doggieDO-GOODers
one walk at a time

UX Case Study
Helene Atkins

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Background

In cases where people are injured or sick and unable to care for their pet, I want to prevent them from losing their animals when they don't have to. It's only a matter of finding someone to help take care of the animals so that the health and mental benefits of owning that pet won't be lost, and animal shelters won't get overcrowded.

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Project Details & Responsiblities

My Role
- Sole UX researcher
- Sole UI designer

Tools Used
- Miro
- Figma
- Trello
- Maze

Problem Statement

A person who is sick or elderly feels devastated that they cannot take care of their pet. They desperately want to do so, but they lack the ability or resources to accomplish the task.

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Strategy

Research Methods

- Competitive analysis
- Screener
- User interviews
- Affinity mapping
- Usability testing

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Product Discovery

Value Proposition Canvas

A support system is established where sick and elderly individuals can receive care at no or minimal cost, depending on income.

An app that puts volunteers in touch with sick or elderly individuals needing help with their dog.

There will be able bodied volunteers who will come and walk or take care of the pet(s).

Able to get help either because it can be afforded, or there is a support system in place.

Find someone to take care of the dog since becoming incapacitated.

Can't afford to hire a dog walker or someone to help with transport to vet and/or groomer.

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Product Vision Statement

The doggieDO-GOODers service is for elderly and sick individuals who have dogs, but need help taking care of them because they're too sick to walk them, or even feed and/or take them to vet/grooming appointments. The platform is an app that connects these individuals with healthy, able bodied, and willing walkers and caretakers.

Unlike the handful of local organizations who offer walking and transportation service, our product will encompass those services, plus more. And unlike ResQWalk, CharityMiles, or WoofTrax, who offer walkers the ability to raise money for a choice of charity, our product will provide the ability to raise funds from walks to either the general doogieDO-GOODers service, or to a specific client of the service.

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Key Factors

Stakeholders

- Volunteers
- Sick/elderly people needing service
- Organizations such as Petsmart, Petco, or Chewy.com
- Shelters and rescues across the country

Assumptions

- Sick/elderly people want to keep their pets.
- Volunteers will want to walk the dogs and/or provide care.
- There is no support system to help these sick/elderly individuals.
- There is a market for this app.
- That this process can be automated.
- That this product is feasible.
- Corporations will be willing to let us advertise in their stores.

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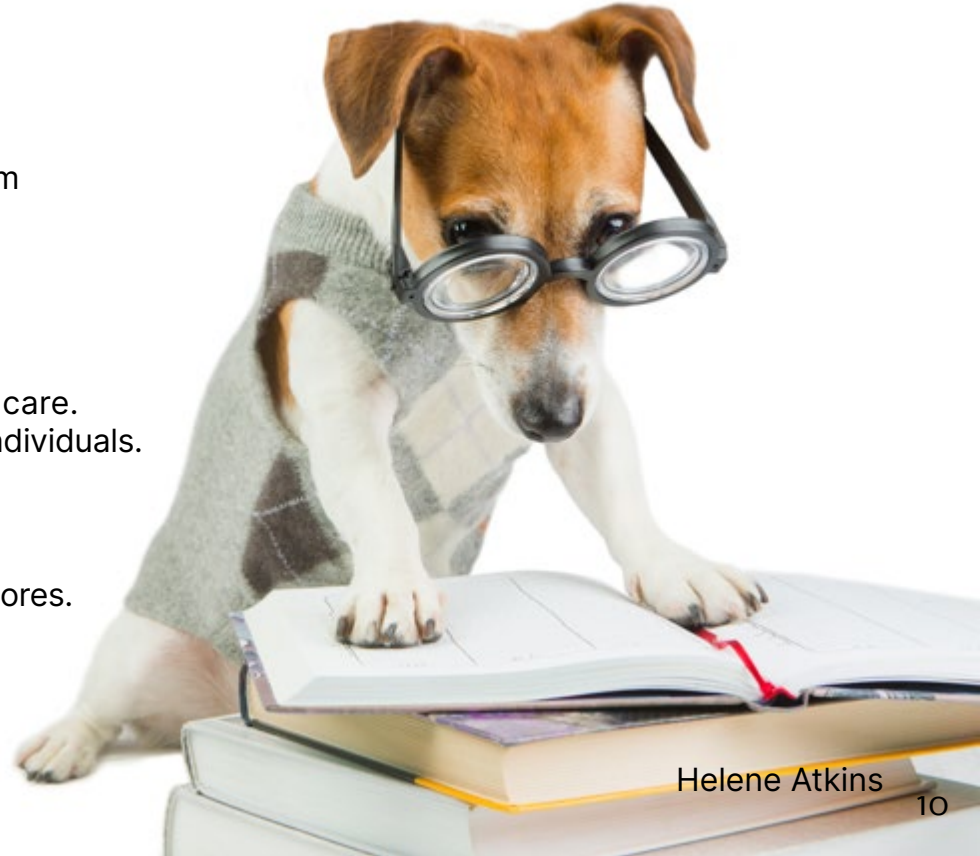
Business Landscape

Goals & Outcomes

- There is to be a benefit to society in that sick and elderly individuals who are enabled to keep their pets, will have their mental well-being, and that will help their physical health as well.

- The economic impact will be that there will be less animals given up, meaning shelters and rescues will have more funds to help animals that have been found as strays.

- The technology to support this app will be developed. Given that there are apps out there that function similarly to what doggieDO-GOODers will do, it is feasible.

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Establishing the Need

Basic need

Currently, many dog owners who face injury or declining health have to give up their beloved pet because they can no longer walk their dog.

Desired outcome

There will be volunteers available who will come and walk the dog, and feed if necessary. This way the sick/elderly individual, who can't afford pet care, will be able to keep his/her dog.

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Possible Barriers

Macro forces affecting a solution

- **Economic:** It is highly likely that many of these incapacitated individuals may not have the funds for veterinarian care and will need some support there, if they are to be able to keep their dog.

- **Socio-Cultural:** If the individuals who are incapacitated are not able to keep their dog(s), depression will likely ensue.

- **Political:** For government support, there has to be a party in office that will take care of the poor.

- **Technoligical:** The technology to run the app has to be there in order for this to be successful.

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Competitive Analysis

Direct

With less than 5,000 visits per month, this organizations offers an almost identical service to what doggieDO-GOODers will. However, it is local to NY City, and does not offer the feature to raise money per walk.

Strength: Well supported
Weakness: Local only
Opportunity: Many are unaware that their service exists.

With 8.5K visits per month, this organizations offers a similar service to what doggieDO-GOODers will. However, it is local to the San Diego area, and does not offer the feature to raise money per walk.

Strength: Well supported
Weakness: Local only
Opportunity: People out of state have heard of them, but that demographic is missed if they're unable to expand.

Indirect

With 886.9K visits per month, this app offers the feature to raise money per walk/run that doggieDO-GOODers plans to. The difference is that we plan to enable certain clients to be supported directly as well as the service generally.

Strength: Well supported, nationally known
Weakness: Poorly designed app
Opportunity: Only people in the rescue and shelter industry seem to know that it exists.

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Threats, Strengths, & Opportunities

doggieDO-GOODers
one walk at a time

Threat: Political Factors

Depending on which party is in office, social funding could be restricted, meaning less dogs get to stay with their owners.

Strength: Social Inclusivity

This app solves a social issue that has long been a problem. It is widely praised, and is extremely necessary.

Opportunity: Economic

doggieDO-GOODers will cater to the underserved communities that are unable to take care of pets due to financial restraints, and would otherwise have to give up their pet.

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Customer Discovery

Research Summary

Who I spoke with

16 participants

Including

Shelter Administration	7

- Susan: 65, rescue intake @ HoustonCares
- Michelle: 32, comm. coordinator @ BARCS
- Leslie: 48, operations mgr @ Agape Rescue
- Allison: 23, exec. assistant @ POMDR
- Gabe: 33, exec. dir. @ PAWSTER Nashville
- Katie 1: 44, advocacy dir. @ MD SPCA
- Katie 2: 36, shelter dir. @ Baltimore Humane

Shelter Volunteers	6

- Sarah 1: 40, homemaker
- Caitlin: 31, social worker
- Elizabeth: 56, health coach
- Jan: 61, retired
- Sarah 2: 46, analyst
- Alexis, 25, Therapuetic Riding instructor

Service Recipients	3

- Dee: 52, self employed
- Linda: 70, retired
- Jean: 75, retired

Research Results

Trends & Patterns

- All of the participants interviewed would use a service helping the elderly and sick get help with their pets.

- Most participants felt that reliability and trustworthiness were extremely important for this service to work.

- All the participants interviewed confirmed that there is a dire need for volunteers to help sick and elderly with their pets.

- The volunteers interviewed confirmed they are willing to ensure pets stay with their guardians by volunteering to care for the animals.

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Personas

Target Audience

- Dog walking/pet care volunteers
- Sick/elderly individuals

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Personas: Janet (volunteer)

Janet Livingston
54 years old
Executive Assistant

Background

Janet never thought to volunteer until after she took care of her mother during her twilight years. Janet realized that there were a lot of elderly and sick individuals who need help, and decided to volunteer. She had no idea where to start, until she learned about doggieDO-GOODers through a random trip to Petsmart, where she discovered the brochure.

Goals

- Wants to help elderly individuals not only care for their pet, but also their home.
- Wants to be able to help the elderly and sick, but also wants to help dogs.

Actions

- Researches ways to help elderly and their pets.

Pains

- Doesn't know how to help both the sick/elderly and their dogs.
- Can only focus on one or the other—volunteering or helping at a shelter.

" It keeps one more dog out of the shelter, and it keeps an elderly person happier. "

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Personas: Isabella (volunteer)

Isabella Hernandez
28 years old
Staff Accountant

Background

Isabella Hernandez is an avid runner. She has been volunteering at various organizations since she was little because her parents instilled in her the value of volunteering. She loves dogs, and has been walking them at local shelters since college. However, she has found that there is a never ending stream of dogs winding up in the shelter system and she wishes there was something she could to to alleviate it.

Goals

- Wants to help dogs stay with their owners.
- Wants to volunteer by walking dogs.

Actions

- Googles to see if there is such a program available.
- Goes to local shelter to walk dogs.

Pains

- She doesn't know where to start on how to keep dogs with their owners because nothing exists.
- She doesn't have a lot of time and can't commit to what the shelter needs.

> " There are many surrenders where the owner is ill and can no longer care for the dogs appropriately. I mean, it just goes on and on."

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Personas: Jane (service recipient)

Jane Hamilton
61 years old
Retired Teacher

Background

Jane Hamilton was a high school teacher up until recently when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She had a nominal savings account to have a dog walker come in and take care of her dog Flora while she dealt with the affects of chemotherapy, but her funds have run out. Since she could no longer take care of her dog, when she called the shelter to surrender her, they told her about doggieDO-GOODers.

Goals

- Wants to keep her dog.
- Doesn't feel well and wants to get better.

Actions

- Research ways to keep her dog.
- Starting her chemo therapy.

Pains

- Doesn't go to chemo because she has no one to care for her dog.
- Doesn't know how she is going to be able to keep her dog.

" Great for dialysis patients, who can be hospitalized at a moment's notice. "

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User Stories

Stories: Janet (volunteer)

Janet Livingston
54 years old
Executive Assistant

As a volunteer, I want to input my availability to care for pets so I can make my own schedule and still help out.

As a volunteer, I want to look up requests for care at my leisure so I can still volunteer, but on my own terms.

As a volunteer, I want to see my bookings so I can start helping people keep thier pet.

Stories: Isabella (volunteer)

Isabella Hernandez
28 years old
Staff Accountant

As a volunteer, I want to post my walk details to social media so I can feel good about what I've done and how much money was raised.

As a volunteer, I want to get sponsored so I can raise money for the service.

As a volunteer, I want to track my walk so I can raise money for the service.

Stories: Jane (service recipient)

Jane Hamilton
63 years old
Retired Teacher

As a client, I want to find a volunteer to care for my dog so I can focus on taking care of myself in order to get better.

As a client, I want to make sure the volunteer I select is trustworthy so I can feel secure about letting them take my pet out of my sight.

As a client, I want to sign up and see if I qualify, so I can start looking for a volunteer to care for my pet.

As a client, I want to schedule care for my dog and my home so I can rest and relax knowing my dog is well taken care of.
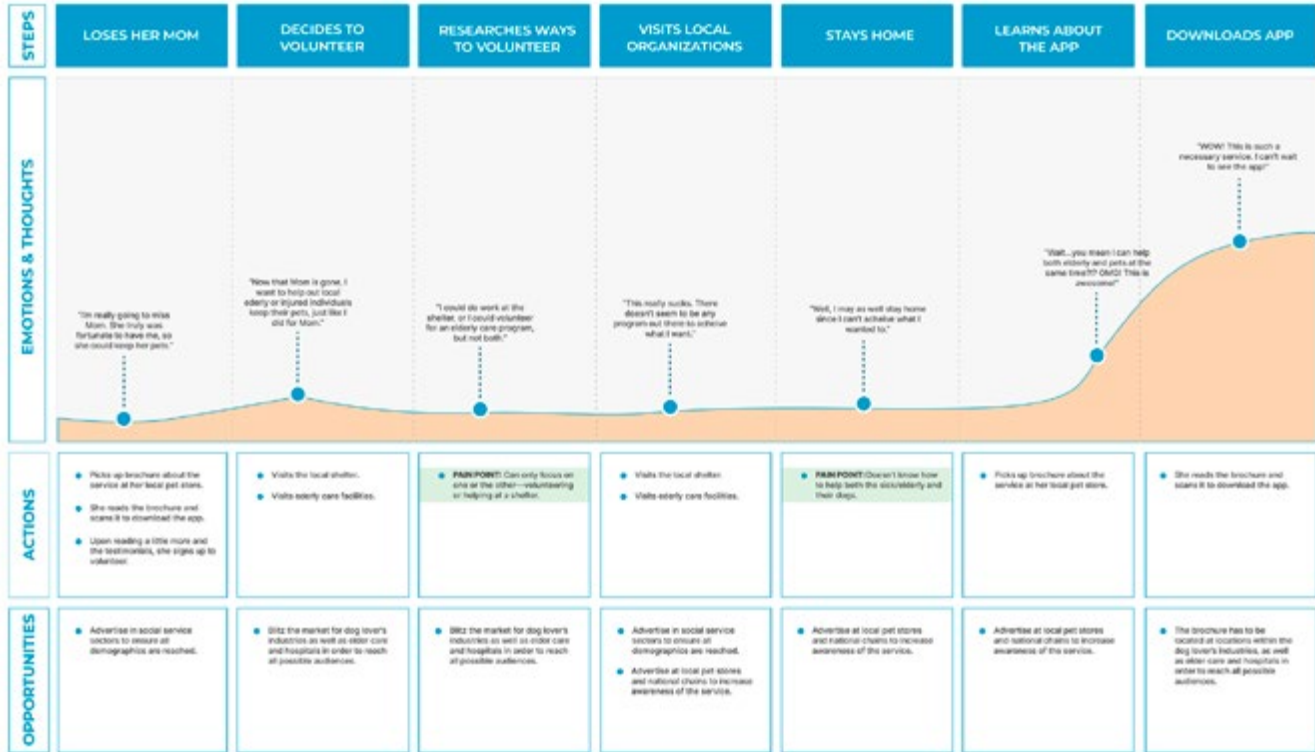
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User Journeys

Journey Map: Janet (volunteer)

Janet Livingston
54 years old
Executive Assistant

"As a volunteer, I want to see my bookings so I can start helping people keep thier pet."
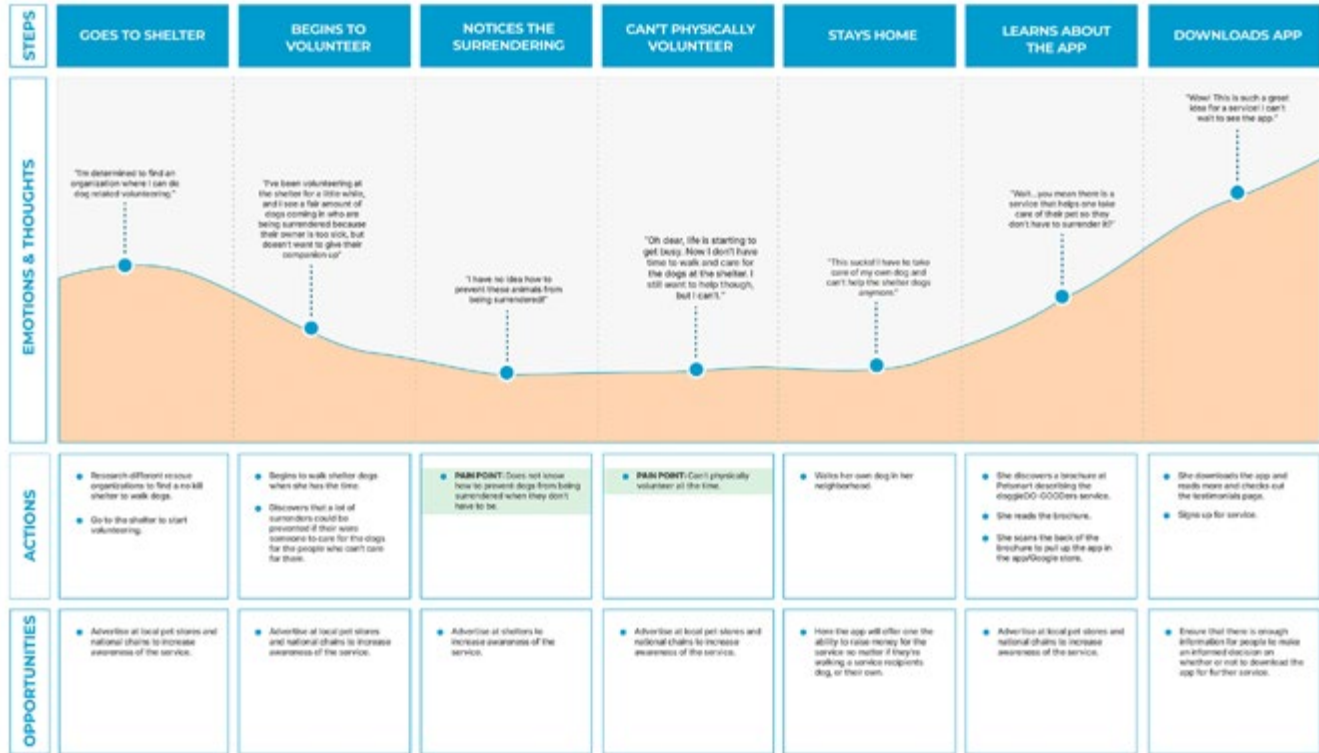
Journey Map: Isabella (volunteer)

Isabella Hernandez
28 years old
Staff Accountant

"As a volunteer, I want to track my walk so I can raise money for the service, and post the results so I can increase awareness."
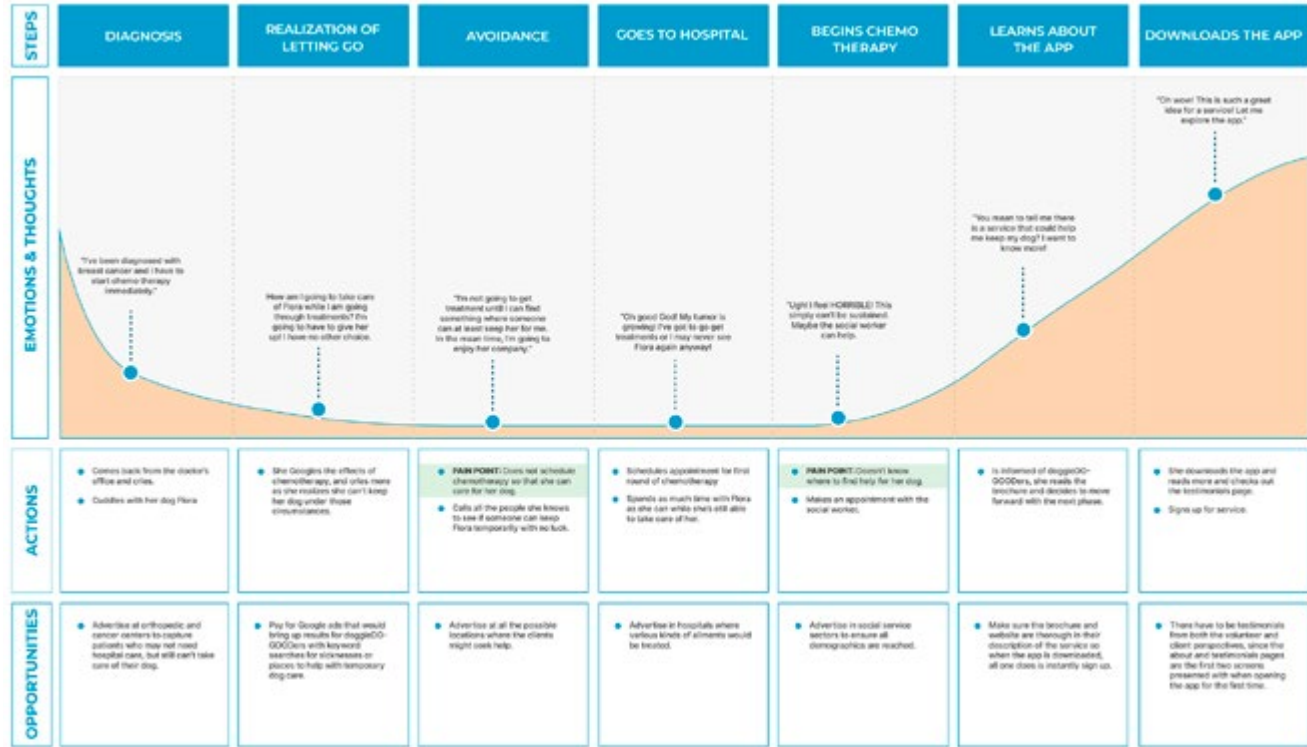
Journey Map: Jane (service recipient)

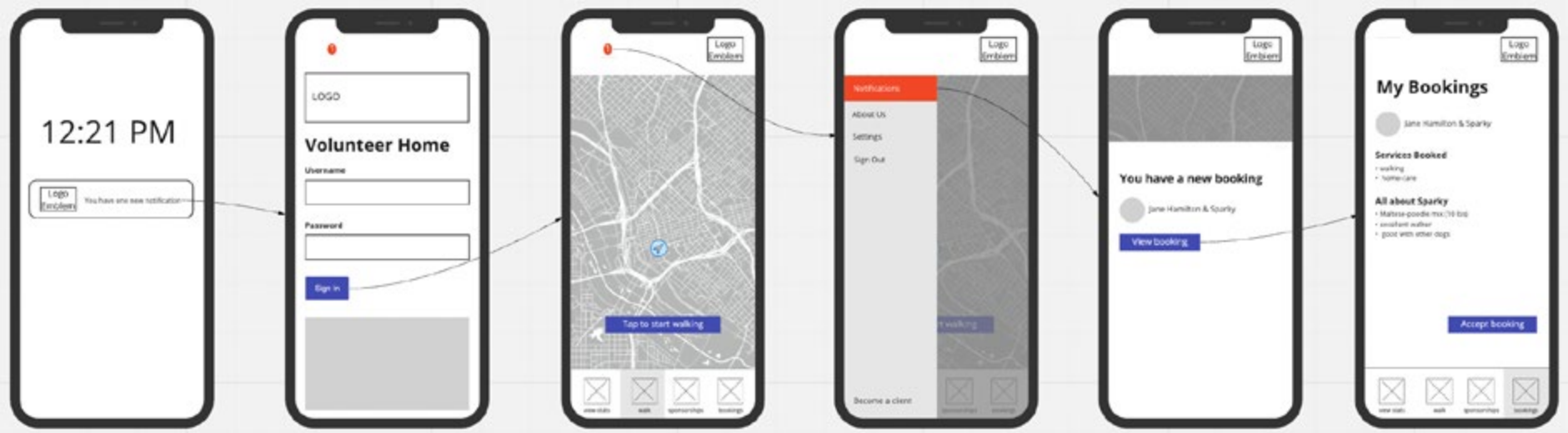**Jane Hamilton**
63 years old
Retired Teacher

"As a serice recipient, I want to find a volunteer to care for my dog so I can focus on taking care of myself in order to get better."
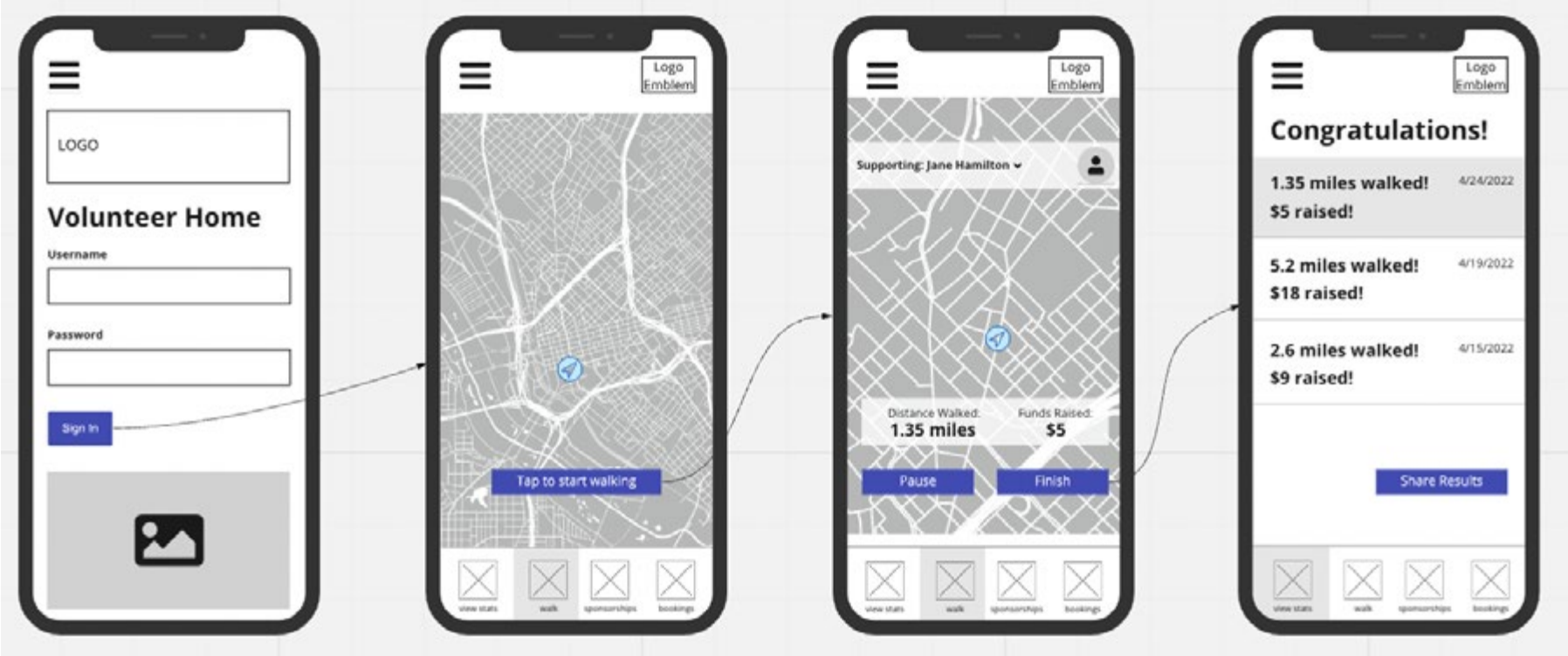
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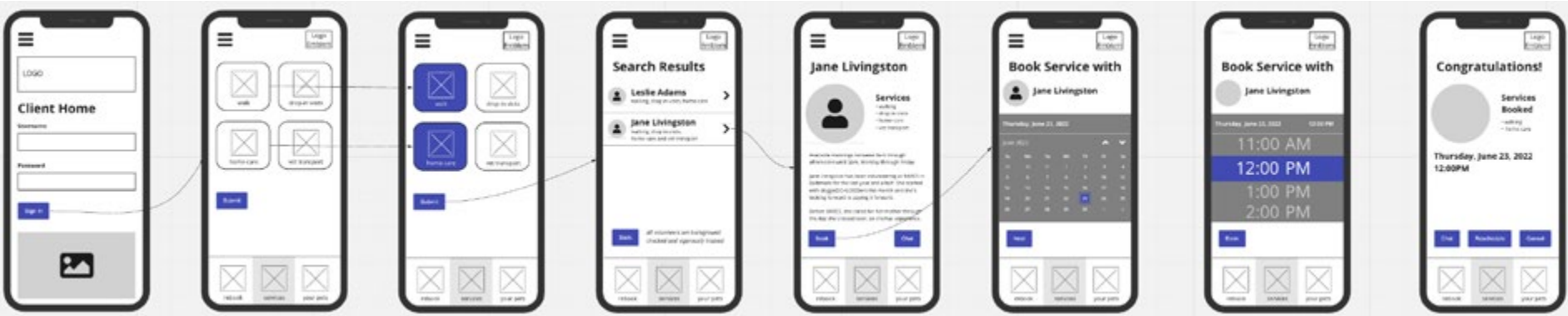
Wireframes

Wireframes - Janet's flow

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Wireframes - Isabella's flow

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Wireframes - Jane's flow

Design System

Typography & Color

Typography

41.89px # Heading

25.89px ## Subheading

16.00px Body

9.89px Caption

6.11px Icons

Type Scale

Inter
1.618 - Golden Ration

Colors

Primary

#006280   #dff0e1   #0099c9

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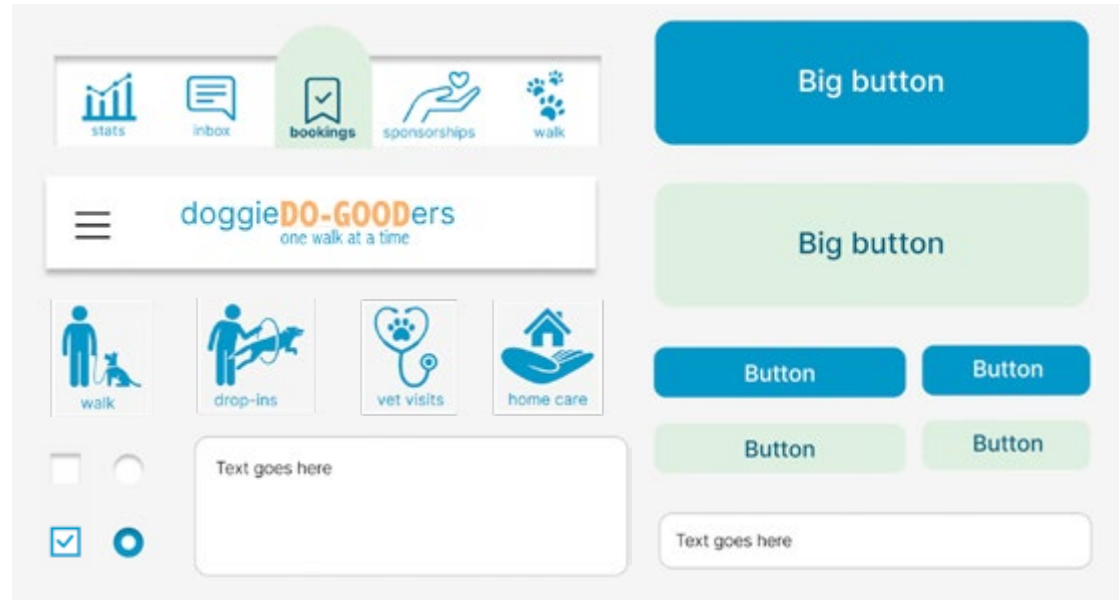
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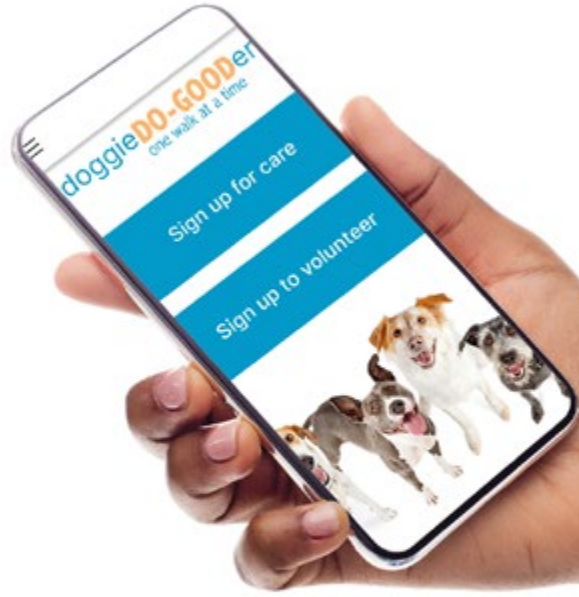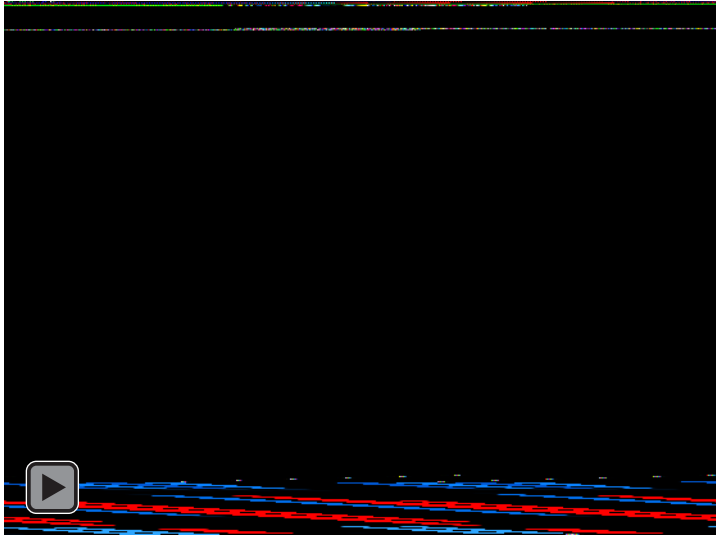
Logo & Components

Logo

Components

Prototype

Prototype

View Prototype

User Testing

Testing Summary

Who I spoke with

6 participants
Including

Shelter Administration	2
• Michelle: 32, comm. coordinator @ BARCS
• Gabe: 33, exec. dir. @ PAWSTER Nashville

Shelter Volunteers	3
• Sarah 1: 40, homemaker
• Sarah 2: 46, analyst
• Justin, 31, ux designer

Service Recipients	1
• Jean: 75, retired

Key Learnings

• Three places where all but one user needed help to get through to the next step.

• All said overall, the app was easy to navigate.

• There was some confusion on the volunteer home page. It needs to be booking related as opposed to walking.

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Testing Results

Direct Success

Testers who completed the mission via the expected path(s).

83.3%
5 TESTERS

Indirect Success

Testers who completed the mission via unexpected paths.

16.7%
1 TESTERS

Client Sign-Up:

23.1%	400.1s	80.0%	0.0%
MISCLICK RATE	AVG DURATION	AVG SUCCESS	AVG BOUNCE

Volunteer Sign-Up:

7.8%	164.5s	80.0%	0.0%
MISCLICK RATE	AVG DURATION	AVG SUCCESS	AVG BOUNCE

Client Book Service:

4.0%	91.9s	100.0%	0.0%
MISCLICK RATE	AVG DURATION	AVG SUCCESS	AVG BOUNCE

Volunteer Accept Booking:

10.0%	99.4s	80.0%	0.0%
MISCLICK RATE	AVG DURATION	AVG SUCCESS	AVG BOUNCE

Volunteer Walk:

5.8%	92.0s	40.0%	0.0%
MISCLICK RATE	AVG DURATION	AVG SUCCESS	AVG BOUNCE

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Iteration

For the forms, I changed the check-boxes and the radio buttons so it was more clear when they are selected. A progress bar to show where one is in the process was also added.

The footer was replaced, and the reschedule and cancel options were made less prevalent since they're secondary actions.

Reflections/Next Steps

Reflections

- A social worker reported that there is a glaring hole in the system in that the sick and elderly need house and yard care help as well.

- Volunteers want recognition and community just as much as a typical worker.

- I discovered where similar organizations obtain their funding from.

- There needs to be a liason between the service recipients and the volunteers.

- Shelter administrators were open to allow doggieDO-GOODers to advertise the services in their establishments.

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Next Steps

- Consult a lawyer regarding the legal implications of entering people's homes and also learning about their health issues.

- Develop the prototype so the donate, chat, and sponsor features work.

- Implement all the suggestions set forth in the first round of user testing.

- Continue the second round of usability testing.

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Appendix

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Resources

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