$87K	$176K

Upfront investment: $18K · **Break-even:** month 7 · **Peak cash need:** $18K · **Retention:** 85% / 85% · **Gross margin:** 86% / 85% / 83% · **CAC:** $35 / $45 / $50

What must happen: Waitlist of 30+ households by Month 12; Second groomer hired and trained to the clinical protocol in Year 3; Second van financed (included in fixed costs).

Key sensitivities (base case, Year-3 operating profit)



Each driver flexed ±20% across all years, others held constant. Ordered by impact.

Driver rationale

DRIVER	RATIONALE	BASIS
New customers	Bounded by capacity: about 120 regular households fill one van (≈840 grooms ÷ 7 a year). Year 1 is part-time.	ESTIMATE
Retention	70–85% of active households rebook the following year; senior-dog lifetimes cap retention.	ASSUMPTION
Revenue per customer (ARPC)	About 7 grooms a year at a $135 average ticket ≈ $945; Year 1 lower because customers start mid-year.	ESTIMATE [S15]
Gross margin	Supplies, card fees and travel ≈ 15% of revenue; lower in the upside case as a second van adds fuel.	ESTIMATE
Fixed costs	Year 1: insurance, software, phone and about three months of van costs. Years 2–3: a financed used van (~$1,000/month, assumption) plus insurance, maintenance and generator (~$1,300/month). Owner pay is excluded.	ASSUMPTION
Upfront investment	Van down payment of about $15K (practitioners report $20–25K is typical — S13), portable kit $1.5K and setup $2K.	ESTIMATE [S13]

INVESTMENT & BREAK-EVEN

In the base case the business recovers its upfront investment around month 12, but operating profit excludes owner pay. The meaningful test for Dana is when operating profit exceeds her clinic income: in the base case Year-2 operating profit is $48K and Year 3 $62K. Dana should confirm her current clinic income to set Gate 2 precisely. A new $129K van would add roughly $12–15K a year of payments to fixed costs (assumption) and push break-even out — reinforcing the used or financed route.

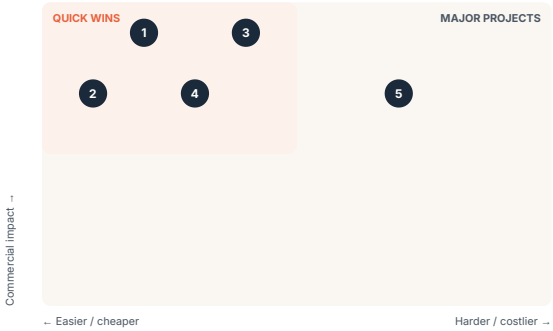
STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

One groomer can build a $111K business with healthy margins, but the upside depends on adding capacity, not marketing. The forecast is most sensitive to customer acquisition and price (see sensitivity chart), which supports the referral-led, premium-price strategy.

12 Strategic priorities & growth initiatives

Ranked by commercial impact, execution complexity, cost and time to value (complexity, cost and time inverted so that easier and faster score higher).

#	INITIATIVE	IMPACT	CMPLX	COST	TIME	RANK
1	**Vet referral programme** Immediate (0-3 mo)	5	2	1	2	#2
2	**Premium repricing and the extended calm session** Immediate (0-3 mo)	4	1	1	1	#1
3	**Paid house-call validation and van gate** Immediate (0-3 mo)	5	3	2	2	#3
4	**Recurring-booking engine** Near term (3-12 mo)	4	2	2	3	#4
5	**Second-groomer readiness** Long term (12+ mo)	4	4	4	5	#5



1. Vet referral programme · Immediate (0-3 mo)
Referral kit, handling protocol, insurance certificate and consent-based health notes for 10 independent clinics
Why now: Builds the defensible clinical position and the cheapest acquisition channel at the same time

2. Premium repricing and the extended calm session · Immediate (0-3 mo)
Launch at $115–$165 plus a $30 extended session; publish prices
Why now: Each $10 on the average ticket adds about $8K a year at capacity

3. Paid house-call validation and van gate · Immediate (0-3 mo)
15–20 paid grooms with a portable kit; van decision at Gate 1
Why now: Protects against the largest financial risk

4. Recurring-booking engine · Near term (3-12 mo)
Booking software with reminders; pre-book at every visit; ZIP-clustered routes
Why now: Utilisation is the profit lever once demand exists

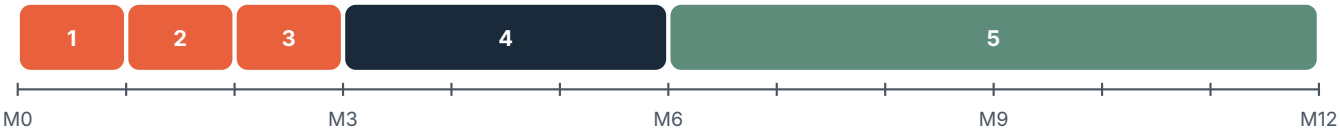
5. Second-groomer readiness · Long term (12+ mo)
Document the clinical handling protocol and training so capacity can be added
Why now: The only route to the upside case; reduces key-person risk

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

Three immediate initiatives are cheap and fast: vet referrals, premium pricing and validated demand. They should take priority over branding, websites or the van itself.

13 Go-to-market execution roadmap

Twelve months in five phases, with 30-, 60- and 90-day priorities.



1. Clear blockers and first grooms

Days 1–30

Objective: Remove legal risk and complete the first paid grooms

Priorities

- Review employment agreement (outside work, non-solicitation)
- Confirm licence, home-occupation and HOA rules
- Bind groomer liability insurance (including care, custody and control coverage)
- Set up booking, intake form and published pricing
- Complete 5 paid house calls

Milestones

- Insured and legally clear
- First 5 paid grooms

Measurable objectives

Paid grooms	**5**
Vet clinics contacted	**5**

Resources: 8–10 hrs/week; ~$3K · **Dependencies:** Employer terms; Insurance quotes

2. Referral engine

Days 31–60

Objective: Start the vet channel and prove rebooking

Priorities

- Visit 10 independent clinics with the referral kit
- Offer staff-dog grooms to interested clinics
- Complete 6–8 more grooms; pre-book every customer
- Collect first reviews

Milestones

- First vet referral received

Measurable objectives

Active vet partners	**2**
Rebook rate	**≥70%**

Resources: 10–12 hrs/week · **Dependencies:** Handling protocol written

3. Gate 1 decision

Days 61–90

Objective: Decide on the van with evidence

Priorities

- Reach 15–20 paid grooms
- Collect three van quotes (new, used, lease)
- Analyse time per groom and utilisation
- Book a SCORE mentor review of the decision

Milestones

- Gate 1 passed or adjusted

Measurable objectives

Paid grooms (cumulative)	**15–20**
Vet partners	**3**
Waitlist households	**15**

Resources: 12–15 hrs/week · **Dependencies:** Van quotes; Financing pre-qualification

4. Van launch

Months 4–6

Objective: Commission the van and convert the waitlist

Priorities

- Finance and fit out a used van
- Convert waitlist and house-call customers to van appointments
- Route by ZIP cluster
- Launch the Google Business Profile at full strength

Milestones

- Van operational
- 40 regular households

Measurable objectives

Regular households	**40**
Average ticket	**≥$130**

Resources: 15–20 hrs/week; van down payment · **Dependencies:** Gate 1; Financing approval

5. Fill the calendar

Months 7–12

Objective: Reach ~80% utilisation and decide on full-time

Priorities

- Grow to 5+ vet partners
- Introduce the tidy-visit service
- Annual price review
- Gate 2: reduce clinic shifts if criteria are met

Milestones

- Gate 2 decision
- 65+ customers served in Year 1

Measurable objectives

Utilisation	**≥80%**
Rebook rate	**≥80%**

Resources: Transition to full time · **Dependencies:** Gate 2 criteria

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

The first 90 days are about evidence and relationships, not assets. Capital is committed only at Gate 1, and employment changes only at Gate 2.

14 Investment & resource requirements

ITEM	CATEGORY	COST RANGE	TIMING	PRIORITY	EXPECTED RETURN
Van down payment (used or financed unit) VERIFIED [S13]	Equipment	$15K–$25K	Months 4–6 (after Gate 1)	Must have	Unlocks full capacity (~840 grooms a year)
Portable grooming kit (table, low-noise dryer, accessories) ESTIMATE	Equipment	$800–$2,000	Month 1	Must have	Enables paid validation without a van
Insurance (general liability, care/custody/control; commercial auto later) ASSUMPTION	Operations	$600–$1,500	Month 1	Must have	Required for vets and customers to trust the service
Business setup (LLC, licences, booking software, simple site) ASSUMPTION	Technology	$500–$1,500	Month 1	Must have	Professional booking and payments
Referral kit and local marketing ESTIMATE	Marketing	$300–$800	Months 1–3	Must have	Primary acquisition channel
Professional advice (employment agreement, accountant) ASSUMPTION	Professional services	$500–$1,500	Month 1	Must have	Removes the largest legal risk
Cash reserve (2–3 months of van costs) VERIFIED [S13]	Working capital	$5,000–$8,000	Before van	Should have	Practitioners advise holding 2–3 months of peak revenue for repairs
Total		**$23K–$40K**			

Capabilities required

CAPABILITY	APPROACH	NOTE
Clinical handling and grooming	Founder	Core asset
Booking, reminders and payments	Buy	Off-the-shelf grooming software
Bookkeeping and tax	Partner	Local accountant
Second groomer (Year 3)	Hire	Only after Gate 3

INVESTMENT PRIORITISATION

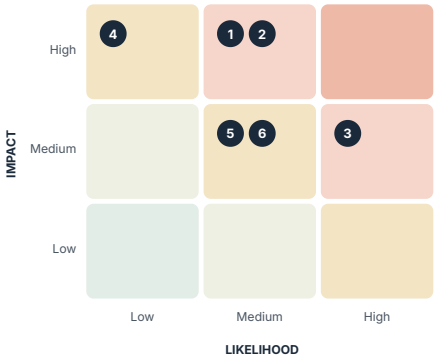
Spend first on the items that de-risk and validate (advice, insurance, portable kit, referral kit — about $3,000–$7,000 combined). Commit the van down payment only after Gate 1. Build the cash reserve before taking on van debt.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

Calm Coat can be validated for under $7,000. The big capital decision is deferred until evidence exists — the single most important financial safeguard in this plan.

15 Risks, assumptions & performance measurement

#	RISK	TYPE	MITIGATION
1	Employment agreement restricts outside work or solicitation L: Medium I: High	Regulatory	Legal review in week 1; never approach clinic clients while employed
2	Van debt taken on before demand is proven L: Medium I: High	Financial	Gate 1 criteria; used or financed van; cash reserve
3	Franchise competitors match the senior-dog message L: High I: Medium	Market	Lead with clinical credentials and vet partnerships they cannot replicate
4	Medical incident during a groom L: Low I: High	Execution	Insurance, health intake, written emergency protocol, refuse unsuitable dogs
5	Founder burnout during the dual-job period L: Medium I: Medium	Execution	Cap weekly grooms; Gate 2 timing
6	Customer lifetime shorter than assumed (senior dogs) L: Medium I: Medium	Financial	Track household retention, including next dogs; keep referral flow constant



Leading indicators

KPI	TARGET	CADENCE
Vet referrals received	**≥4 a month by Month 6**	Weekly
Rebook rate at checkout	**≥80%**	Weekly
Waitlist households	**15 by Day 90**	Weekly
Average ticket	**≥$130**	Monthly

Lagging indicators

KPI	TARGET	CADENCE
Monthly revenue	**Track against base case**	Monthly
Utilisation (grooms done ÷ capacity)	**≥80% by Month 12**	Monthly
Operating profit before owner pay	**Above clinic income by Gate 2**	Quarterly
Annual household retention	**≥75%**	Annually

Decision gates

GATE	WHEN	CRITERIA	IF MET	IF NOT MET
Gate 1 — van commitment	Day 90	≥15 paid grooms, ≥70% rebook, ≥3 vet partners, ≥15 waitlist households	Finance a used van; target operation by Month 6–9	Continue house calls for 60 days; revisit pricing and channel; do not buy
Gate 2 — reduce clinic shifts	Month 9–12	≥60 regular households, ≥75% utilisation, 3 months of operating profit ≥ clinic income	Move to full-time grooming	Stay part-time; focus on referrals
Gate 3 — second groomer	Year 2–3	≥90% utilisation for 3 months and a waitlist of 30+ households	Hire and train to protocol; finance a second van	Raise prices instead of adding capacity

STRATEGIC IMPLICATION

Explicit gates turn the biggest decisions — van, job and hiring — into evidence-based checkpoints. The strategy should change if vet referrals fail to materialise by Day 90: that would suggest repositioning toward convenience and price, a much less attractive game.

→ Final recommendation

1. Is this an attractive commercial opportunity?

Yes, conditionally The market is large relative to one groomer's capacity, unit economics are strong and the clinical niche is unoccupied. The conditions are premium pricing, a vet-referral engine and disciplined van financing tied to Gate 1.

2. Which customers and markets should the business prioritise?

Senior-dog households in Lewis Center, northern Westerville and Worthington, reached first through independent veterinary clinics; vet-referred medical dogs as the premium tier; convenience-seekers accepted but not targeted.

3. How should the business position itself and compete?

As the clinically led at-home grooming specialist — not as another calm, cage-free mobile groomer. Publish transparent premium prices, lead with credentials and health notes, and make vets the primary channel.

4. What is the realistic revenue and profit potential?

One groomer: about $111K revenue in Year 3 (base), with $62K operating profit before owner pay; range $67K (conservative) to $202K (upside, with a second groomer).

5. What are the most important actions to take next?

#	ACTION	OWNER	BY
1	Have the employment agreement reviewed	Dana	Week 1
2	Confirm licence, home-occupation and HOA requirements	Dana	Week 2
3	Bind liability insurance and publish premium pricing	Dana	Week 3
4	Complete 5 paid house-call grooms	Dana	Day 30
5	Pitch 10 independent vet clinics with the referral kit	Dana	Day 60
6	Obtain three van quotes and hold the Gate 1 review	Dana + mentor	Day 90

REVIEWER'S NOTE

Dana, the most important finding is uncomfortable but useful: 'calm' is already taken locally — 'clinical' is not. Your twelve years are the business. Price like a specialist, let vets do your marketing, and let the Day-90 numbers buy the van.

— Kickpath reviewer

A Data gaps to close

GAP	WHY IT MATTERS	HOW TO CLOSE IT
Dana's current clinic income	Sets the Gate 2 threshold for going full time	Client to confirm
Actual minutes per senior-dog groom including travel	Determines capacity (SOM) and price per hour	Time every house call
Competitor prices for Zoomin Groomin and Bark & Mane	Neither publishes prices; affects premium positioning	Request quotes for a senior medium dog
Local licence, wastewater and parking rules for grooming vans	Could constrain where the van operates	City of Westerville, City of Worthington and Genoa Township offices
Insurance and van financing quotes	Largest fixed costs in the model	Two broker quotes; lender pre-qualification

B Sources

REF	SOURCE	USED FOR
S1	**U.S. Pet Industry Reaches $158 Billion in 2025, Poised for Continued Growth in 2026** American Pet Products Association (APPA) · 2026-03-26 https://americanpetproducts.org/news/u.s.-pet-industry-reaches-158-billion-in-2025-poised-for-continued-growth-in-2026	Industry spending $158B in 2025 (+3.7%), projected $165B in 2026; 95M pet households; dog-owning households 53% (71M) Accessed 2026-10-22
S2	**Pet population continues increase while pet spending declines** American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) · 2024-10-10 https://www.avma.org/news/pet-population-continues-increase-while-pet-spending-declines	Dog ownership rate (45.5%), 59.8M dog households, 89.7M dogs Accessed 2026-10-22
S3	**Over half of dog & cat owners have senior pets** Packaged Facts / Freedonia Group (MRI-Simmons data) · 2022 data https://freedoniagroup.com/blog/over-half-of-dog-cat-owners-have-senior-pets	53.5% of dog-owning households have a senior dog (7+), up from 41.6% in 2012 Accessed 2026-10-22
S4	**ZIP Code 43081 (Westerville) demographics** zip-codes.com (U.S. Census 2020 DHC; ACS 2024 5-yr) https://www.zip-codes.com/zip-code/43081/zip-code-43081.asp	26,825 households; median household income $92,422 Accessed 2026-10-22
S5	**ZIP Code 43082 (Westerville) demographics** zip-codes.com (U.S. Census 2020 DHC; ACS 2024 5-yr) https://www.zip-codes.com/zip-code/43082/zip-code-43082.asp	12,089 households; median household income $147,972 Accessed 2026-10-22
S6	**ZIP Code 43035 (Lewis Center) demographics** zip-codes.com (U.S. Census 2020 DHC; ACS 2024 5-yr) https://www.zip-codes.com/zip-code/43035/zip-code-43035.asp	11,209 households; median household income $154,683 Accessed 2026-10-22
S7	**Worthington, OH profile** Data USA (ACS 2024) https://datausa.io/profile/geo/worthington-oh	~6,140 households; median household income $127,382 Accessed 2026-10-22
S8	**Zoomin Groomin North Columbus — areas served** Zoomin Groomin https://www.zoomingroomin.com/locations/ohio/north-columbus/areas-served/	Direct competitor: serves Worthington, Westerville, Dublin; markets one-on-one, cage-free grooming for anxious and older pets; franchise; prices not published Accessed 2026-10-22
S9	**Bark & Mane of Northwest Columbus** Bark & Mane https://www.barkandmane.com/pet-groomers/northwest-columbus-oh/	Direct competitor: serves Lewis Center, Westerville and others; 'certified experts', Well-Being WrapUp; formerly Aussie Pet Mobile; prices not published Accessed 2026-10-22
S10	**Central Ohio Dog & Cat Groomers** Furry Land Mobile Grooming https://furryland.us/locations/central-ohio-mobile-pet-groomers/	Published starting prices: $110 small, $140 medium, $165 large, $190 XL (full groom) Accessed 2026-10-22

S11	**Mobile Pet Grooming & Spa Services** Furball Fitness Pet Care https://www.furballfitnesspetcare.com/grooming-spa	Mobile bath from $45, nail trim $25; mobile limited to baths/nails; $2/mile beyond 10 miles Accessed 2026-10-22
S12	**Dyna Groom Van** Wag'n Tails https://wagntails.com/all-vehicles/dyna-groom-van-2/	New purpose-built grooming van from $129,246 after rebate (2026 Ford Transit 350 chassis $63,490 + upfit $69,756) Accessed 2026-10-22
S13	**Mobile Grooming Workshop Recap** The Daily Groomer · 2025-10-03 https://thedailygroomer.beehiiv.com/p/mobile-grooming-workshop-recap	Practitioner panel: $115–125/hr for senior/difficult dogs; travel fees $25–75; expect $20–25k down on a van; raise prices 5–10%/yr; keep 2–3 months of revenue in reserve Accessed 2026-10-22
S14	**Animal Care and Service Workers — Occupational Outlook Handbook** U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics https://www.bls.gov/ooh/personal-care-and-service/animal-care-and-service-workers.htm	Median pay $35,530 (May 2025); employment +11% 2025–35; ~25% of caretakers self-employed Accessed 2026-10-22
S15	**How Often Should You Groom Your Dog?** GoodRx (reviewed by a DVM) · 2025-01-22 https://www.goodrx.com/pet-health/dog/how-often-should-you-groom-your-dog	Professional grooming every 3–4 weeks (long coats) and 4–6 weeks (medium-long coats) Accessed 2026-10-22
S16	**Zoomin Groomin franchise summary** FranchisePayback (third-party summary of 2026 FDD) https://www.franchisepayback.com/franchise/zoomin-groomin	257 units; initial investment $65K–$205K; $45K fee; 8% royalty + 2% ad fund; reported average unit revenue $171K (inconsistently presented — treat as indicative only) Accessed 2026-10-22
S17	**Zoomin Groomin Brings Mobile Pet Spa to Carver County** Carver County Local News · 2025-04-04 https://cclocalnews.org/2025/04/04/zoomin-groomin-brings-mobile-pet-spa-to-carver-county/	Franchise vans schedule five to eight dogs per day Accessed 2026-10-22

C Methodology & standards

Process. Your intake was analysed alongside desk research of public sources (Appendix B). A strategist model drafted the analysis to a fixed structure; all market sizing, unit economics, forecasts and sensitivities were then calculated by a deterministic model from the stated drivers, so every figure in the narrative traces back to a visible calculation. A human reviewer checked sources, challenged assumptions and edited the report before delivery.

Evidence standards. We never invent market statistics, competitor prices or financial performance. A claim is labelled *Verified* only when it appears in a cited source; competitor ratings and scores are analyst estimates; anything else is labelled as client data, an estimate or an assumption. Where sources disagree (e.g. different dog-ownership rates), we state both and use the more conservative figure.

Scoring. Segments, channels and initiatives are scored 1–5 per criterion with simple, equally weighted totals so rankings can be debated and re-weighted.

Forecast model. Active customers = prior-year active × retention + new customers. Revenue = active customers × revenue per customer. Gross profit = revenue × gross margin. Contribution = gross profit − (new customers × acquisition cost). Operating profit = contribution − fixed operating costs (excluding owner pay and tax). Cumulative cash starts from minus the upfront investment. Break-even month is interpolated within the year.

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