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# CLICK!

BUILDING BETTER TRAINERS THROUGH EDUCATION

**PUBLIC RELEASE**

MAGAZINE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PET DOG TRAINERS AUSTRALIA INC.

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## Disclaimer

*All articles appearing in this publication are considered to be of general interest to the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) Australia Inc. members and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Association Committee Members. The Editor and Committee of the APDT accept no responsibility for the accuracy of claims made by contributing members or advertisers within this publication.*

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## Cover Dog

This edition's cover dog is a Bernese Mountain Dog enjoying the cooler autumn weather.

Originally from Switzerland, Berners are all-around farm dogs, good at droving, drafting, herding, farmyard protectors and wonderful family companions.

One reason they excel at so many different jobs is because of their deep need to please their humans. A Bernese Mountain Dog is meant to live with you, not be kennelled or left outside – and, with their easy-going, affectionate temperament, you'll want to be where they are too!

# From the editor's desk

Welcome to the Autumn Edition of Click! and the first edition for 2023. This time of year is a transition period between summer and winter, allowing time to prepare for the colder months. It's also a great time to think about transitions and changes in our dogs' lives.

A real-world strength to develop in your dog (and yourself) is the concept of optimism and flexibility when confronted with change. How does your dog cope with moving from one environment to another? Do they remain calm or feel overwhelmed? Can they demonstrate an emotional transition when re-entering the house from an active play session outside? What steps can you take to help these transitions? In this edition, you'll learn techniques to help your dog to transition successfully through meaningful training and rehearsal of appropriate behaviours.

This edition also includes articles about contrafreeloading, stress, how your emotions may be

affecting your dog and the latest information about the APDT Awards and Conference scheduled for October.

That's all from me. Enjoy this edition and get your nominations in for the APDT Awards.

Tom Heeren

*Dear reader,*

*This edition of the APDT Australia Inc. Click! Magazine is a public-release preview of our much larger publication available to financial APDT Australia Inc. members.*

*Each members-only edition is filled with science-based training articles from around the world and other APDT information. The front cover features a member's dog, and the magazine is published in both hard and soft copy three times a year.*

*If you wish to access the full edition of this magazine and all of our other publications, consider joining APDT Australia Inc. at [www.apdt.org.au](http://www.apdt.org.au).*

## WEBTODAY

Kate from WebToday designed the new APDT website and would love to help you with your dog business website as well!

What's included:

- a creative and functional website design
- logo design and stock photography
- single or multiple webpages
- copywriting from your brief
- click-to-call phone number and email
- an interactive contact form
- a functional mobile device site
- bookings and events software
- a blog page
- full search engine optimisation (SEO) for the entire site and each page.



Most of all, you'll be listened to and supported with knowledge about the best way to achieve your online goals.

**When you are ready to get online or upgrade your existing website, call Kate for your APDT discount**

**[www.webtoday.com.au](http://www.webtoday.com.au) | 0411 811 417**

# President's report



Hello members,

Registrations are now open for the 2023 APDT Conference at the Oaks Cypress Lakes Resort in the beautiful Hunter Valley, NSW. This was the location of our 2019 conference, so it's very fitting that we return to the same location in 2023 to celebrate our return to in-person learning.

Eminent speakers include Diane Garrod, Sarah Fisher, Dr Matthew Muir, Dr Conor Brady, Dr Chris Pachel, and Dr Susan Friedman, plus a host of local Australian talent to bring you a conference that is diverse and educational. The immensely popular APDT Shorts are back; a call has gone out for submissions. Please support these popular short 10 – 15 minute talks enthusiastically again this year.

Check the conference website for full program details and things to do in the Hunter Valley. Buses will be available to collect and

drop you back at Newcastle and Sydney Airports, and there are many opportunities to relax and enjoy the surroundings. There is no substitute for friendships, camaraderie, and getting together for a drink or dinner while you chat about the days learnings.

The APDT awards are back and open. These awards haven't been offered since 2019, so jump in and fill out an application for yourself or someone you know. Winners will be announced at the APDT 2023 conference.

Our organisation is all about education, and community events are an incredible way for members to spread the message to educate future generations of the dog-owning public and new dog trainers so we can help get them off to the right start. We can't do this without your help, so please put your hand up to volunteer so that we can educate trainers and guardians and help more dogs.

Sharon Carroll hangs up her treasurer's outfit this month to focus on her business and, no doubt, her dogs and life. Sharon has done an absolutely fantastic job and has been a joy to work with. So as we farewell Sharon, we welcome Mark Ehrman into the role. Sharon, we are eternally thankful for you stepping up when you did and for transferring your knowledge to Mark so that he may excel in this role.

In the meantime, happy training!

Your president,

*Louise Ginman*

## APDT merchandise

Support and promote your APDT by purchasing dog training related merchandise with the APDT logo from the APDT website. Go to **Member Area > Online Store** – you will need to login first.

Please note some older items have the older APDT logo printed on them.



**Spring hinge treat pouch – \$15.00**



**Loud Box Clicker**



**Soft iClicker**

**Clickers – \$4.00 each**

# CONTRAFREELOADING

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WHY DOGS PREFER TO WORK FOR THEIR FOOD



## WHAT IS CONTRAFREELADING?

You may have read that your dog likes to work for food rather than get food for free. At first, this seems illogical. Why would any animal choose a path of work and effort rather than a path of freebies?

Foraging, hunting, and seeking are innate behaviours that improve through learning, but fundamentally, they are instinctive, and many animals spend a considerable amount of their day seeking food. This instinct to seek food is hugely important from an evolutionary standpoint. Fail to find enough food, and you may die before passing on your genes; find enough food, and you get an opportunity to pass on your successful food-seeking genes to another generation. This process creates an evolutionary pressure to make a planet full of animals with a reasonably strong instinct to look for food.

This theory doesn't quite explain why your dog would choose to work for the food rather than eat what is provided freely. When given a choice, why doesn't your dog think, "Oh, I found the food in this bowl – I don't need to do anything more than just eat it?"

## WHY DO DOGS CONTRAFREELOAD?

Science shows that dopamine (the feel-good brain chemical) rises when an opportunity to gain food appears, not when your dog actually gets the food. This explanation tells you that the chase/play/search for food is a greater thrill than actually getting the food. This, too, explains why you can use your dog's daily food allowance and diet in training rather than always resorting to extra-high-value food.

A note of caution here: Do not take this desire to work for food as a reason not to reinforce your dog's training because, without success, the thrill of the chase would soon die.

In your dog, what you might be seeing during contrafreelading is that genetic link to their ancestors who had to seek to live, coupled with a dopamine rise during such seeking behaviour. Simply put, it feels good to forage.

## THIS DOESN'T WORK FOR MY DOG

However, it isn't a given that your dog will contrafreeload. There are many contributing factors. For example, dogs with more than enough opportunity to perform their natural behaviour may not feel the need, and hungry dogs may prefer to dive straight in than contrafreeload. Maybe some breeds have lost too much of their ancestor's behavioural traits through selective breeding.

As dog guardians, we should encourage seeking behaviours in our dogs and give them every opportunity to fulfil some of the behavioural instincts lacking due to their domestic living conditions as companion animals. No animal ever evolved by receiving free food in a bowl. Every feed is an opportunity to give them something back, allowing natural behaviour and promoting the feel-good factor.

## TRAINING CONNECTIONS

- **Ditch the Bowl** – rather than feeding your dog in one instance, use your dog's food allowance as multiple training opportunities.
- **Animate food** – utilise the thrill of the chase by animating food – roll, toss, scatter, lure, etc. food for your dog. It's the chase that releases dopamine and makes the experience fun and makes them come back for more!
- **Food puzzles** – create opportunities for your dog to use their brain to get their food out of containers, tubes, Kongs, etc.
- **Don't over complicate it** – make all contrafreelading opportunities successful. Make sure your dog wins the food prize. If it is too hard, your dog will lose interest and not want to participate. You can make it harder once you have grown the concept of grit or persistence.
- **Be creative and resourceful** – you don't need to spend a fortune creating contrafreelading opportunities for your dog. A crimped cardboard toilet roll with a few pieces of food within is great prize to find in the garden or the house on a rainy day!

# Ready to launch?



If you've been dreaming of taking your business to the next level, we can help you **THRIVE!**

Going all in on your dog training business can be daunting. Join our community of supportive R+ trainers to learn, connect, and build confidence. Experience weekly coaching, listen to industry experts, and learn practical skills you can use right away.

Join the **THRIVE!** waitlist at  
[dogbizsuccess.com/thrive/](https://dogbizsuccess.com/thrive/)

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**THRIVE!**  
A dogbiz U group coaching program

# Is it time to go all in?

Are you dreaming of making dog training your full-time gig? At dogbiz, after two decades of helping R+ dog trainers do just that, we can confidently say that it's absolutely possible to make that dream your reality! The leap from a hobby or part-time business to a full-time dog pro can be thrilling and terrifying. Once you've decided, you may feel a surge of energy thinking about all the possibilities ahead. You may also feel overloaded as you attempt to juggle your 'regular' job, business, family commitments, and dogs. Oh, and something about a social life? Thinking and planning upfront can help avoid the overwhelm by getting you and your business ready for the transition.

## DO THE NUMBERS ADD UP?

If your current non-dog job lacks flexibility, savings and other household income streams can significantly help. They can allow you to transition more quickly by supporting your early business costs or enabling you to quit your job earlier. Not everyone has a safety net; if that's the case, don't lose heart. While transitioning may take longer, it's still possible with some planning. Can you prioritise your spending to ease some of the pressure? Is there room in your budget for small or large sacrifices? We know this isn't the case for everyone, but it may be worth considering.

## ABOUT THAT 'OTHER' JOB...

If you're um-ing and ah-ing about how and when to leave your current job, there are several questions to consider. Is your work flexible? For example, can you come to work late or have long lunch breaks to fit in a dog training session? Do you work from home, and if so, can you choose your hours? Or are you restricted to evenings and weekends for dog training work? Calculating the hours available for your business will help you estimate how quickly it can grow.

When planning your exit, can it be gradual, or will you need to make a more dramatic shift? For some, reducing hours over time makes the transition a little easier – it allows you to let go as your dog training clients and income ramps up. For others, being forced to make a more permanent decision can provide a big dose of motivation.

Don't underestimate your transferable skills that you can use in your dog training business. If your work has learning opportunities, marketing, finance, and customer experience, seize those opportunities!

## YOU CAN'T DO ALL THE THINGS

We've seen many trainers exhaust themselves during their transition period. Juggling your regular job with your growing business, among all your other commitments, is a lot. This uneasy tightrope can quickly break down, and you may end up in limbo, not enjoying either version of your working life. One of the most important steps is having an honest conversation with yourself about your capacity. What can you say no to, even temporarily, to give yourself the necessary space? While it can be tough to let a hobby, commitment, or volunteer role go, it will allow you to move towards the life you want more quickly.

Lean on your support network. Who in your circle might be able to step in and relieve some pressure? A personal cheer and support squad is invaluable, whether for household chores, dropping off a few dinners, or just being a sounding board for your ideas. Build habits now that you want to retain in your business. Taking time to rest and replenish is hugely important when you run your venture. Burnout is common in the dog industry, and if you're exhausted and overwhelmed, you won't be able to help all those clients and dogs that need your outstanding skills.

## BUILD A VIABLE BUSINESS

Part of the transition to full-time dog training is assessing and designing your business with this in mind. Adjustments may be needed to ensure its long-term feasibility if you've been approaching it from a hobby or part-time perspective. You can switch more quickly if your services are effective and your rates are competitive. This is the best and most risk-free time to raise them, and once you do, you'll be able to build that safety net more quickly.

Are your consultations lengthy (over 90 minutes), or running over time? How long are training notes taking to write per client? Giving clients as much value as possible in the first session is tempting, but this undervalues your time and leaves them with less reason to book you again. Are you teaching classes? Switch to open enrolment, particularly for your entry-level puppy and manners classes, to avoid losing money to cancelled or under-enrolled courses. Consider offering topics-based classes on common issues such as loose-leash walking or recall. These will fill more quickly than longer intermediate or advanced classes.

Don't ignore the boring stuff. Solid policies and automated processes help your business run smoothly. Cancellation policies that allow too much wiggle room can cost you time and money. Automated booking processes and software are convenient for clients and save you from back-and-forth, "which date works for you?" email chains. A comprehensive marketing plan allows you to promote your business strategically rather than hoping social media inspiration will strike.

## TAKE A DEEP BREATH!

Diving into a full-time dog training business takes courage. To be successful, it also takes support, planning, and perseverance. But the reward is enormous – you get to create a life doing what you love and making the world better for dogs. If you want more tips on growing your R+ dog training business, we've created a free checklist at [dogbizsuccess.com/dog-training-e-book](http://dogbizsuccess.com/dog-training-e-book).

**Veronica Boutelle**, MA, CTC is the author of *How To Run a Dog Business: Putting Your Career Where Your Heart Is*, and co-founder of dogbiz, whose business is to help yours succeed.

**Harriet Alexander** is the content curator for dogbiz. Learn all the ways dogbiz can support your success at [dogbizsuccess.com](http://dogbizsuccess.com). While there, join the THRIVE! waitlist to be first in line when membership opens in November 2023.

# Take the lead with Marsh

As a world leading insurance broker and risk advisor, Marsh can arrange a wide range of insurance products to help protect your legal liabilities and business interests.

As the appointed insurance broker of Australian Pet Dog Trainers Association Inc. (APDT), Marsh can assist you with your insurance needs.

We can help arrange a combined Public & Products Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance product solution, tailored specifically to the pet industry.

**For more information contact Marsh today**

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# MEMBERS' BENEFITS

APDT is proud to partner with the listed companies to offer our members great discounts on their products and services.

To view the latest offers, discount codes and how to redeem them, visit the **Member Discounts** page in the Member Area of the APDT Australia website.

# FOR BUSINESS...

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*A commission is paid to APDT Australia Inc. for each policy sold.*

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# TRAINING...



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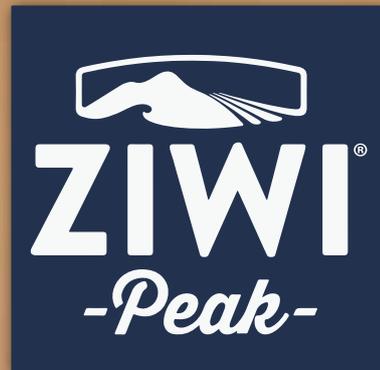
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**CONTACT FOR DISCOUNT**

# APDT Code of Ethics

All APDT Dog Trainers and members have agreed to follow our code of conduct, including:

- Perform services to the best of their ability within this Code of Ethics guidelines
- Employ only humane, dog-friendly techniques in the training of dogs
- Actively reject the use of harsh, physical, psychological, coercive and aversive methods in the training of dogs, including the use of electric shock collars, correction, pinch or pronged collars
- Make the welfare of the dog of primary importance
- Be honest and trustworthy
- Treat all dogs with respect
- Do no harm
- Promote responsible dog guardianship
- Actively pursue ongoing education to provide a service based upon sound scientific principles and current best practices
- Promote a positive human/canine relationship between guardian and dog
- Work at developing and applying positive methods of dog training
- Provide a service of the highest standard within the limit of their skill, knowledge and ability
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of clients
- Not advertise themselves as a member of APDT Australia Inc. without prior approval of the Association
- Not represent themselves as a spokesperson for APDT Australia Inc. without prior approval of the Association.

