

Cat Welfare Survey 2018

Report of Findings

27 July 2018

Prepared For:

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Ipsos Ref: 18-043220-01



Background to the research

Cat Protection Society in NSW has a vision of finding every cat in need, a loving and responsible home. In addition to that, they also work with the government and the community to promote cat welfare.

One of its strategies is to encourage cat owners to desex their cats at an early age. A research study was conducted by Ipsos in 2017 that shows 89% of cat owners desex their cats.

Since then, Cat Protection Society has run several campaigns promoting desexing, vaccination and adoption on radio (2GB and 2CH) and poster ads (Sydney Trains), and has advertised in print media on the topic of desexing cats.

A repeat of the 2017 study was recently conducted to track whether more cat owners are now desexing their cats. Inputs from this study are sought to formulate plans and strategies to target communities in NSW with cat welfare communications.



Business questions

Who are the owners who have and who have not desexed their cat?

Are certain type of cats more likely to be desexed than others?

What are the barriers to early-age desexing?

Will health messaging improve the rate of cat desexing?



Research objectives

- 🐾 Identify the profile of owners who have desexed their cats
- 🐾 Identify the profile of owners who have not desexed their cats

- 🐾 Identify the profile of cats which have been desexed
- 🐾 Identify the profile of cats which have not been desexed
- 🐾 Determining whether the origin of cats highly correlates with owners not knowing if their cats have been desexed

- 🐾 Investigate the barriers to desexing
- 🐾 Verify whether cost is a barrier for not desexing their cats

- 🐾 Awareness of health benefits of desexing cats by each group
- 🐾 Examine whether health benefits have an impact on owner/future owner's decision to desex their cats

Background to the research

Study design



Design

- Quantitative online survey
- Survey length: 10 mins
- Fieldwork dates: 25th May – 1st June 2018



Who we interviewed

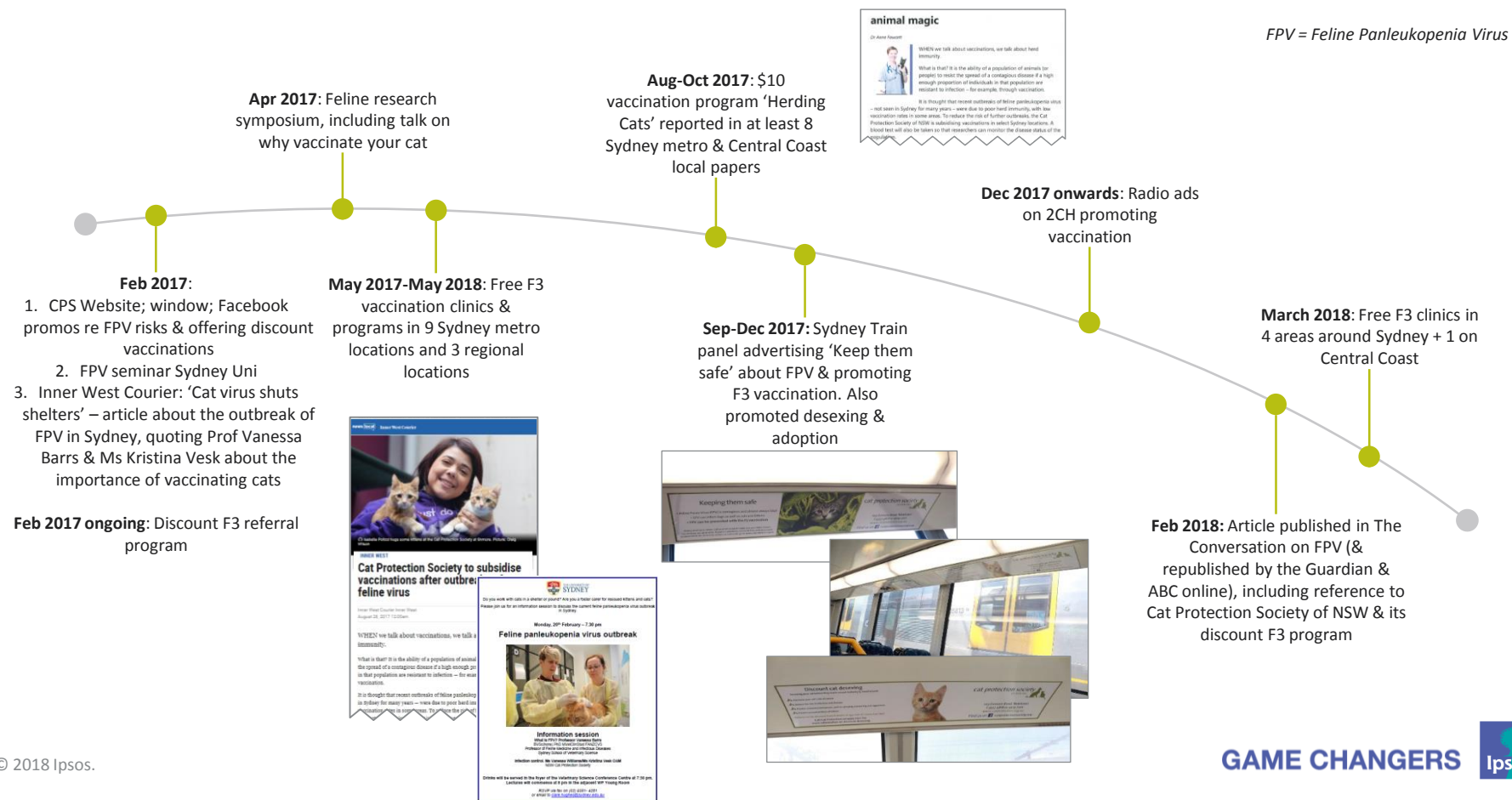
- Aged 18+ years
- Quota on cat ownership:
 - Cat owners: 70%;
 - Non-cat owners: 30%;
- Living in New South Wales (NSW)
- Spread across age, gender, and region (metro versus rural)

Note: Results from 2018 are compared with 2017 results and highlighted if different

Sample sizes	2017	2018
Total respondents	519	524
• Cat owners	363	364
• Non-cat owners	156	160
• Total number of cats amongst owners	554	542

Analysis

- Analysis is conducted by the following groups:
 - Cat owners
 - Who have desexed all their cats
 - Who have not desexed all their cats (including 'don't know')
 - Non-cat owners
 - Cats which have been desexed
 - Cats which have not been desexed
- Data was weighted by age, gender and location at total level so that it is comparable to 2017
- Total sample analysis is not possible due to quota sampling



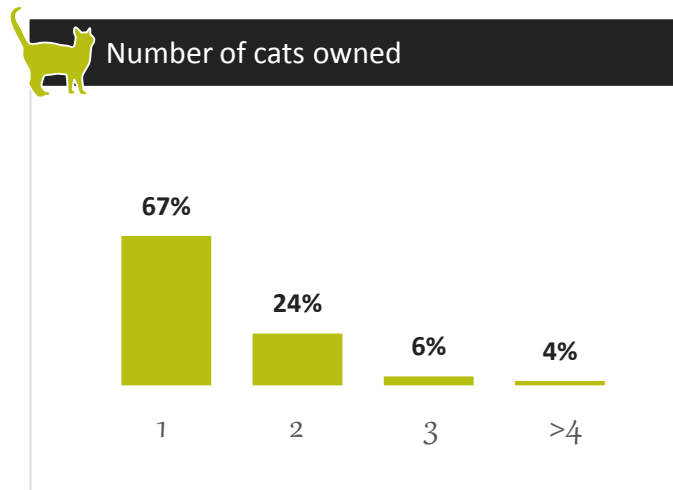
Cats and their owners

Cat owners in NSW are pet lovers, owning at least one other type of pet. Around half of all cats live with a dog in the same household, debunking the myth that cats and dogs are sworn enemies!

Over the last one year, interesting trends have emerged. More cats are being vaccinated compared to a year ago. Owners are also adopting more from shelters. The proportion of cats in NSW that have been desexed remains high at 90%.



Most cat owners in NSW have one cat at home, but a third have two or more cats



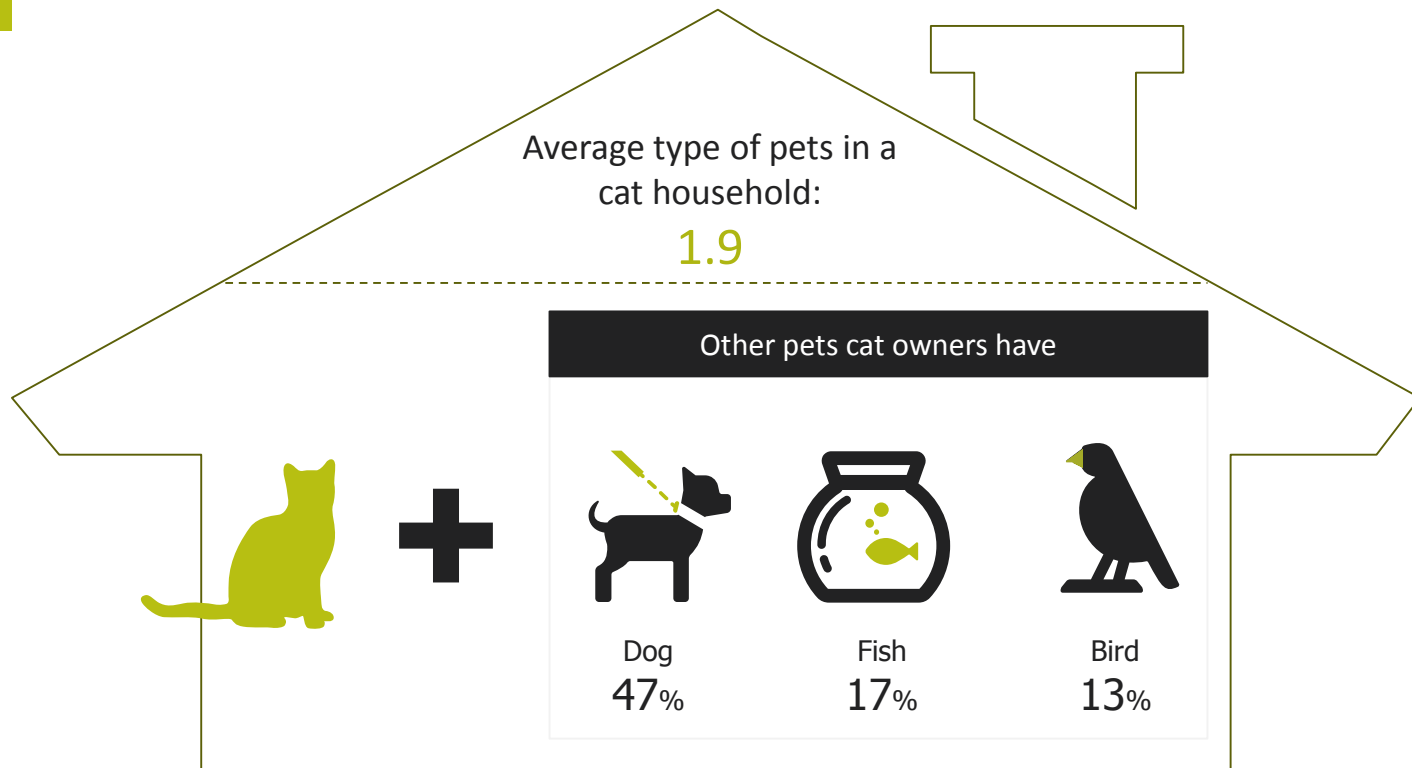
Average number of cats in NSW per home: 1.5

Base: Cat owners, n=364
Q2. How many cats do you own?

Difference between 2018 and 2017 not significant @ 95% confidence level

GAME CHANGERS

An average cat owner also owns one other type of pet, more likely to be a dog



Difference between 2018 and 2017 not significant @ 95% confidence level

Base: Cat owners, n=364

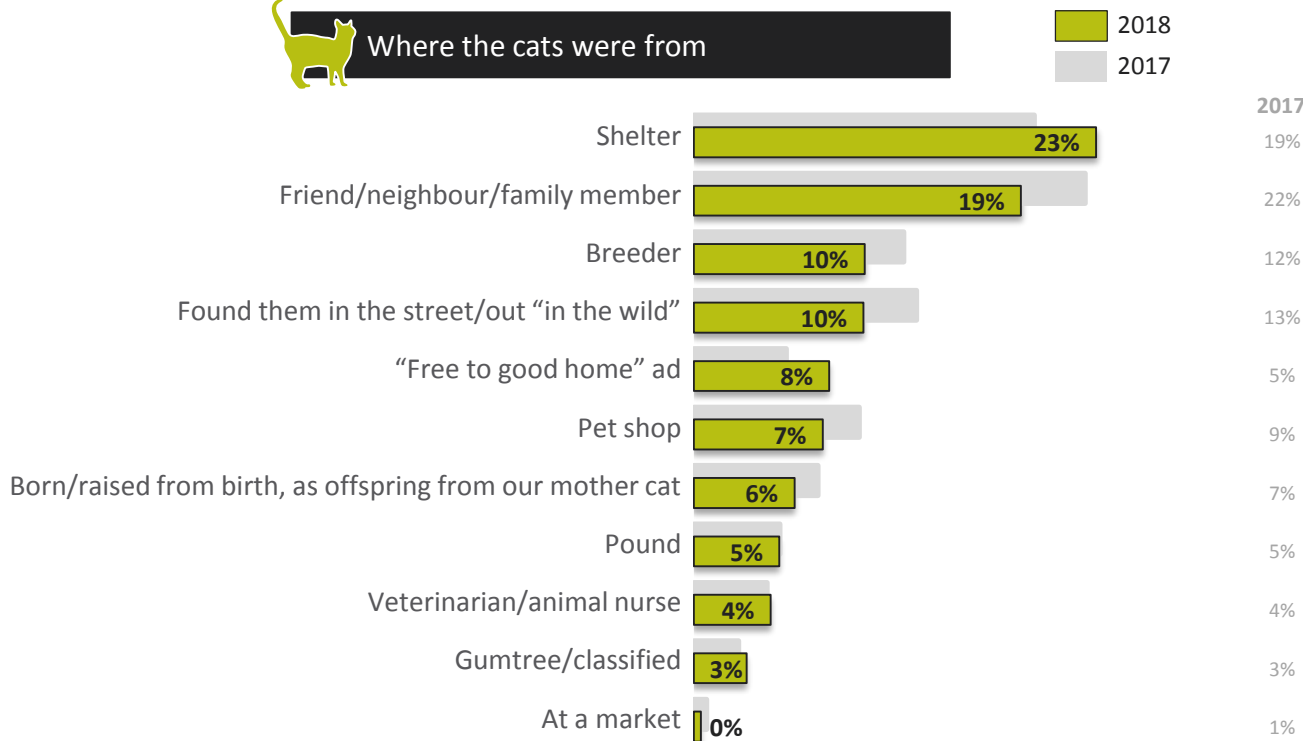
Q1. Can you please tell us which of the following type of pets, if any, do you own?

GAME CHANGERS

Directionally, more owners are getting their cats from shelters - it is now the more popular place from where cats are adopted



Where the cats were from



Base: All cats, n=542
Q5. Where did you get your cat/cats?

Difference between 2018 and 2017 not significant @ 95% confidence level

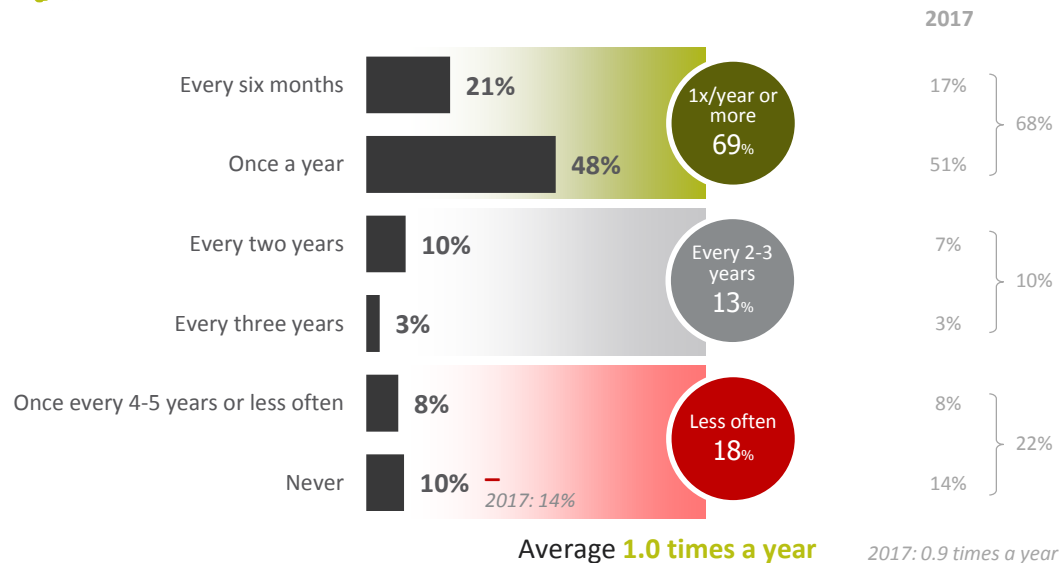
GAME CHANGERS



Cats are visiting vets more frequently this year, possibly as a result of greater awareness resulting from the various campaigns conducted in NSW



Frequency of visits to the vet



Base: All cats, n=542

Q6. On average, how often do you take your cat/cats to the vet?

+/- significantly higher/lower than 2017 @ 95% confidence level

GAME CHANGERS

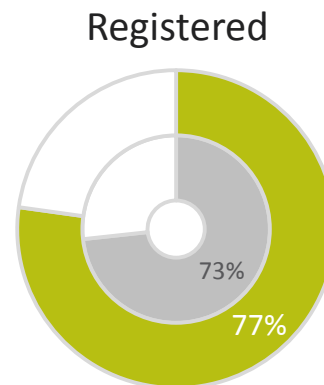
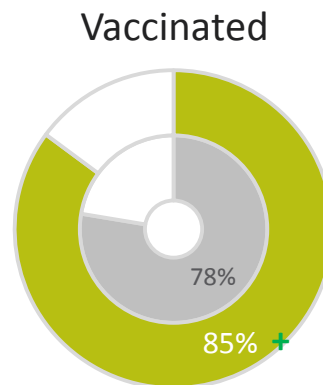
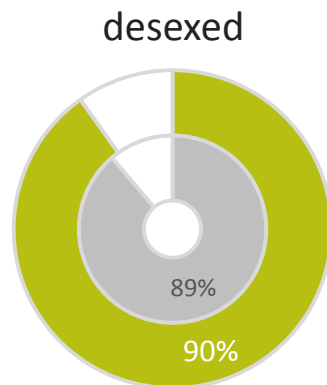


The proportion of desexed cats is still high – only one in ten haven't been desexed. More owners have vaccinated their cats compared to last year



Incidences of cats which have been...

2018
2017



+/- significantly higher/lower than 2017 @ 95% confidence level

Base: All cats, n=542
Source: Q9 (desexed), Q7 (vaccinated), Q8 (registered)

Even among cats that have not been desexed, proportion of cats being vaccinated and registered higher compared to last year



Incidences of vaccination & registration amongst cats who have and have not been desexed



Have been vaccinated



Have been registered

Amongst cats which have been desexed

87%

80%

Amongst cats which have **NOT** been desexed

63% +

2017: 39%

51% +

2017: 26%

+/- significantly higher/lower than 2017 @ 95% confidence level

Base: Cats which have been desexed n=487; cats which have not been desexed n=50
Source: Q9 (desexed), Q7 (vaccinated), Q8 (registered)

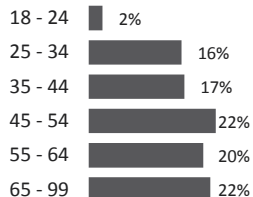
GAME CHANGERS



Who are the cat owners who have desexed their cats?

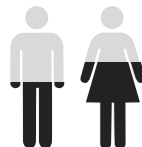


Age



Average **49 y.o.**
(2017: 50 y.o.)

Gender



42% 58%

Household



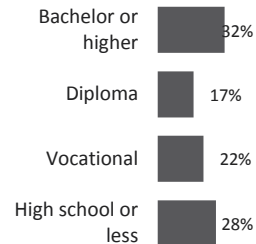
Married/de-facto
relationship
64%



With kids
<18
31%

Average
household
members
2.6

Education



Regions in NSW



Sydney **49%**
Major regional city **27%**
Rural town/surrounding **21%**
>5km from rural town **3%**

Employment

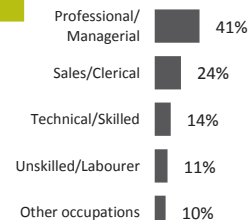
Have employment
60%

Full time 39%
Part time 22%

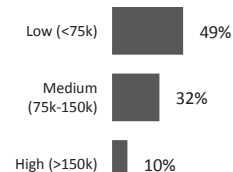
Work from home
(full time or part
time)
37%



Occupation



Household income



Average **\$81,921**

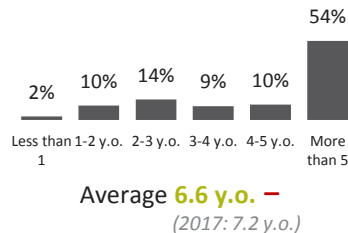
Base: Cat owners who have desexed all their cats, n=325

D2 (age), D3 (gender), Q5D (marital status), Q6D (number of people in HH), Q7D (with kids <18), Q4D (highest education level), Q11D (area), Q8D (working status), Q8Da (work from home), Q9D (occupation), Q10D (household income)

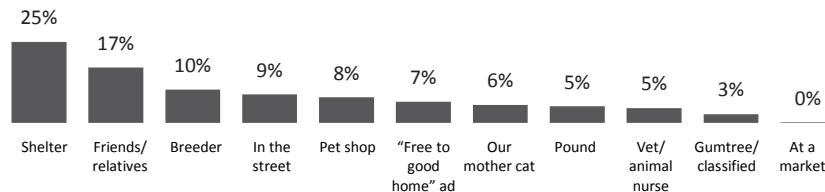
Profile of cats that have been desexed



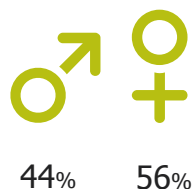
Age of cat



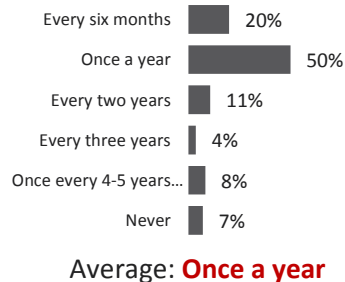
Where they got the cat from



Gender of cats



Visits to the vet



Vaccination & registration



Have been
vaccinated
87%



Have been
registered
80%

+/- significantly higher/lower than 2017 @ 95% confidence level

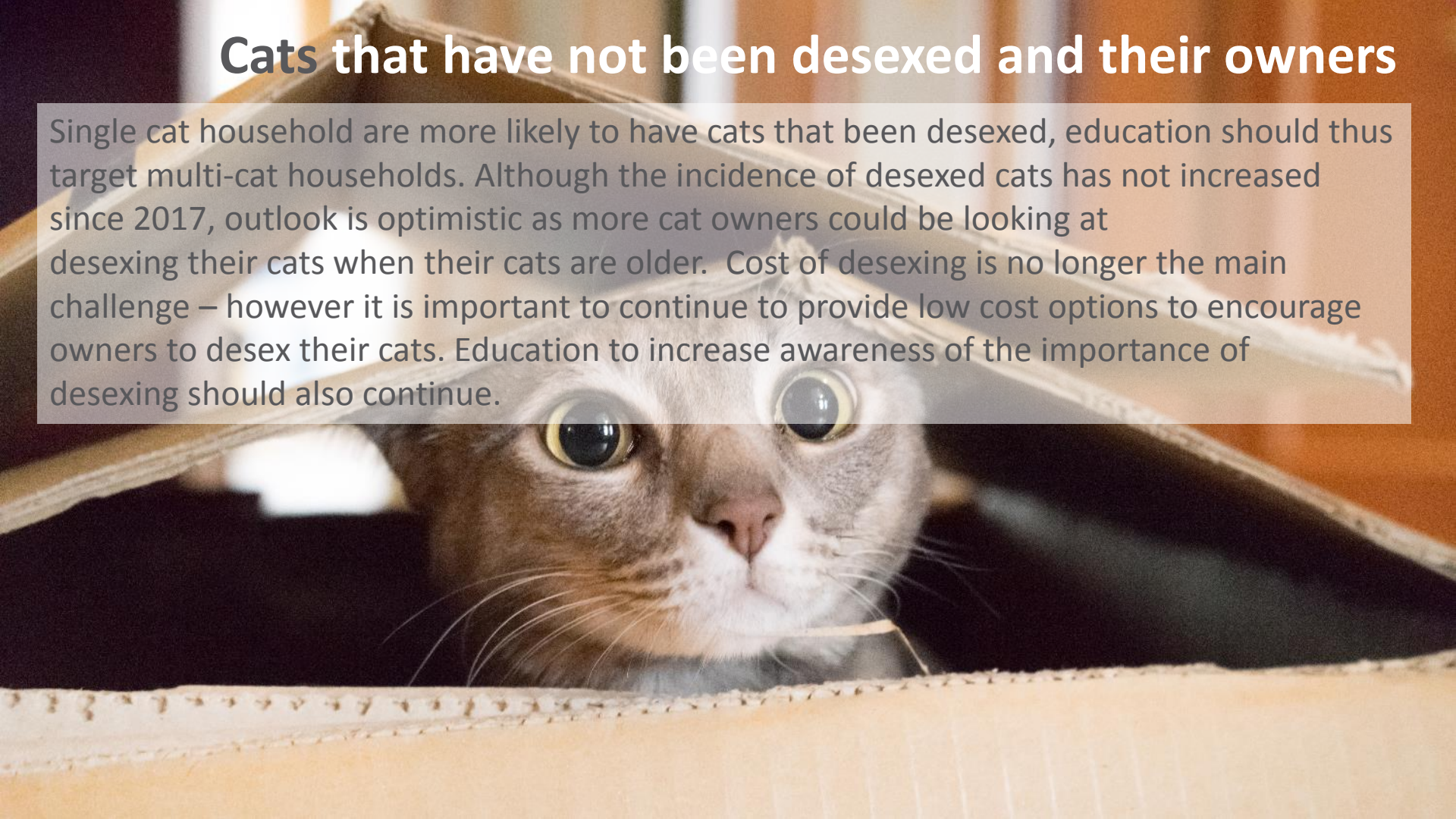
Base: All cats that have been desexed, n=487

Q4 (age), Q3 (gender), Q5 (where they got the cat), Q6 (frequency to the vet), Q7 (vaccination), Q8 (registered)

GAME CHANGERS

Cats that have not been desexed and their owners

Single cat household are more likely to have cats that been desexed, education should thus target multi-cat households. Although the incidence of desexed cats has not increased since 2017, outlook is optimistic as more cat owners could be looking at desexing their cats when their cats are older. Cost of desexing is no longer the main challenge – however it is important to continue to provide low cost options to encourage owners to desex their cats. Education to increase awareness of the importance of desexing should also continue.



Number of cats owned by those who have not desexed all their cats



Number of cats owned

*Amongst owners
who have desexed
all their cats*

69%

23%

5%

3%

*Amongst owners
who have not
desexed all their
cats*

65%

48%

18%

34%

12%

4%

15%

6%

1

2

3

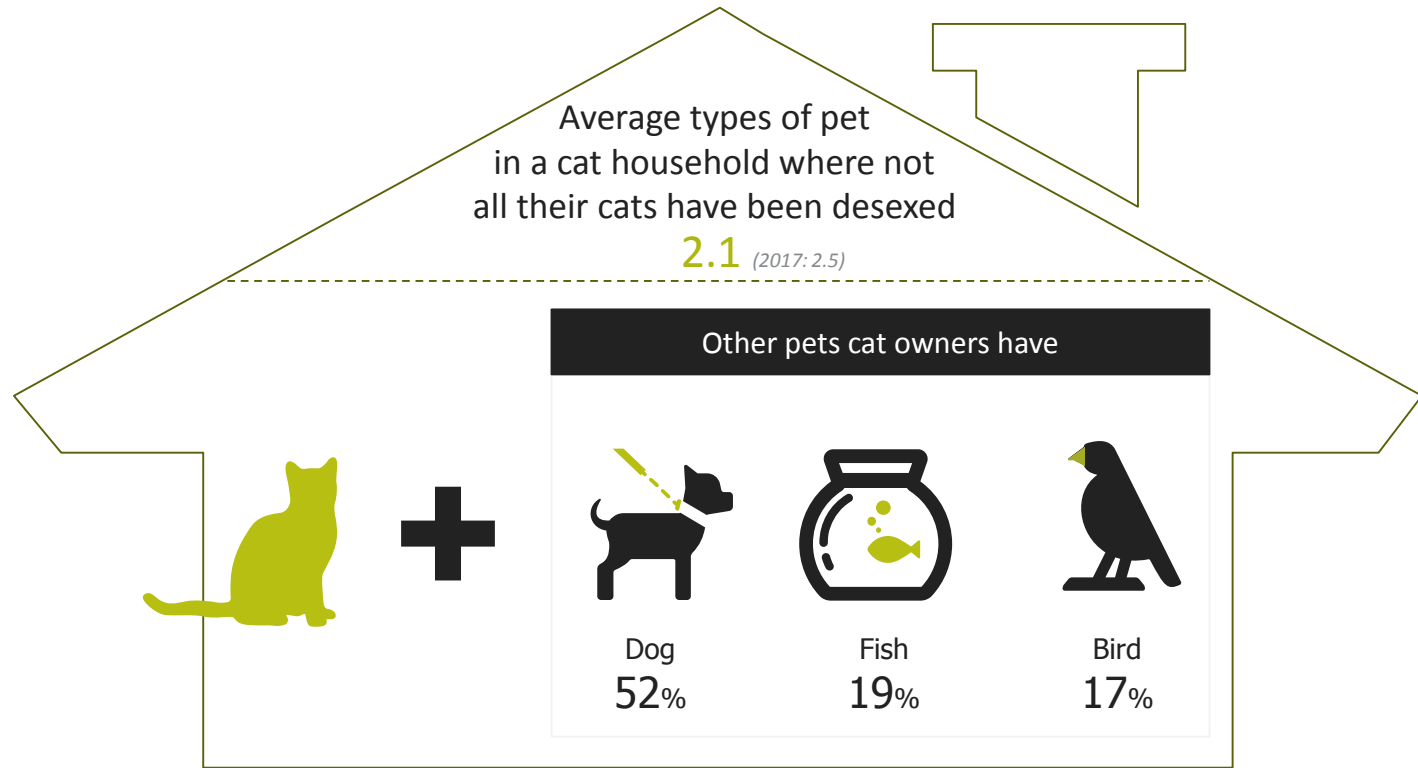
>4

2018

2017

*Average number of cats in NSW per home: 1.8
(2017: 1.8)*

Other type of pets owned by those who have not desexed all their cats

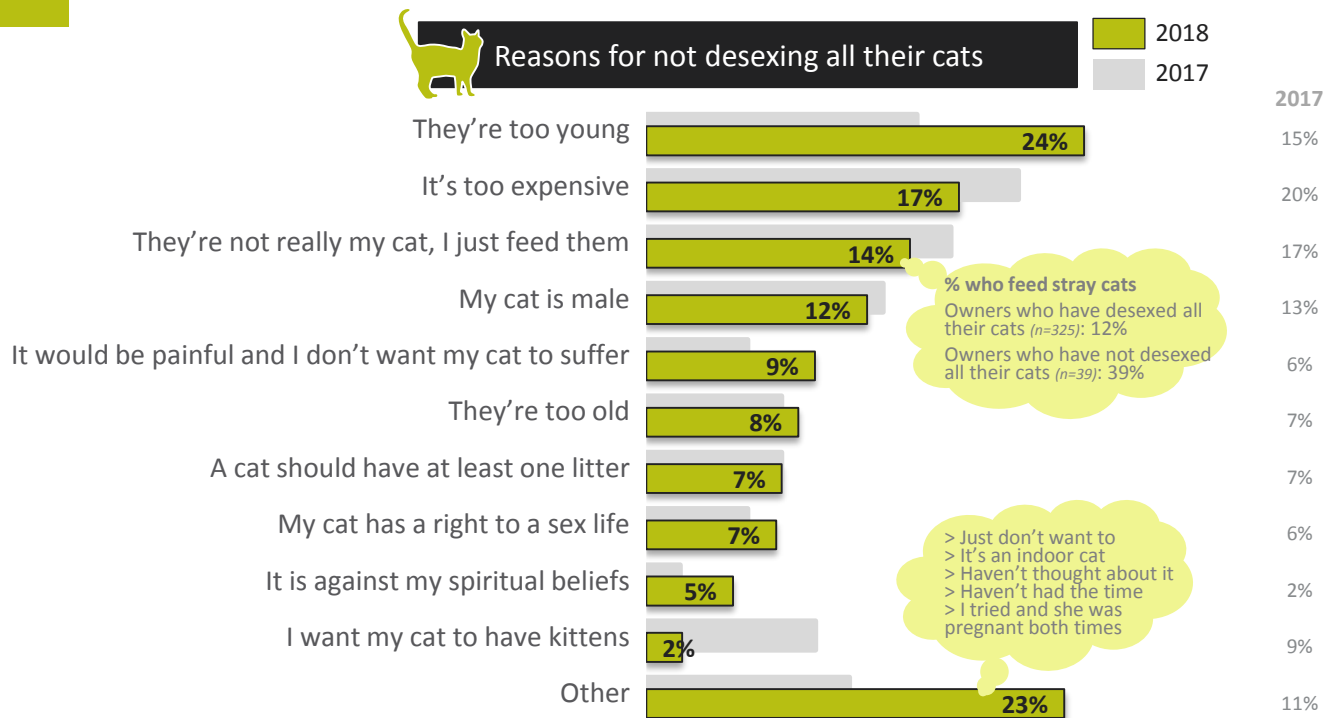


Difference between 2018 and 2017 not significant @ 95% confidence level. Also no difference between the two types of owners

Base: Owners who have not desexed all their cats n=39; owners who have desexed all their cats n=325

Q1. Can you please tell us which of the following type of pets, if any, do you own?

Age of cat is the biggest reason for not desexing their cats, implying that these owners may be open to the idea of desexing their cats when they are older



Base: Cats which have not been desexed, n=50

Q10. You mentioned that your cat/cats is/are not desexed, could you please state the main reason(s) why not?

Q16. Do you feed or care for a stray cat or cats

Difference between 2018 and 2017 not significant @ 95% confidence level

GAME CHANGERS

Although cost is no longer the top reason for not desexing their cats,

it is still a barrier for almost 2 in 10 owners who have not desexed all their cats.

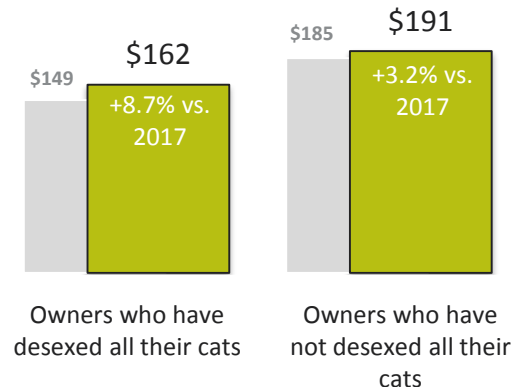
Their perception of costs of the procedure is higher than amongst other owners



Cost to have a cat/kitten desexed

2018
2017

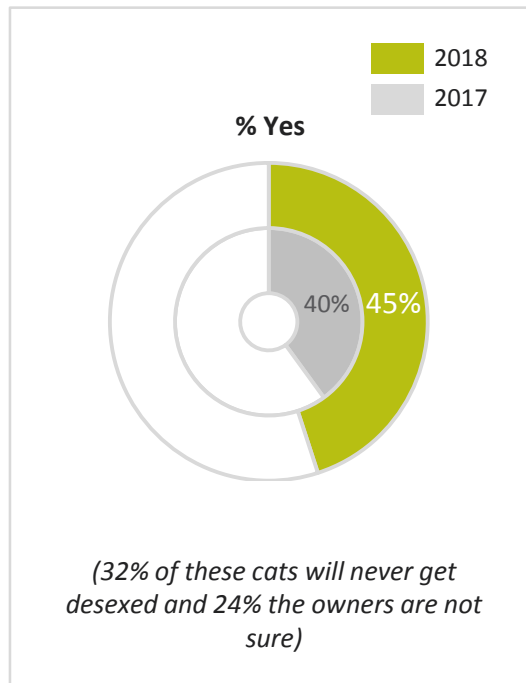
17% "It's too expensive"



The issue of affordability has prevented some owners from desexing their cats earlier



Do they plan to desex their cats? (among those who haven't)



Base: Cats who have not been desexed, or don't know, n=54

Q11. Do you plan to desex your cat/cats?

Q12. Given that you plan to desex your cat/cats, what is the main reason you have delayed desexing them?



Reasons for the delay in desexing their cats

Base: 26 cats



9 mentions relate to cost

No money / Haven't had the money.

Need the money and she is still young and I have to find the time.

I haven't been able to afford to have him desexed yet as I am on a single parent's government payment. However, since he is entirely an indoor cat and has never been outdoors since he was 6 weeks old, other than a few moments each week supervised so he can eat some grass, it doesn't impact on other cats or the environment.

6 mentions relate to the cat's age

They aren't 6 months old yet.

Too young and completely indoor cat.

3 of the cats are indoor cats

She is an indoor cat and does not go outside anytime.

4 of the cats' owners are time challenged, or are waiting

No money and haven't had time.

Waiting list 8 weeks.

it is in the program set out by vet.

2 of the cats don't belong to the 'owners'

I don't know if someone owns him, or not. I need to get him scanned to see if someone has taken responsibility for him, or not.

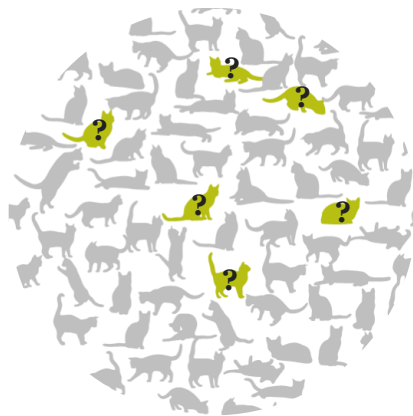
Not our cat.

2 'other' reasons

She keeps falling pregnant every time I go to do it.

I want him to develop his full Tom cat appearance, just so people know that he is a Tom Cat

When the background of the cats is unknown, especially if they are from the streets, it is difficult for some owners to know if the cats have been desexed or not, without seeing a vet



For 6 cats out of a total of 542, owners are unsure if they have been desexed or not

Base: Cats unknown if desexed or not, n=6
Q9 (desexed), Q5 (where they got the cat), Q10B (reasons why 'don't know')



Where these cats were from

count

- 3 Found them in the street/out in the 'wild'
- 1 Friend/neighbour/family member
- 1 Breeder



Reasons why they don't know



Cat of the street have feeding for almost 2 years.

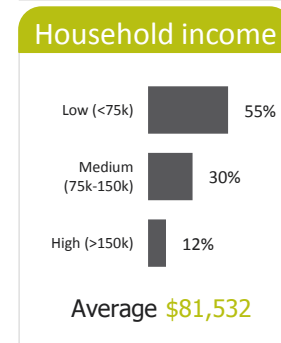
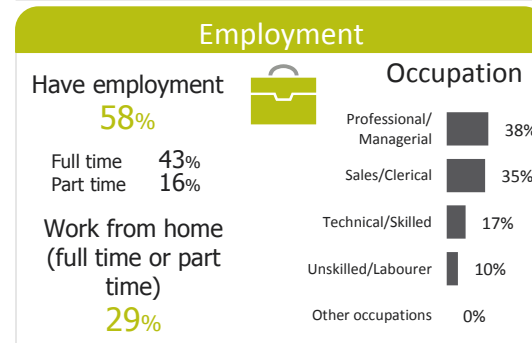
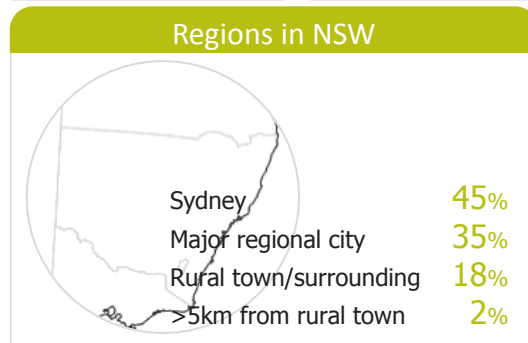
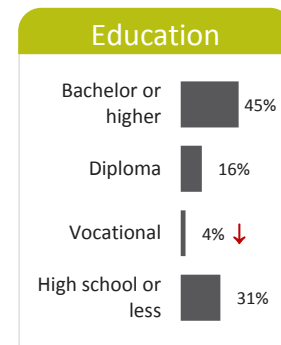
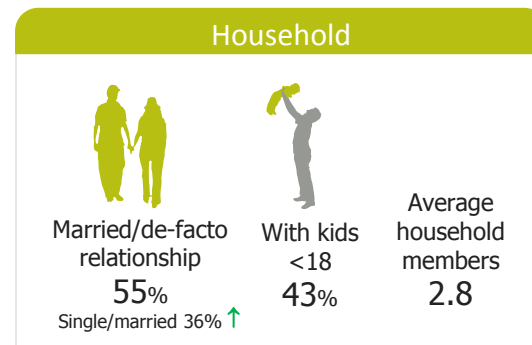
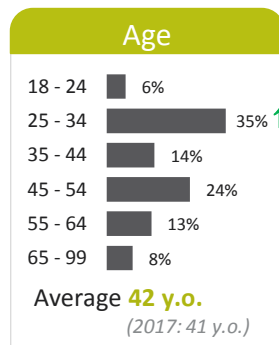
Never been to vet.

I do not know if my friend desexed my cat.

Did not know.



Who are the cat owners who have not desexed all their cats?



↑↓ significantly higher/lower than owners of desexed cats @ 95% ci

Base: Cat owners who have desexed all their cats, n=39

D2 (age), D3 (gender), Q5D (marital status), Q6D (number of people in HH), Q7D (with kids <18), Q4D (highest education level), Q11D (area), Q8D (working status), Q8Da (work from home), Q9D (occupation), Q10D (household income)

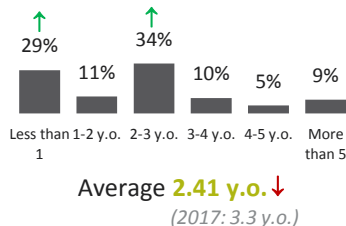
Cats that have not been desexed tend to be younger and have been either purchased from a pet shop or given to them. Also tending slightly towards being male cats



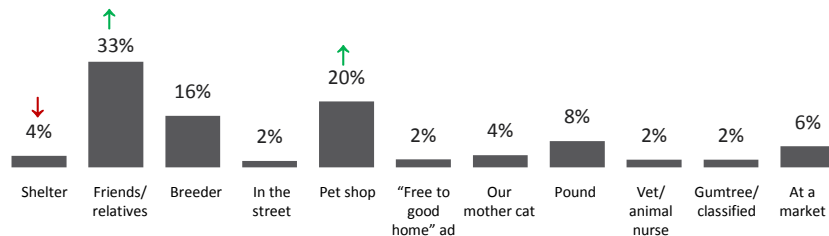
Profile of cats who have not been desexed



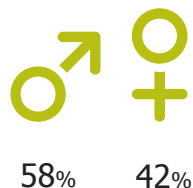
Age of cat



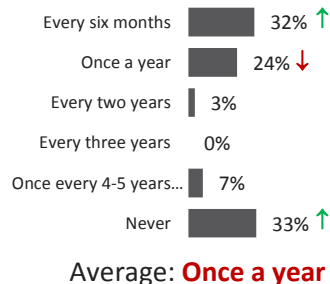
Where they got the cat



Gender of cats



Visits to the vet



Vaccination & registration



Have been vaccinated
63% ↓



Have been registered
51% ↓

Base: All cats that have not been desexed, n=50
Q4 (age), Q3 (gender), Q5 (where they got the cat), Q6 (frequency to the vet), Q7 (vaccination), Q8 (registered)

↑↓ significantly higher/lower than owners of desexed cats @ 95% cl

GAME CHANGERS

A silhouette of a cat is shown in profile, looking out over a landscape. The background is a warm, golden-orange sky, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The cat is perched on a dark, textured surface, possibly a wall or a ledge. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

Future cat owners

More people are expected to join the cat-club in the future, and the good news is that future owners are only too keen to desex their cats. It is thus important to ensure that they are not deterred by the perceived high cost of the procedure of desexing cats.

One in two non-cat owners in NSW would consider getting a cat – higher compared to 2017. Directionally more will get them from pet shops or the pound, although shelters are still popular



Will consider having a cat



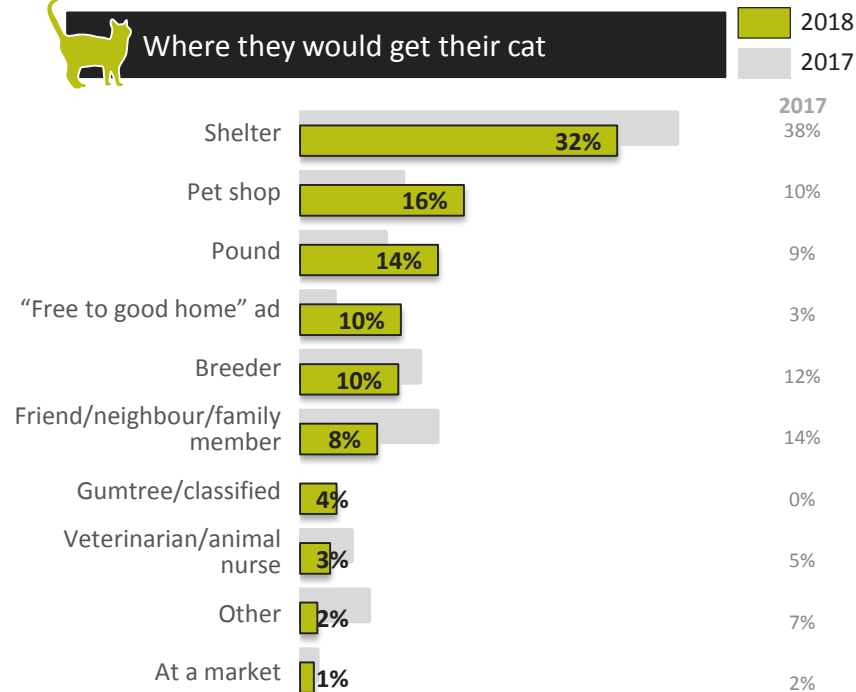
49%+

of non-cat owners would consider getting a cat

37% in 2017



Where they would get their cat

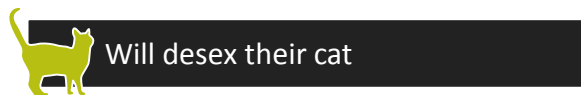


+/- significantly higher/lower than 2017 @ 95% confidence level

Q13. Would you consider having a cat? Base: Non-cat owners n=160

Q14. Where do you think you would go to get a cat? Base: Non-cat owners who intend to get a cat n=78

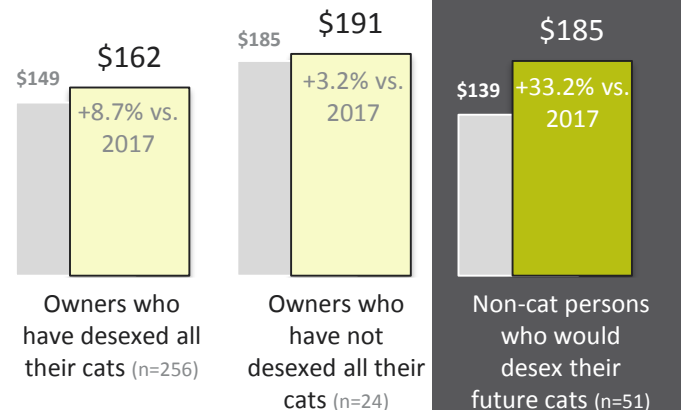
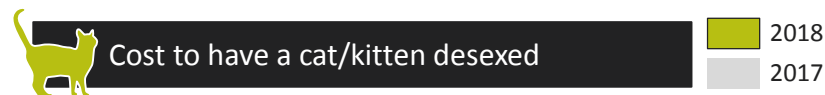
A high proportion of future owners claim they would desex their cats, but their perception of the cost may cause hesitation



88%

of these future cat owners
intend to have their cats
desexed

81% in 2017



+/- significantly higher/lower than 2017 @ 95% confidence level

Communicating the benefits of desexing

Understanding the benefits of desexing has the potential to improve the lives of almost all cats. Currently, only less than two thirds of cat owners are aware of these benefits, so reaching out to them and communicating these facts should be a focus.



Awareness of these facts has remained steady in general, with room for improvements. Health benefits can be promoted to arrest future decline



Awareness on facts about desexing

<i>% aware</i>	Cat owners (n=364)	Cat owners who have desexed all cats (n=325)	Cat owners who have not desexed all cats (n=39)	Future cat owners (n=78)
Cats can be safely desexed from about 8-10 weeks of age	67% 67%	70% 71%	43% - 43%	49% 52%
Female kitten can get pregnant from as young as 4-5 months old	62% 65%	64% 68%	44% - 48%	42% 38%
Early age desexing provides health benefits such as reducing the risk of various feline cancers, and behavioural benefits such as less wandering, fewer cat fights and also cats are less likely to 'spray' (urine)	60% 64%	61% 67%	48% - 46%	44% 47%

2017 in smaller font, light grey

Decline from 2017 significant @ 90% cl

- Significantly lower than cat owners who have desexed all their cats @ 95% confidence level

GAME CHANGERS

Communicating the benefits of desexing is important as it has the potential to persuade almost all current and future owners to desex their cats



Effects of exposure to benefits of desexing

“Early age desexing provides health benefits such as reducing the risk of various feline cancers, and behavioural benefits such as less wandering, fewer cat fights and also cats are less likely to ‘spray’ (urine)”

Amongst current cat owners

(n=364)

Have desexed all their cats

90%

2017: 87%



Have desexed all their cats + *have plans to desex all their cats*

95%

2017: 91%



Have desexed all their cats + *have plans to desex all their cats + will desex all their cats as a result of the health benefit messaging*

97%+

2017: 93%

Amongst future cat owners

(n=78)

Will desex cat

88%

2017: 81%



Will desex cat + *will desex cat as a result of the health benefit messaging*

99%+

2017: 90%

+/- significantly higher/lower than 2017 @ 95% confidence level

Q19_Post./Q19_PostB. Now that you've had the opportunity to learn about some of the health benefits described above: if you decide to get a cat/for your cat(s) that is not desexed, would you now make the decision to have them desexed?

GAME CHANGERS

Sources of information

Most cat owners go to vets and browse the internet for information on cat care, but 1 in 4 also go to friends & family and pet shops. Future cat owners are more likely to go to cat welfare charities like Cat Protection Society of NSW.



Vet clinics and the internet are the two most common sources of information on cat care. Owners who have not desexed their cats are more reliant on pet shops, while future owners are more likely to consult an animal welfare charity



Top 6 sources of information/advice on cat care (ranked 1 to 3)



86%

Veterinary clinic

- 67% Future owners



73%

Internet search

- 58% Owners who
haven't desexed all cats



43%

Cat/animal welfare charity

+ 57% Future owners



29%

Friends/family



26%

Pet shop

+ 48% Owners who
haven't desexed all cats



19%

Cat breeder

Base: Cat owners, n=364
Q23

+/- significantly higher/lower than Cat Owners @ 95% confidence level

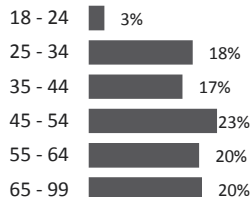
Appendix



Who are the cat owners?



Age



Average **48 y.o.**
(2017: 49 y.o.)

Gender



42% 58%

Household



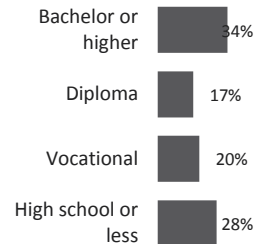
Married/de-facto
relationship
63%



With kids
<18
32%

Average
household
members
2.6

Education



Regions in NSW



Sydney **48%**
Major regional city **27%**
Rural town/surrounding **21%**
>5km from rural town **3%**

Employment

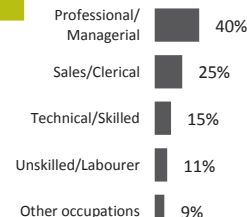
Have employment
60%

Full time 39%
Part time 22%

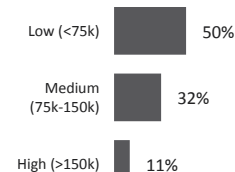
Work from home
(full time or part
time)
36%



Occupation



Household income



Average **\$81,878**

Base: Cat owners, n=364

D2 (age), D3 (gender), Q5D (marital status), Q6D (number of people in HH), Q7D (with kids <18), Q4D (highest education level), Q11D (area), Q8D (working status), Q8Da (work from home), Q9D (occupation), Q10D (household income)

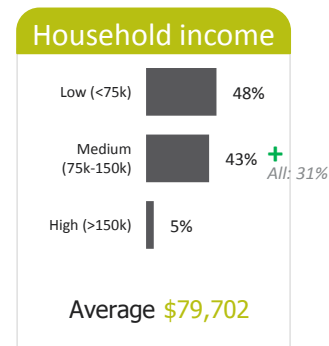
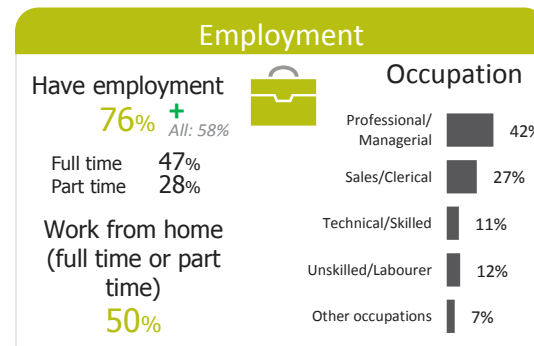
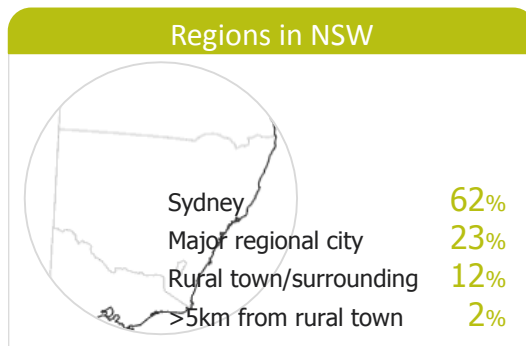
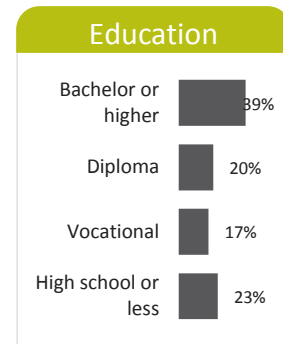
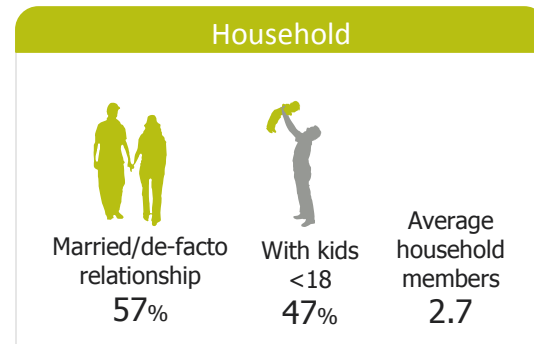
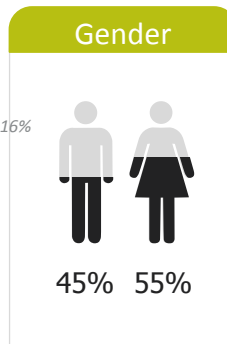
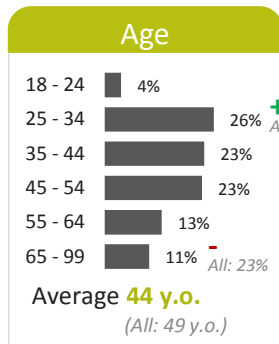
Those who would care for stray cats...



% who would feed or care for stray cats

	Cat owners (n=364)	Cat owners who have desexed all cats (n=325)	Cat owners who have not desexed all cats (n=39)	Future cat owners (n=78)
	15%	12%	39%	28%
2017	16%	14%	30%	26%

Who are the people who would feed or care for stray cats?



+/- Significantly higher/lower than all respondents (70% cat owners, 30% non-cat owners) @ 95% confidence level

Base: People who feed stray cats, n=80

D2 (age), D3 (gender), Q5D (marital status), Q6D (number of people in HH), Q7D (with kids <18), Q4D (highest education level), Q11D (area), Q8D (working status), Q8Da (work from home), Q9D (occupation), Q10D (household income)

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“Thank you!”

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