



ADD A LITTLE LIFE TO YOUR HOME



Fish have never been easier to enjoy and maintain. Blue Planet has everything you need to create a home for your finned friend. Hexy Tanks include the filter and light so all you need to add is gravel and ornaments to create something special...

To see more, visit your nearest Blue Planet Stockist and add a little life, to your home.



Can You Become a Marine Mini-Mogul or Aquapreneur?



The Firm of Bowlawyer Esq.

It wasn't so long ago that kids brought little goldfish home in plastic bags and released them into a round bowl and that was the major part of the fish trade in the pet industry. Times changed, new breeds were introduced and the technology available only to wealthy and cluey fish-fanciers became a common and cheap item at pet shops and department stores alike.

Now consumers can choose from saltwater tanks with living reefs and autopilot-controlled environments, a staggering range of freshwater and saltwater fish species, crabs, invertebrates and other critters and a virtual home gallery of fish furniture, backgrounds, toys and treats.

As the pet industry grew to close to \$5 billion in Australia last year, new franchise opportunities and marine mini-moguls sprang up. When the investors and venture capitalists entered the market, new ideas have led to innovative finned business models and piscatorial profit centres. And we're not piscine in your pocket with these new-age business ideas. Many new fortunes are being made by aquapreneurs who are soaking novice aquaculturists.

Gills R Us! is the upmarket, uber-fish palace where you can choose your tanks from stacks on pallets, pick your gear using a computerised pump/filter/chemical enviro-pack calculator, much the same as matching car stereos, amps and speakers. There's also a fish café within with appropriately named coffee drinks - Cichlid Cappuccino, Lungfish Latte and Flounder Flat White - as well as theme sandwiches or snacks such as Angelfish Fritters, Carpaccio of Carp, Koi Cakes, Nemo Nuggets and desserts.

A warehouse operation that slashes prices, piles product on the floor and has sales staff dressed as various fish species, Gills R Us! also has a kids' area. They are entertained with video games that emulate fishing from a dinghy in a virtual world, using lasers to corral schools of fish for imaginary harvesting. And there's a squish room that kids can bound within for fun - a large, glassed area filled with soft, water-filled, fish-shaped, multicoloured plastic shapes.

Aquarist Concierge - For the true aspirational, upmarket fish collector and fancier, nothing less than the service of an on-call professional, who through rigorous training, testing and exhaustive field work with their peers has attained the credentials of Aquarist Concierge. The AC will have the skills to tackle any technological, chemical, biological or mechanical problem, at the same time maintaining an aesthetic view to what looks fabulous framed in a watery world. Whether it's a question of tank design, interior fishscaping, species intervention or underwater decorative arts, the AC is only a phone call away to handle any request. Tipping is optional but encouraged.

FinNanny - No need to worry about your aquarium buddies being lonely and unprotected with this service that provides qualified fishsitters on an hourly rate. No more dire fears of the power being knocked out and the pump, aerator and filter stopping when your FinNanny is there with a voltage inverter that can be wired to their car engine to get needed AC to moving parts to keep your fish moving. Rest assured that your fish are safe at home from predators - no chance of fishnapping on FinNanny's watch. And they'll even play with or entertain your school of fish if you wish. All FinNannies have thorough background checks and are bonded as well as certified in all areas of fish care.

Clean & Scale - Much like pooch mobiles or home dog-washing services, C&S can groom your fish at home. They remove algae from the fish (they don't do windows or tank glass, however) and can also align scales and remove any parasites or growths from marine animals of all types. They will brush crabs, comb anemones, trim tails and plump lips where cosmetic techniques can help. And after a short, rubber-gloved massage, they will then lovingly place their clients back in the colony looking just smashing!

Aquatects - In the race to beat the neighbours or other piscatorial enthusiasts, it's all about location, location, location, and the structure that houses the environment. The new-wave aqua architect caters to the top end of town seeking elaborate and fancy digs for their display of finned creatures. Starting with exterior glass sculptures, hidden pump and filter niches and camouflaged stands that hold or mount the fish houses, a consulting architect can design the perfect plans for building a structure in home or office that goes swimmingly with existing décor or contrasts for a whole new look.

Fish Vets - Veterinary schools are producing more graduates but they tend to go to pet practices, zoos or equine medicine. So there's room for specialist fish veterinarians whose businesses are exclusively finned patients, perhaps with a sideline of amphibians, axolotls, turtles, frogs and other water-based patients. House calls would be a specialty and the clinical costs of setting up a practice, which is so expensive for start-up vets catering to an array of mammals, birds and reptiles, would be negated.

Fish Ambulance - Just like pet medic transport businesses decked out with life-saving devices and vet nurse attendants, this piscine paramedic service can take any size tank and its fish, hook them up to life support systems on the go, and secure the aquarium and contents for fast travel to the nearest emergency care facility or fish vet. Filtered water and pure gas bubblers cater to all needs. Optional sterile fish pods are available to clients who want to isolate or quarantine only one fish instead of transporting the entire aquarium. Resuscitation devices on board are safe for mobile use and will shock only the fish patient, not the medical personnel or driver. CLEAR!

Submarine Squeegee - With the new advances in miniaturisation, nanotechnology controls and rechargeable underwater batteries, this is the robot tank-glass cleaner that sits docked in its own submarine berth under the surface. It goes to work weekly, patrolling the tank, randomly scraping algae from the glass sides, sucking up debris from the bottom and removing any scum from the top with its periscope. Also available in sunken Love Boat or pirate ship models.

FinSpace and GillBook - These Internet communities based on MySpace and Facebook serve as online social networks for fish and their companions. Everyone starts out with Flipper as their first friend, with plenty of space for other finny friends that you invite and accept. There's a bubbling background sound that can be replaced with sea shanties or the theme from any number of marine movies. Room for YouTube snorkelling clips is available as well as a direct pipeline to Second Life Underwater - a whole new water world.

AquaLawyers - To protect the rights of fish owners against unscrupulous businesses or technology failures where negligence is the cause of loss or damage, these beaks work the specialist area of marine law to fight insurance companies not paying, or those at fault in any way. Leaving no legal stone in the tank unturned, they will likely be called to prosecute the businesses above when they don't perform and the client loses his fish or property.