

# RightPaw connecting dog breeders with potential owners

by Tucak P

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A new consumer focused website is hoping to connect people looking for a new pet with reputable dog breeders and will incorporate veterinary oversight and education. The [RightPaw](#) website will be fully launched later this year and is the brain-child of Sydney-based husband and wife team, veterinarian Dr Imogen Tomlin-Game and marketing executive Nathan Olivieri.

With a veterinary background working in pet rescue and shelters, Dr Tomlin-Game explained that the idea for the concept stems from the sometimes daunting task that would-be pet owners face, when trying to research and purchase a new canine pet.

"Frequently vets see new puppies and kittens who are too young or unwell and have been sold to owners who have unwittingly spent thousands of dollars supporting illegal and irresponsible breeding. So many of these clients would sheepishly tell me the pet had been bought through online trading classified pages and that they were embarrassed but they hadn't known where else to go."

"With more people looking for their first pet online, the problem is growing exponentially. We realised that there is a huge opportunity to positively impact the standard of dog breeding in Australia, if we could create a trusted website that could educate the public and help them find responsible breeders," said Dr Tomlin-Game.

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RightPaw hopes to become a legitimate, transparent, ethical resource for finding dog breeders online, together with helping to educate new dog owners about making the right breed choices, and helping to unite quality breeders behind a common goal of improving welfare standards in Australia.

"I'm realistic that there will always be a demand for puppies and for specific breeds. I truly believe that regulating the market for puppies by working on the inside, with excellent quality breeders, is where we can affect the most change and make the biggest difference for animal welfare. Many health, behaviour and welfare problems can be avoided by matching the right puppy with the right owner and ensuring quality breeding and health practices from the beginning. Helping people to make responsible choices also decreases the chance of their dog ending up in a shelter in the future", said Dr Tomlin-Game.

RightPaw has a written 'Code of Ethics' for breeders which are based on the legal guidelines for each state or territory, as well as other best practice principles widely accepted in the industry. "We individually 'vet' every single breeder who lists on RightPaw, taking them through our checklist and gathering evidence to validate their answers. People looking for pets get frustrated, confused and understandably pushed towards the 'easy' choice of paying for an easily accessible pup from a dubious source. RightPaw can transform that process so this pull towards unethical breeders stops", said Dr Tomlin-Game.

RightPaw also has plans to facilitate adoption from rescue organisations and potentially expand their offering into other species. "The opportunity to create positive change in this space is exciting. Now more than ever, the time is right for a responsible platform to connect prospective pet owners with responsible breeders who will be selective about who they sell their pups to and will help to educate the public about their choices", said Dr Tomlin-Game.

*Image: Dr Imogen Tomlin-Game Chief Veterinary Officer, RightPaw*

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