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Group 4  
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# Project Proposal

## Introduction

We are group 4 in Professor Douglas Oard's Information Technology and Organizational Context class which is being taught in the Fall of 2022. Our group for the team project consists of four members, each assigned a specific role. The project manager is Scott Mobarrey, the designer is Animesh Nandan, the implementation lead is Sravya Lenka, and the implementer/programmer is Srikanth Parvathala. Scott Mobarrey (project manager) communicated with his supervisor at the University of Maryland iSchool to find a project sufficient in scope and complexity for an external organization. After an internal group discussion and meeting with the external customers, the group unanimously decided his project would be a good application of our skill sets and interests. The group plans to work for six weeks, each working a total of seven hours per week for the organization WAG Workshops Inc. WAG Workshops is a young non-profit in Southern Maryland. The external customers, Professor Samantha Kemper from the University of Maryland's iSchool and Principal Officer Elizabeth Ashley are who we will be communicating with directly for this project. Both have leadership roles in the WAG Workshops organization. Their work is via contract through Calvert Academy training and a grant through Maddie's fund. The WAG Workshops' mission is, "the prevention of animal cruelty by building a positive training community, offering educational workshops and video library, providing a trade-in program for prong, shock, and e-collars, providing a therapy dog program in partnership with Calvert County Public Schools, and by offering education and training services at low cost or free to the Southern Maryland communities of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties" ([Wag Workshops](#)). At the moment, the directory website for the WAG Workshops organization requires a significant redesign that includes adding more functionalities, cleaning and importing new data, a long-term solution for adding new trainers to the database, and fixing bugs.

Professor Samantha Kemper convinced our group of the importance of the positive reinforcement training work done at WAG Workshops. She told us, "Positive reinforcement training has decades of science suggesting that it is the most effective way to train your pet. It's

how zoos train tigers to let them brush their teeth, and sharks to let them take ultrasounds of their abdomens. There is no regulation of the training industry. Anyone can call themselves a dog trainer, and popular myths about dominance in wolves have led to the popularity of training methods that risk harm to both dogs and to people. It is remarkably difficult to find force-free trainers in the Mid-Atlantic region. Many are small businesses with one or a handful of trainers, and they are often drowned out by large training schools that either tout themselves as "balanced", meaning they will use anything including force or are force-based.”. Their trainers are all required to be certified in positive reinforcement methods instead of punishment-based training which we all believe is a far more humane way to treat man's best friend. We hope our efforts on this project make it a significantly easier process for people in Southern Maryland using the WAG Workshop directory site to schedule appointments for their dogs with positive reinforcement service providers.

## Main body description

The external customers envision that our group's work will make it easier for Southern Maryland community members to find force-free trainers that have been accredited by one of the recognized national or international standard bodies. We have been given backend access to an existing WAG Workshops directory site that is hosted on the WordPress, Elementor, and Wilcity software applications that include; veterinary offices to fear-free certified groomers, as well as trainers. (<https://wagworkshopsdirectory.org/>). Our customer's biggest problem has been displaying trainer information. Many of these trainers work in their client's homes with their dogs. The trainer's address doesn't necessarily tell someone whether this person will come to their house, or if there is a training facility near them. We intend to implement the equivalent of google maps similar to: “restaurants-near-me” for trainers, board, and training locations. This includes a mix of point locations for those with brick-and-mortar locations and service areas listed by zip code.

The customers have sent our group a data dump from their existing directory by way of a CSV file. Since they had not had a chance to clean all of the addresses for us we will have to do some data cleaning. In addition, they included a handful of trainers that had not yet made it into their directory online at the bottom of the CSV file.

The highest priority that our client has is to design a clean interactive way to display the trainer and board, and train locations. Implementing this is crucial in order to provide users with proximity-based service providers that are force-free certified. Another deliverable to be addressed is adding the option to search for other directory businesses and services. Additionally, the clients had expressed the desire for this to become a resource for the force-free (also known as the R+ for positive reinforcement) community, including Fear Free certified veterinarians and groomers.

# Expectations and Limitations

Functionalities to be developed:

1. Search particularly for force-free trainers and board and training that will service their area (by zip code)
2. Log in and sign up for new/existing users.
3. Subcategories in the Menu rather than on the Homepage.
4. Data entry for new trainers which should be added to the database.
5. The search is implemented incorrectly and a basic search for training is not working.
6. Bug fixes
  - The sort-by shows only ASC and DESC, we need to add sorting options like nearby, popular, top rated etc.
  - Wag Workshops, Inc and Contact Us - these two links at the bottom of the site are not working.
  - The distance shown of the place as compared to google maps is incorrect and needs to be fixed.

Technologies used:

WordPress, Elementor, and Wilcity app.

## Issues and Problems Anticipated

On a Zoom call, with our clients, we addressed our initially anticipated problem. Since we are working with an already existing website, instead of creating one from scratch, we were concerned about the risk of inadvertently bungling the website's current structure/design. Therefore, leaving our clients and stakeholders upset. Professor Kemper informed us that the directory is currently set up as a separate site from the main WAG Workshop site, and it is barely functional as it is, so there is no risk of upsetting our clients. The directory is in a virtual sandbox from the main WAG Workshop site. Also, the directory is currently only referenced on the mission page of the WAG Workshops website. The worst-case scenario of our changes to the directory is that our clients will start at something better than what currently exists on the website. Our group must be mindful that our clients have entrusted us with their business's confidential information. By sharing with our group the credentials for backend access to the directory website, it is of utmost importance that all members protect the client's privacy and not disclose the password to anyone else or access information related to the Calvert Dogs Academy, and business information.

# Solution for long-term (sustainability) and Conclusion

The current day implementation of the website doesn't have the functionality for information to be added by trainers. It's added manually when it is sent via email. So, we intend to implement a solution which could be in place to help with the maintainability later on. We plan to create a forum as part of the website which could be used for new trainers, or to edit the existing trainer details and this would be directly added to the database without intervention.

## Schedule and task division

Our group's near-final design will be completed and submitted no later than Tuesday, November 1st at 11:59 pm. We intend to have a working version of our project along with a description of the system submitted no later than Tuesday, November 15th at 11:59 pm. The final version of our system that is ready for testing will be ready and submitted no later than Tuesday, November 29th at 11:59 pm. Lastly, the video file of our project presentation and PowerPoint slides will be finished and submitted no later than Tuesday, December 6th at 11:59 pm.

- The project manager, Scott Mobarry, will be the main point of contact for the team in communicating directly with external customers. He will set the team up with a project management timeline tool and track the progression of tasks on the project plan. Will assist in the design and implementation process. Also, he will communicate regularly with the project's mentor.
- The designer Animesh Nandan will be responsible for creating a design flow on how the programming will be done, and ensure that the design to implement changes is feasible. He will closely collaborate with the programming mentor and programmer.
- The Programming Mentor, Sravya Lenka will be working with the designer and programmer to make progress on the development front. She will be involved throughout the development cycle and during maintenance.
- The implementer/programmer Srikanth Parvathala will be responsible for programming at the backend, testing the website and database design for updating trainer and business data for future reference along with programming mentor, designer and manager .