

Pets tricked into Halloween costume tradition

By Charles Passy, Market Watch

Perrie Susman devotes plenty of time to picking the perfect Halloween costume. In previous years, she's opted for skeleton, frog and cow outfits. This Halloween, she's going with a Headless Horseman theme, she says.

But Susman, a rehabilitation aide in West Palm Beach, Fla., is not talking about the outfit she herself will wear on Oct. 31. Instead, she's referring to the costume she's purchased for Domino, her five-year-old Lab-pit bull mix.

"I do it because I like to dress up and I like to have somebody to dress up with," says Susman.

Yes, Halloween has gone to the dogs. And the cats, too. Sales of pet costumes have soared in recent years, growing by 68 percent – from \$220 million in 2010 to \$370 million in 2012, according to the National Retail Federation. And individual retailers say they see demand only increasing in the years ahead. PetSmart points to the fact that it now carries 111 styles of pet costumes and accessories; it's even starting to offer items for "small animals."

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