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Problem Domain

Our group is focusing on the user group of dog owners and aims to explore how we can make proper dog-caring knowledge fun and accessible. Through our initial research, we found a gap between how prepared a person originally thought they were and what the experience of taking care of a dog was actually like. We were able to split our findings into three general categories that we hope to pursue further: incentivized chores, competition within family, and streamlining match process for adoption centers.

Preliminary POV

We met Mateo, a 12 year-old boy and first time dog owner of Chili. We were amazed to realize that Mateo enjoyed saving up money to pay for Chili's expenses, but disliked doing simple chores such as feeding her because it didn't feel "rewarding". It would be game changing to make mundane chores feel rewarding.

Additional Needfinding Results



We met Julian, a young alumni working at an SF tech company. Julian had owned a small dog, Minnie, in highschool. He explained does not want to get a dog just yet because he doesn't want to naively believe that he can commit to equal responsibility, and then have his girlfriend, who is currently not working fulltime, do all the heavy lifting.



We met Christelle, who is a tenth grader who recently got two puppies, Sahara and Nile. Christelle spoke to us about the difficulties she's facing training her dogs given the time constraints she has from school. She also brought up some of the difficulties associated with raising a dog, as it seems in the puppies' young age it is difficult for them to do anything properly.



We spoke to Katie, a senior at Stanford majoring in Civil Engineering. She's a veteran dog owner, having had at least six dogs so far. Several of her dogs growing up have been rescues, and, as a result, she is a big advocate for adoption. Katie really stressed the importance of finding a dog who is the right "fit" for the family in regards to personality.



We met Ian, a 9 year old first time dog owner of Spot. Ian's parents first got Spot from a local rescue as a surprise for Ian- as their only son they wanted Ian to have some company. The family explained to us that in order to have a dog you have to be ready in every way possible- "if you feel even slightly unsure about what the responsibility will be like, just don't get one"

POV 1

We met Mateo, a 12 year-old boy and first time dog owner of Chile. We were amazed to realize that Mateo enjoyed saving up money to pay for Chile's expenses, but disliked doing simple chores such as feeding her because it didn't feel "rewarding". It would be game changing to make mundane chores feel rewarding as well.

HMW's

- **How might we make the intrinsic/reward of "boring" tasks more explicit/ extrinsic?**
- How might we give people better monetary understanding of pets?
- How might we educate children better about the needs of dogs?

Prototype 1



Our first prototype wanted to test whether a gamification and a rewards system would make undesirable tasks more desirable. We wanted to see how in-app rewards (e.g. intangible rewards) would incentivize users. Thus, we prototyped a simple system where the user could do various chores that allow them to gain various items. For example, taking the dog on a walk rewards users with a pair of sunglasses. Our assumption was that an in-app reward system would motivate people to do these undesirable tasks.



We created this prototype by using post-it notes of which the various challenges and rewards were displayed, where orange post-its were tasks and blue post-its were rewards. We layered the tasks on top of the rewards to simulate the idea that completing tasks would earn rewards for the user.

We tested this concept on Connor, a college student who currently owns one dog. He “experienced” the app by playing with our post-its and seeing his rewards as he looked at every task.

In terms of what worked, we found that Connor said that the gamification gave him a sense of pride and accomplishment. He independently mentioned how he could see himself using this app in competition with his sibling. However, he also felt that the whole system might be too childish and might not be something that he would be interested in doing as a high-school student, let alone an adult.

After testing, it seems our assumption is mostly valid, as Connor did seem more excited about doing his chores. However, we learned that the incentives have to stay relevant for long enough to keep users coming back and work for a wider range of users.

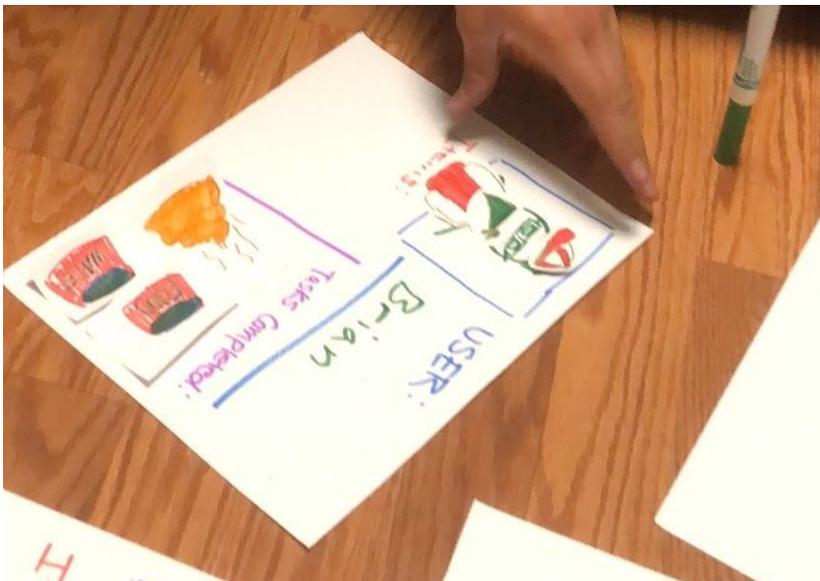
POV 2

We met Lili, Ian's mom and primary care-taker of Spot. We were amazed to realize how she was the only person in the household to clean up after spot. It would be game changing if we could evenly distribute the cleaning tasks around the home

HMW's

- **How might we encourage all members of the family to take care of the dog?**
- How might we provide additional resources to take care of dogs
- How might we show/convince people that taking care of their dog strengthens their relationship?

Prototype 2



Our second prototype tested whether or not we could use competition as a way to get more people in a family involved with raising a dog. Thus, we prototyped a concept where there would be a joint dashboard where everyone could see the list of tasks that need to be completed. Based on how many tasks a family members would complete, people could then show off how much work they put into their dog, hopefully motivating others to take care of the dog as well. Our assumption was that all family members would want to take part in the competition.

We created this prototype by using paper cutouts and drawing to represent a menu screen. Another paper was used as the dashboard to show tasks.

We tested this on Brian and Luke, two brothers. When testing, we had them both create avatars for themselves. Upon looking at a dashboard, they saw some of the items that they could try to get. Thus, in this demo, Brian was the one who went out of his way to do activities for the family dog, thus allowing him to show off his achievements.

It seemed that both of them enjoyed competing with their brother. In addition, them creating avatars on the paper made it feel more real. Finally, as Brian was the one who had completed all the tasks, it made Luke much more motivated work harder.

However, one thing we realized was that it might be difficult to confirm if someone was actually completing tasks, as people could be rigging the system. Also, there was again the potential issue like in Connor's situation where people may eventually get tired of using the app. However, this experiment aligned with our original assumption that families would be incentivized to compete with each other if there is something at stake.

POV 3 KATIE

Katie is a senior at Stanford University majoring in Civil Engineering. Katie has two dogs, Anka and Ella. Katie talked about the importance of finding the right "dog fit" for each family. She believes that adoption is a great choice however that new owners should definitely do research to find dogs that fit their lifestyles.

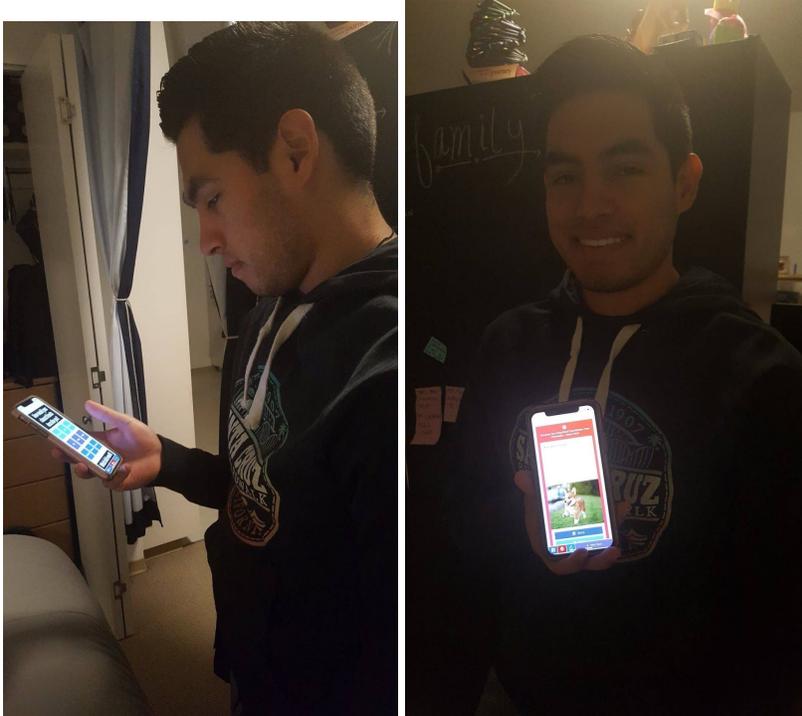
POV 3's HMW's

- How might we promote adoption instead of purchasing dogs off of breeders
- How might we help people find the "right fit" from adoption centers
- How might we provide dog owners with more information about a dog's personality [based on dog's parents/dog's breed perhaps?]

Experience Prototype 3

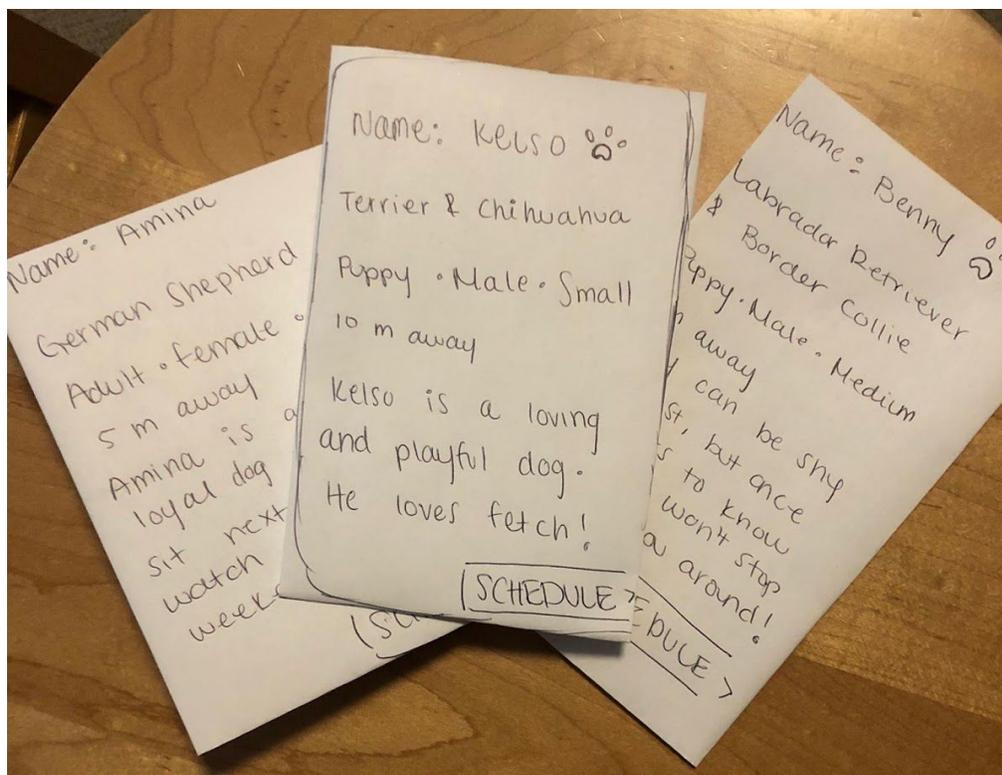
We were testing the assumption that if you remove the task of searching for the perfect dog for you streamlines the adoption process.

For this prototype we first had the user take a quiz to match them to their 'perfect' dog breed match.



User took quiz and got matched to corgi!

After this we presented the user with 3 cards, telling him that these were personalized suggestions based on the results from his quiz.



After the user chose a dog that they wanted to schedule a playdate with, we asked him the following questions:

- Would you like to bring the dog to your house? Or bike out to the nearest park?
- Would you like to play for 30 mins or an hour?
- Is there anyone else in the family that you would like to bring along to meet the dog?

After the user answered these questions, we looked at their calendar and scheduled them in for a slot!

Julian mentioned that “this app would definitely make me feel more at ease throughout the process of finding a dog to adopt”. He also mentioned that he was concerned that he was not the right ‘user’ for the app because he is unsure he is able to fully commit to adopting right now. This proved our assumption that taking away the commitment of finding the right dog for you will help facilitate the adoption process. However, it also made us realize that it is very difficult to gauge at what point of commitment the user is at when they chose to ‘schedule a playdate’. This led us to assume that users may be more likely to schedule a playdate just to spend some time with a dog, and not really to commit to finding a dog to adopt.

Summary

We took away amazing learnings from these interviews and prototypes. Prototype 1 showed us that although our initial assumption that users would feel more compelled to complete chores given in-app rewards (e.g. new avatar items) was valid, there was an underlying need to show off such rewards. Our user independently suggested that a competition with family would have been very motivating as a child. Having an awesome decked out avatar was only rewarding if he could show it off to other friends or family!

In Prototype 2, our most successful prototype, we confirmed this finding. The competition is what made it fun and engaging to complete chores. However, we did learn that a potential pitfall is that it's hard to enforce/verify that people actually did the task. We may need to consider more rigorous methods for task enforcement or simply trust in a family 'honor code' and not have this app lead to sibling fights.

Appendix

Additional HMWs

POV 1's HMW's

- 1. How might we make the intrinsic/reward of "boring" tasks more explicit/ extrinsic?**
2. How might we better quantify the commitment of owning a pet?
3. How might we give people better monetary understanding of pets
4. How might we educate children better about the needs of dogs
5. How might we get parents to better help educate kids about dogs
6. How might we create programs for kids to learn about owning a dog
7. How might we get kids to collaboratively take care of a dog
8. How might we promote bonding better between dog and kid
9. How might we give dog education classes to children
10. How might we promote the idea that kids should help raise dogs

POV 2's HMW's

1. How might we better inform non-dog owners of the rewards of owning a dog?
2. How might we better inform non-dog owners of the challenges of owning a dog?
3. How might we show/convince people that taking care of their dog strengthens their relationship?
4. How might we help strengthen their relationship so they would feel more committed to taking care of their dog?
5. How might we provide additional resources to take care of dogs
6. How might we reconnect people with lost dogs
7. **How might we encourage all members of the family to take care of the dog?**
8. How might we have other people helping out with taking care of a dog
9. How might we connect people to potential shelters when they need it
10. How might we ease the process of putting dogs for adoption if necessary?

POV 3's HMW's

1. How might we promote adoption instead of purchasing dogs off of breeders
2. How might we help college students find the right dog given their busy schedules
3. How might we help people in general find the "right fit" for a dog
4. **How might we help people find the "right fit" from adoption centers**
5. How might we help owners help their adopted dogs feel welcomed
6. How might we provide dog owners with more information about a dog's personality [based on dog's parents/dog's breed perhaps?]
7. How might we spread the responsibilities among people
8. How might we make people away from their dogs miss their dogs less
9. How might we automate the feeding process for dogs
10. How might we have dogs for people on campuses.

