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Assignment 3

73-155

1. The domestication of dogs occurred before 14,000 BCE and was typically done for hunter gather purposes, not particularly for agriculture. Dogs originally started to live close to human settlements as they would feed off scraps and sometimes seek shelter on the outskirts. Dogs have had a long history with mankind, as they have coexisted with humans, hunting pests and helping secure human settlements as guard dogs. Dogs would then be bread together to select traits that were favorable to people as they continued to use dogs as tools. People primarily had economic purposes for the domestication of dogs as dogs would be able to perform tasks like help track down food to hunt or stand watch. By breeding dogs with these favorable traits, people could exchange the dogs for other goods or services in a crude bartering system. For example, dogs that were particularly good with running fast to kill pests and dogs that would be vigilant security dogs would be bread to create a dog that would be good at both characteristics. Furthermore, some dogs would be selected for their ability to be trained or their ability to be gentle with children.
2. The creation of the Oculus Rift Googles differs quite a bit from the breeding of dogs, however there were some similarities. The googles had originally been created out of someone’s love to tinker and play around with various pieces of electronic equipment, however the breeding of dogs was done out of necessity. It was also evident that the googles filled a void that was already researched and deemed impossible or too expensive; however the dogs occurred as various people’s efforts to engineer an animal for a specific purpose. Furthermore, the googles had attempted to provide people with a particular experience that wasn’t previously been able to be achieved with the current technology on the market; however with dogs, it was the combination of traits that had already existed to make a new dog that had multiple traits, meaning those abilities had already existed. Despite the differences, there were some similarities between the dogs and the googles, as both processes required some experimenting with different ideas and technology to create a product that was desired. Moreover, both products were created with a particular vision, a particular idea of what the creator wanted to achieve and then those ideas were met or at least explored to determine if and how best to create them. Finally, both had some type of economic motive as there were people in both situations that simply wanted to further this technology for money or in the case of dogs, other services.
3. Crowdsourcing and open source software development differ in a very large way from the other examples that were explored. Primarily the googles were created with an economic motive, at least in terms of the investors who help back the project; however open source development occurs where people volunteer to write code to create a product for free. These people do not have financial motive to reaching an end goal, yet spend their time and resources to do something for free. Even compared to the dogs breeding example there was an economic motive as these dogs provided services to their owners, like security or seeing-eye dogs, these dogs could then be sold to others and would be a financial motive. Also crowd sourcing collects data from a number of people, but also doesn’t particularly have an economic motive for the people who contribute data. There may be some type of reward system like virtual points or levels of achievement, but nothing that would further someone’s economic status. Although there are cases where certain individuals may benefit from the development of open source software like the in the Linux/Unix example, those who created this software did not directly benefit from its creation, in terms of being able to gather economic status from this development. Granted there are cases where companies will create software and make it open source; however even this has the hope that someone will use it for their own product that will be sold and the company received some money as a result of their agreement, so this example is more like a free to try basis. Thus, the main difference between dogs, googles and open source/crowd sourced data is the economic motive of those researching and developing the products. There may have been some historic innovations before 14000 BCE, if you consider the use of stone tools. As people experimented with various ways to work with their hands to accomplish tasks, they concluded via trial and error that using rocks in their hands would be more efficient than using other means. For example, to dig a hole, it might be easier to use a sharp rock than their own bare hands.