Jackie Owdij Woodson

HCI 598 Capstone

M1: Your Idea - What Problem Are You Solving?

My system monitors your pet cats and their behavior when you are not home. The working title for my system is, “Cat Watch”. The working slogan is, “Helping you watch your furry friends”.

Users of Cat Watch will be at people who have at least one pet cat. Some examples of Cat Watch users can be cat owners with a sick pet, cat owners who are away on vacation, cat owners having trouble with their cats, curious cat owners, etc.

My husband and I own a cat, my husband’s parents own two cats and we have friends who are cat owners. I will use three of these people for my project’s user population.

Have you ever wondered how much does my cat sleep during the day, how many times does my cat go to the bathroom, how much does my cat eat and drink, how active is my cat, are my cat’s behaviors healthy and normal, does my cat go where he or she is not allowed? Cat Watch addresses the problem of what do your pet cats do when you are not home and is it healthy behavior?

There will be two components to the Cat Watch system. One component will be a lightweight tracker that your cat wears on his or her collar. The other component will be a web application that allows you to upload a diagram of your house and indicate where specific hot spots are in your house, such as feeding bowls, water dishes, litter boxes, etc. The tracker on your cat will send data about your cat’s behaviors to the web application. Your Cat Watch web application will display the data in an intuitive and user friendly manner.

The Cat Watch web application will be interactive. Users can click on different rooms or hotspots identified in the house to view specific information about those places. Cat Watch lets you compare your cat’s current behavior to your cat’s past behavior and to other cat’s behaviors. As a Cat Watch user, you can talk to other cat owners to see if your cat’s behaviors are healthy and normal. Some information Cat Watch will allow its users to see are how many times does my cat eat, how many times does my cat drink, how active is my cat, how many times does my cat sleep, how many times does my cat go to the bathroom, etc.

I selected this topic because I have a pet cat, Louie. Often times I wonder what Louie is doing when we are not home. For example, is he drinking enough water, is he getting enough exercise, etc. Since cats cannot talk and tell us if something is wrong, it is up to cat owners to know their pets and be able to recognize abnormal behavior. For these reasons, I wanted to create the Cat Watch system.

Below is a picture of Louie.

