

Creating a More Pleasant Onboarding User Experience Sequence with Wag!

By Kevin Tian - November 11, 2018



Context

Wag! is a service dedicated to providing busy dog-owners with a trustworthy and fun solution to ensure that their furry friends receive the care, attention, and physical activity they need to remain in high spirits.

One of the driving factors that call prospective Wag! users to action is a user psychology-based solution: providing an initial free trial, one free dog walk, to new users. This foot-in-the-door technique is useful, but the way it is presented in the current Wag! app makes the user onboarding process cluttered and “busy;” this is clearly counterproductive in these already busy dog-owners’ lives.

Problem

The current onboarding process screens are too cluttered. This makes the user experience generally confusing, which likely leads to higher rates of error and lower conversion metrics.

Rather than reducing the number of steps that a user must go through before they can order their first walk—the approach Wag! appears to have chosen—we can simply reduce the amount of information displayed each step of the way, for a clearer, more appealing onboarding process.

Considering the User Persona

Before beginning any pencil to paper work, we need to establish the target audience for the new user onboarding process. The overarching persona we are reaching out to are employed dog-owners between 22 and 45 years old, invested owners who care deeply about their pets and are willing to spend money to ensure the health and well-being of their pets.

Gathering Feedback on Existing Process

This step was also conducted before sketching took place. The Wag! app was downloaded, and each piece of the process was extensively analyzed. What purpose does this button serve? Does this information need to be shown with that piece of information, or can they be separated? Plenty of useful information was gleaned from this process. Three major take-aways from user research on this were:

1. Visual hierarchy of information unclear, especially with the free trial timer
2. Graphics and buttons cluttered
3. Too many buttons on one screen

Each of these take-aways can lead to cognitive overload and general user confusion, two critical warning signs of a poor user experience and loss of interest in the product, before the app and service are even used.

Redistributing Information for Clarity

Consider Figure 1 below, with a side-by-side comparison of the live Wag! mobile app and an initial redesign that I have created to address some of the issues.

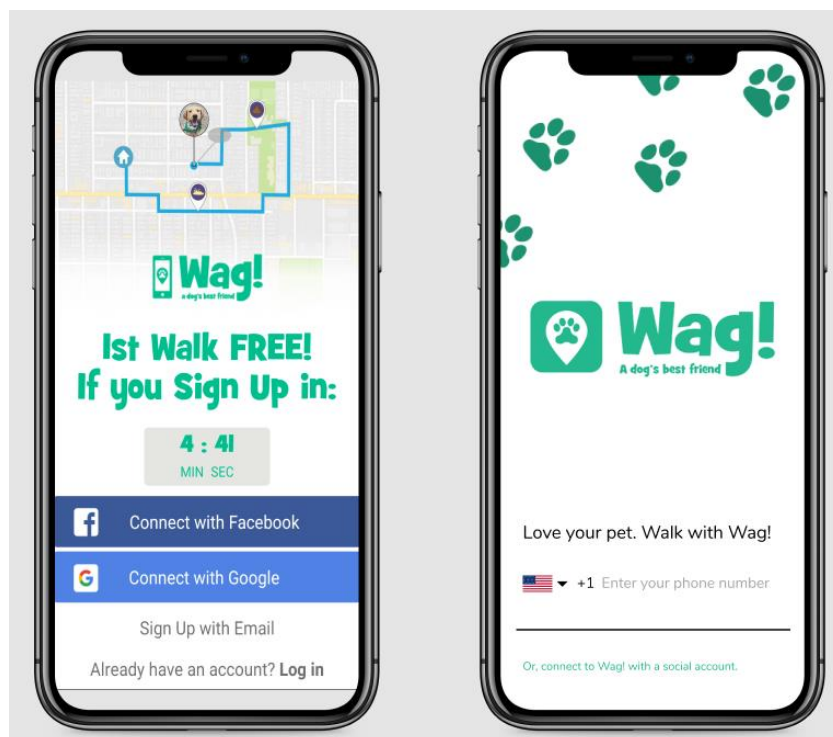


Figure 1. Live version (left) and my proposed redesign (right).

One of the key changes proposed in Figure 1 is **reducing the number of user input/interaction areas from 4 to 2**, simplifying the appearance of the starting page. Retaining one field for phone numbers ensures that every user can either register an account, or login to an existing account with a previously registered phone number. This additional verification step for Wag! reduces the amount of information the user sees upfront, producing a more streamlined and visually appealing login screen.

Another design update proposed in Figure 2, below, is **combining relevant information on one screen and eliminating anything else**. If the phone number login step is chosen from the landing screen, the user then sees the confirmation number screen. The alternative is if the user clicks the social account button at the bottom of the landing screen. No irrelevant information should be displayed on each screen, and each screen should have a single, clear intent.

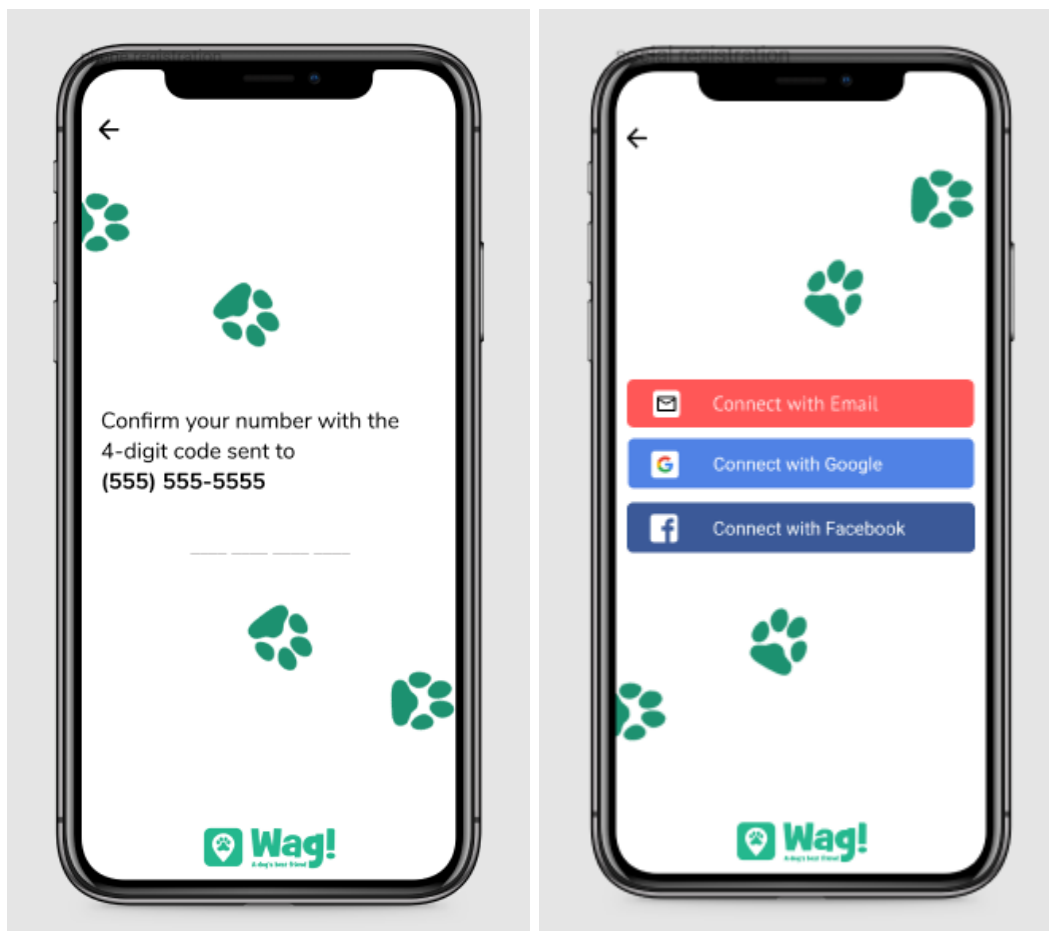


Figure 2. Both the phone number verification screen (left) and social account sign-in screen option (right) are simply designed and meant to reduce the overall amount of cognitive overload for a pleasant user experience.

A final redirection in design of the Wag! onboarding sequence is a **transitional screen to ensure user motivation and engagement remains high**. This screen, shown below in Figure 3, is simply confirmation that information has been received and stored properly, sending a playful and reassuring message to the user that Wag! has everything under control.



Figure 3. Confirmation screen, for transition between onboarding and actual use of the app services.

Justification of Design Choices

I focused on redesigning the onboarding experience for this project, because no matter how good the substance of any app is, if the user cannot make it through the onboarding process without getting frustrated or giving up, they will never appreciate what lies ahead.

Therefore, the design changes proposed in this project are all primarily related to improving the visual hierarchy of the Wag! onboarding sequence. Overall, the core design of the information collection process for Wag! has been simplified, providing a more streamlined and pleasing user experience.

One change that should be addressed is the removal “call to action countdown timer,” a 5-minute countdown on the app landing screen that promised a free first dog walking if the user registered before the time elapsed. This seemed jarring to me from the second I opened the application, and while I see the merit of offering a free trial, I do not believe this offer should be flashing in user’s focus right away. Rather, users download apps and open them almost immediately after they finish downloading. Therefore, it is almost guaranteed that they will register an account when they first open the application, especially if the user experience is excellent and regardless of a flashy message and countdown on the display . Therefore, it only makes sense that the countdown timer be removed, and the free trial deal be displayed after the onboarding sequence is complete.

Future Design Plans

After downloading the Wag! app, and critiquing and redesigning the onboarding sequence user experience, more can still be done to improve the overall user experience navigating through the app.

Now, after proposing a few initial design iterations, and using the app past the onboarding sequence, I think more can be done to improve the user experience. For example, one change that could be made is a redesign of the Wag! Walker Profiles, which currently appear very static and outdated.

Given the user base persona as people who are careful and attentive to the pet, these people must care deeply about the walker who is assuming care of their dog.

Note how in Figure 4, below, that the live version of the app has the structure of a photo and name with ratings and Wag! certifications, then a review section with all reviews open. Finally, at the very bottom of this plethora of information, is the walker bio section.

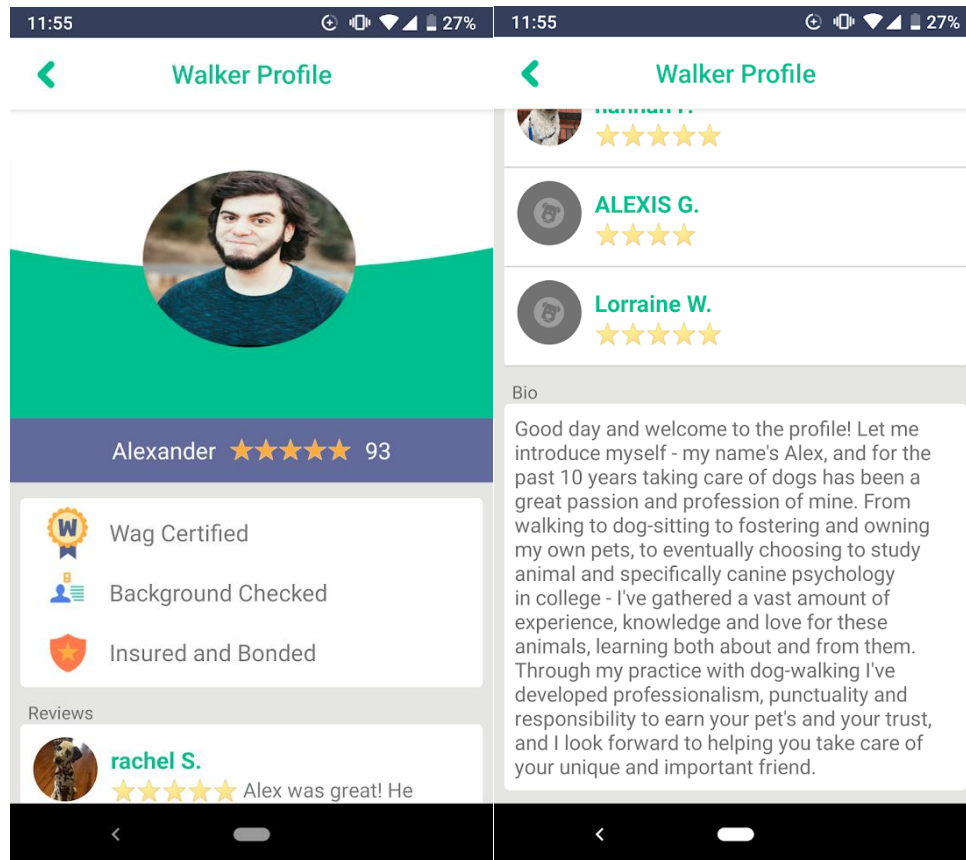


Figure 4. The current Walker Profile is inundated with review information; walker Bio is only displayed at the very bottom of the reviews.

As a prospective user of Wag! and after conducting simple user research, this bio section should be displayed right under the walker name and ratings. Additionally, the reviews should be collapsed, summarized, and/or ranked to reduce information overload.

Collapsing and summarizing the reviews and relocating the bio section to the top of the Walker Profile would improve the user experience, reducing the amount of frustrating scrolling needed to learn about the prospective walker. This simple yet effective change could work wonders on user retention rate and bounce rate, boosting favorability reviews of the app.

Link to sketches and interactive prototype:

<https://www.figma.com/file/UeXO4dCO8Z84iw8KzrB0uTOP/Wag!-redesign?node-id=0%3A1>

Sources: <https://www.appcues.com/blog/consistency-principal> ; <https://facebook.design/> ; <https://www.uber.design/>

Property of Wag!: Logo, screenshots of live version <https://www.wagwalking.com/>