

on the show floor

WORLD VIEW

International retailers and partner associations talked about challenges, trends and opportunities at Thursday's key networking event, the WPA International Pet Forum. **BY MELISSA L. KAUFFMAN**

The World Pet Association's (WPA) International Pet Forum is always a key networking event for SUPERZOO international pet professional attendees, and this year was bigger than ever with two discussions held Thursday in the Mandalay Bay - North Convention Center, South Pacific A: one for international retailers, led by Michael Johnson, and the other for the international partner associations, led by Andres Tovar.

This year's forum offered an opportunity for both connections and education to the international community. WPA Chairman Michael Lou said, "The WPA International Pet Forum is where global insights drive meaningful change. We're proud to bring together leaders from around the world to share challenges, celebrate successes, and strengthen the global pet care and trade ecosystem."

A consumer insights and trends thought leader in the pet specialty industry and principal at business services consulting firm BSM Partners, Johnson took a fun and educational look at why the U.S. pet market matters and how to plug in as a partner.

His forum talk, "U.S. Pet Industry Perspectives: Opportunities for Global Partners," covered consumer and innovation trends, channel structures and industry layout, competitive landscape and category dynamics. He gave advice on how to



Johnson Michael



Andres Tovar

position products in the U.S., why U.S. brands matter overseas, how key markets and economic factors stack up, along with practical steps to plug into U.S. distributors, brokers and retailers for faster market entry.

As SUPERZOO's international specialist working with the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration, Tovar led the forum's dedicated networking event for leaders of the international pet event industry.

The exclusive roundtable covered valuable insights on current pet industry trends across key global markets. Attendees connected with peers, received expert advice, and collaborated on strategic planning and actionable strategies to make their international trade shows more successful amidst shifting financial and geopolitical landscapes.

"This year has reminded us that global change is the new constant, but so is the passion and resilience of the pet industry," says Tovar, who is also the international marketing manager for mdg, an agency that specializes in event and association marketing. "Even with

trade challenges and shifting travel dynamics, we're seeing remarkable creativity in how companies connect with pet parents and come together at events. This forum was about more than reacting to change. It's about sharing ideas, building connections, and finding new ways for our global pet community to grow stronger, together."

Last year, SUPERZOO welcomed nearly 3,000 international participants from more than 84 countries out of the 22,000 registrants. This includes more than 1,100 exhibitors, many from Mexico, Korea, Japan and Australia. The WPA provides thought leadership, knowledge and value-added business services to the entire pet industry community — both national and international, connecting the community through industry leading forums like the International Pet Forum.

"These roundtables offer an essential gateway for international attendees looking to better understand the U.S. pet market," says Mike Karsting, senior vice president of the WPA. "With expert insights on everything from consumer trends to sales channels and competitive strategy, we're giving participants the tools to navigate today's complex economic and geopolitical climate — and connect with the right partners for a faster, smarter market experience. It's a strategic conversation built for real-world application, especially for those aiming to maximize their presence at U.S. trade shows like SUPERZOO."



International Trade Show Reach

The WPA leads a thriving international pet industry community. SUPERZOO partners with many international pet shows, including (in order of show dates):

- + **Indonesia International Pet Expo** — Sept. 5-7. iipe.co.id
- + **Petzoo Eurasia, International Pet, Products,**

Materials and Accessories Suppliers Fair — Oct. 8-11. petfuari.com

+ **PetFair SE Asia** — Oct. 29-31. pet-fair-sea.com

+ **Pet Sourcing Fair China** — Nov. 5-7. pscfair.com

+ **China International Pet Show** — Nov. 13-16. en.cipscom.com

+ **MEGAZOO, Korea International Pet Show** — Nov. 21-23. megazoo.co.kr

+ **Interpets 2026** — Interpets Asia Pacific April 2-5, 2026. interpets.jp. messefrankfurt.com

+ **The ONE Pet Show - TOPS Shanghai** — May 7-10, 2026. theonepetshow.com

+ **ZOOMARK International** — May 2027. zoomark.it

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