

TOP PRODUCTS

SHANNON BARNARD

Crafting a Booming Business

Shannon Barnard has always loved to create. She even holds a degree from the Art Institute of Seattle. But the founder and creative designer of K9 Bytes, Inc. didn't find her true calling until about 10 years ago.

"My background is in graphic and web design, so I bought a computer business with my husband," she recalls. "But I missed making things with my hands. I started a website to market my crafts, including fabric dog and cat collars."



K9 Bytes, Inc.

Gifts for Pets & Pet Lovers

Finding that the pet products sold best, Shannon redesigned her website to feature them and has never looked back. Today, the list of K9 Bytes' handmade products has grown to include leashes, blankets, dog and cat toys, treats and more.

"I'm so happy to be in the pet industry," quiet Shannon says. "It's such a great fit for my passion for animals."

Collared by Cockers

Shannon's passion for pets started early with a grey cat named Henry. "He was my buddy," she says. "I thought I was a cat person until my husband talked me into getting an English Cocker spaniel puppy, Ted E. Bear."

Ted E. Bear was the first English Cocker to join the family but certainly not the last. Littermates Oreo and Mocha followed and "brought me delight every day of their lives. Their acceptance, pure love and warm cuddles are such great memories."



Lovable Rogue is the latest English Cocker to rule the K9 Bytes roost. Like so many of us, Shannon says she can't imagine life without a dog and all the happiness they bring. "Watching Rogue's joy of simply receiving a treat or playing with his toys is amazing."

Pattern for Success

When Shannon first discovered a pattern for dog and cat collars, she probably couldn't have imagined where it would lead her. A decade later, she marvels at being able to do what she loves. "I get to make fun products for precious dogs and cats to wear," she exclaims. She says she feels successful each time she packages and ships an order.

But she also knows that success doesn't happen in a vacuum, and she knows she's fortunate that her family has been so supportive. "When I landed a big drop-ship client, I asked my husband for help," she explains. "He built me a wonderful fabric cutting table, which helped to streamline my production. Last summer, my mom spent a few days helping me transfer my bins of fabrics onto mini bolts: Now I can see at a glance where each fabric is located."

In addition, she notes that she finds inspiration and support in a network of female pet business and small business owners. "Sharing ideas, worries and successes," she notes, "makes us all stronger."

By Amber Carlton

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