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| Textagochi |
| Pre-MVP Design Abstract |
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# Basic Game Summary

In this game, you take charge of raising a virtual pet of some sort. This virtual pet grows based on various aspects of your phone usage – things like text messaging, emails and calls. As your monster grows and you foster your relationship, you’ll be able to participate in various activities.

It is, first and foremost, a sort of virtual pet. By loading the app you’ll be able to interact with it in various ways, but its primary method of growth and development as a creature is based entirely around your phone usage.

## General Design Goals

At its most basic level, the game will always fulfill the following experiences to the player:

* Raising a virtual pet
* Caring for and bonding with the virtual pet
* Achieving growth for the pet through out-of-game phone usage
* Partaking in interactive activities with your pet and those of others

At this point in the design phase, these need to be as general as possible in order to leave room for flexibility for changes in target demographic and the willingness to have an app that monitors the usage statistics of their phone passively in the background.

There is, however, room for a multitude of various general features that will likely fit into the scope of the game in some capacity, regardless of any shifts in target demographic or underlying statistics-tracking services. Examples of this include:

* Direct interaction
  + Petting, feeding, grooming, etc.
* Facility upgrades
  + Better housing, more area in which to frolic, better bedding, etc.
* Shopping
  + Shopping for food, toys, various amenities for your pet
  + Real-money credit shops are possible as well
* Minigames
  + Any manner of things could be here, but these would primarily be a combination of direct interaction with your pet, as well as raising money to buy things like food and housing upgrades
  + So jobs/errands (to raise money), training (to facilitate growth), play (bonding) and the like.
* Customization
  + Likely a large part of this would be from purchases made with real money

The general goals for such a layout are to satisfy the following for the player: Provide an interactive virtual pet that satisfies basic psychological functions of having a pet (ownership, companionship, pride – it should feel like “my pet,” but also “my friend” and “something I’m proud to have raised”), grant the pet its primary growth and advancement through the statistical tracking of various phone functions initiated by the user even when not running (as if it’s “living” inside your phone, and also learning from all of the things happening around it), and provide a pet with which the player can enjoy fun activities and hopefully create lasting memories.

However, it’s also important to note the appeal of very passive pet simulations, such as the virtual goldfish scenario – all you do is feed it and look at it. Some players enjoy this type of thing very specifically, because it’s very hands-off and vicarious, whereas others might more enjoy a sort of needy, affectionate and highly-active pet that requires a lot of attention and interaction. This could easily be encompassed by having a variety of pet types available to the player. A good starting trichotomy of pet archetypes could be, for example, “dog,” “cat,” and “fish.” Dogs require a lot of attention and activity, fish require little more than food and tank maintenance, and cats are generally somewhere in-between.