**Happy Valley Kennels Inc.**

**Prepared by Deborah R. Compeau**

Professor Deborah R. Compeau prepared this case solely to provide material for class discussion. The author does not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation.

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Modifed by Anne Hamilton, Heritage College, August 2007, Allan McDonald, Heritage College, August 2009 and Anne Hamilton, August 2013.

**Background**

The *Happy Valley Kennel* (HVK) is a boarding kennel for dogs, or a doggy hotel. When dog owners go on vacation, they make bookings at the HVK to bring their pet in and have the kennel staff look after them. Jim and Sally Read own the kennel. They've had an online presence in the form of an information web page for a year now. They realize that in order to stay competitive that they also need automated support for the “Reservation and Care System.”

The Reads are so pleased with the web page you designed for them they've decided to hire you and your class-mates to build an information system to help manage the reservation process. The feasibility of the project has already been established and requirements determination has begun. In order to proceed, you have scheduled an interview with Sally Read, who manages the day-to-day kennel operation. The following paragraphs document your interview experience.

**The Interview**

It is 9 am on a Friday morning. Sally has just finished making the morning rounds of the dogs and you each have a cup of coffee and are ready to proceed. You begin by asking Sally to describe how reservations are made.

*Sally:* Well, usually reservations are phoned in. Sometimes people come in off the street, but I’d say 75% or more of our reservations are by phone. But more and more of our customers are asking us if they can make reservations over the web. Jim and I were talking about it and think that we might be losing customers because we’re not accepting reservations online. We’d like you to set us up with something there in addition to the web page you set up last year.

You: OK. That’s something we could certainly do. Let’s start though by finding out how things work now. Can you describe what happens when someone calls in?

*Sally:* Sure. When a customer is planning a vacation, they call to make a booking. Jim or I or one of our part time staff will take the call. We pull the kennel card for the customer from the file, and make any updates…you know, address change, change in the dog’s food, that kind of thing. Then we assign the dog to a run.

You: A run?

*Sally:* Yeah…haven’t you ever seen the inside of a kennel? Here, let me show you.

Sally takes you on a quick tour of the kennel. She shows you the dog runs, a 4 ft by 20 ft indoor/outdoor cage with a metal door on a pulley that can be opened and closed to let the dog in and out. She explains that in the summer these doors are left open all the time so dogs are free to go in or out as they please. In the winter, when the inside of the kennel is heated, the doors are shut all the time. Several times a day someone puts all the dogs out for 15 minutes or so (longer if it’s a nice day). Then they come back inside. You also see a sheet of paper tacked to the kennel door that has the names of all the dogs in residence at the time along with their food preferences. Sally tells you that is the Kennel Log, and offers to make you a copy (Exhibit 1). Once you return to the office, you continue your questions:

You: OK. So the dog is assigned to the run. Now I noticed that some of the runs had big doors and some had little doors. I also thought I saw chain link on the tops of some of the runs, but not all. Does that factor into the run assignment?

*Sally:* It sure does. The assignment of a run is based on many factors, such as the availability of the run for the duration of the stay, whether the dog is a climber or not (climbers need to be put in covered runs), and whether it is a small, medium or large dog (since some of the runs have larger doors which are easier for bigger dogs to go in and out of). Sometimes a run might be empty but it’s not available because it needs to be cleaned or maybe repaired. We also find it is better to have some dogs facing the back of the kennel property. Dogs facing the front or roadside of the kennel tend to bark more, so really yappy dogs get put facing the back.

You: OK. What happens next?

*Sally:* Well, once the run is assigned, we note the dog’s name, run, and food preference in the Kennel log for the days he or she will be visiting.

You: OK, so all dogs have the same schedule while in the kennel. Is that right?

Sally: Well, some dogs get fed twice a day if that’s what they’re used to. And owners can pay extra if they want their dog taken on a 20-minute walk each day or if they want their dog to participate in the doggie playtime or if they want their dog to be groomed during their stay. We make note of those services in the kennel log as well. I think that’s pretty much it.

You: Now, you said that you update the kennel card, right? What is the kennel card?

*Sally:* Actually it’s just a recipe card that we keep for each of the dogs. I keep them in this old recipe box here (she shows you the box). On it, we write the owners’ names, the address and the phone number, the dog’s name and sex, whether it has been spayed or neutered, what food the dog prefers and the number of times a day it is fed. We also note any special dietary needs and any special medications that the dog takes. Oh, yeah, we need to record the family veterinarian too, just in case the dog gets sick while staying with us.

You: So you check with the customer each time they call to make sure the information is still current?

*Sally:* Well, almost every time. If it’s really busy, I sometimes forget.

You: And what about for new customers? Do you fill this out over the phone the first time someone calls?

*Sally:* Yep. Oh, did I say we record the breed and age of the dog too?

You: OK, I think I’ve got all that. What do you do if someone has more than one dog? Do you create a kennel card for each dog?

*Sally:* Yes, each dog has a separate kennel card and we cross-reference them so that we know about the other dogs. Let me give you an example – here are Jane’s cards. She has two dogs – Archie and Scrabble. (She photocopies the kennel cards for Archie and Scrabble and gives you the photocopies. – (Exhibit 2))

Oh, and since we’re talking about second dogs, a lot of our clients have cats as well, so we decided to convert the old chicken coop to a cattery with three different kinds of accommodation – luxury, semi-luxury and regular. Could you accommodate cats in the system as well?

You: That shouldn’t be a problem. What information would you keep on the cats?

*Sally:* Mostly the same as for the dogs. We’d also like to know whether they’re indoor or outdoor cats and whether or not they’re declawed. Oh and also whether they’re litter-trained. We won’t take any cats who don’t use a litter box.

You: Would you provide any extra services for cats – like you do with the walks and grooming for the dogs?

*Sally:* No – we’d just house them, feed them and change their litter.

You: OK. So, I think that tells me how it works when someone makes a booking. Now what happens on the day the dog or cat is brought in?

*Sally:* Well, first I pull out the kennel card and transfer the owner’s information to a contract. You know, the owner’s name, address, all that stuff go in this section at the top. Then the pet name, size and other info goes in the next section. Oh, do you want a sample contract? I’ll give you a copy of this completed one. (Exhibit 3) Anyway, then we have to figure out the price – I’ll tell you how we do that later, OK? We enter the daily rate onto the contract, here, and then check with the owner to see if they brought any toys for the dog or if they have a leash to leave or a blanket. We note these in the contract too, just so we don’t forget when they go home. You know, if a blanket gets really wet we’ll pull it out of the run to dry. Then sometimes we forget to send them home. This way we remember to check. I also note the time of arrival. We used to not charge dogs if they came in after noon on their check in day. We don’t do that now, but I still note the time – force of habit.

You: It’s amazing how hard it is to break some of those habits isn’t it?

*Sally:* It sure is. So, where was I? Oh yes. Once all of this is figured out and the contract is complete, I get the owner to sign it and I give a copy to them before they go. The remaining copies get stored in the office file cabinet until check out time. We get the owner to bring the dog into the kennel and we put the dog into its assigned run. Once they’ve said their goodbyes, that’s pretty much it.

At this point, a car drives into the lot.

*Sally:* Oh, that will be Allan McDonald – you remember the really friendly Golden Retriever, Brandi that was sharing with the cute lab mix, Katie? Well, he's are their parents. Will you excuse me while I check them out?

You: No problem. Actually is it OK if I watch what you are doing?

*Sally:* Sure.

Allan comes into the office. He chats briefly with Sally about his trip to the Bahamas and Sally catches him up on the local news, while she roots around in the filing cabinet. She finds his contract and tells him that everything was just fine while the dogs were there, except that Katie barked a lot on the first day. You notice that there is a notes area on the contract where this information is recorded. Allan comments that she was probalby anxious and Sally agrees.

Before his arrival, Sally had prepared an invoice which she gives to Allan. (Exhibit 4) He makes out a check and gets a copy of the invoice. Sally puts a second copy into a stack of other papers.

Once Allan is gone, you ask Sally a couple of questions about what you just saw.

You: How did you figure out how many days to charge for?

*Sally:* Well, the dogs came in on Monday of this week, so they get charged for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Since it’s before noon, I don’t charge them for Friday. So, it works out to 3 days.

You: The notes you have about the dogs (e.g., that Katie barked a lot on the first day), when do you make those?

*Sally:* Whenever something needs to be noted. Usually after feeding time (5 pm) or at the end of the night, just before I turn in I go through the kennel log and try to remember if I need to write anything down.

You: Great, this is really helpful Sally. Now, the copies of the contract and invoice that you kept, the pink copy, what happens to those.

*Sally:* Well, as you can see there’s a pretty big stack of them. Those are all of the “closed” contracts. Eventually they get passed to the accountant who keeps our books, but that pile is basically the filing system we use. Awful, isn’t it?

You: Oh, one more thing. You mentioned something earlier about getting the vet’s phone number in case you have to take a dog in. How does that work?

*Sally:* Well, it’s only ever happened a half a dozen times that I can remember in 5 years. So, it’s not really a big issue. If a dog gets sick (and I mean really sick – if it’s just a bit under the weather we wait until the owner comes back), we take it to the owner’s vet if it’s not too far away or to a local vet. We call the owner at the emergency contact number they leave us and make sure it’s OK and then they deal with everything from there on in. So, really we’re just a taxi service or something. Oh, and since we’re talking about medical issues, we don’t accept any dogs unless they have up-to-date vaccinations for Bordetella, Distemper, Hepatitis, Parainfluenza, Parovirus and Rabies.

You: How do you ensure that their vaccinations are current?

*Sally:* When they make their reservation, we tell them to bring their vaccination certificate with them when they bring the dog. We should probably record the date their vaccinations expire on their kennel card to make things easier –then we wouldn’t have to see the certificates each time. But we’re usually rushed when the dogs arrive since they all come together at the beginning of the day and the owners are frequently in a hurry to get off on their holiday.

At this point Jim Read comes into the office with a box of canned dog food. You exchange pleasantries with Jim while he puts the food on a shelf and then continue the interview.

You: So, I think I have a pretty good handle on how the booking and check in and check out work. What else is there? I guess, just the daily routine while they are here. Sally, you told me about letting them in and out during the winter and about taking notes and all that. Is there anything else that happens during the day – specifically things that will affect the system we’re building?

*Jim:* Well, have you talked about feeding at all?

You and Sally: No, we hadn’t gotten to there.

*Jim:* Each day at about 5pm, we feed all the canine guests. Some dogs also get fed at 8am if the owner has requested that they be fed twice. Every dog has its own favorite food and we try to accommodate that. Sally has probably already showed you where we write that down in the Kennel Log. So, at feeding time, we go out to the kitchen, look all the foods and amounts up and prepare the food. We give it to the dogs, and then come back in about 30 minutes to make sure it is all gone.

We get the feed for the dogs from a variety of suppliers. I guess in all, we stock about 10 of the most common dog food brands. When a customer makes a booking, the person taking the booking checks to see if the dog’s preferred food (from the Kennel Card) is one that the kennel stocks. If not, we give the customers the option to bring their own food or to use a substitute. When we are running low on food, Sally lets me know, and I send a purchase order to the appropriate supplier (mostly that’s just a phone call or a fax). Food is usually delivered the next day. We get a shipping notice when the food arrives and then have 30 days to pay our outstanding balance. We get invoiced monthly from the suppliers for food costs, and I usually pay by check when we get those invoices.

You: OK. What about the special services you offer – walks, playtime, etc. Do you record that anywhere?

Jim: The walks are done at 7am before the day gets too hot. Dogs whose owners are paying for a daily walk have it noted on the daily log and whoever walks the dogs initials the note on the log after the walk is done. The same goes for playtime and grooming. Playtime takes place at 4pm before feeding and grooming is done from 10am on.

You: Is there anything else we need to think about?

*Sally:* Oh, well I haven’t told you yet about the daily rate. I promised I would do that earlier, didn’t I?

You: Uh huh. I had forgotten, I’m glad you remembered.

*Sally:* Small dogs (e.g., Poodles, Chihuahuas) are charged a daily rate of $10.00. Medium sized dogs (e.g., Shetland Sheepdogs, Siberian Huskies, Golden Retrievers) are charged $11.00 per day and large breeds (e.g., St. Bernards, Rottweilers, Alaskan Malamutes) are charged $12.00 per day. That’s the basic rate.

Some dogs require daily medication for various physical ailments. Well, let’s see – Rhabytt here (points to today’s Kennel Log) takes Eltroxin 2 times per day every day for a thyroid condition. Our policy is that we will administer these medications while caring for a dog, but we charge (currently) an extra $1.00 per day. We’ve talked about increasing this, but so far haven’t bothered.

As Jim said, most owners use the food we provide, but if we don’t stock the preferred food, then the owner has the option to bring their own. If they do this, then the daily rate is discounted (currently the discount rate is 10%), but only for large dogs.

You: So, let’s see if I have this right. Rhabytt is a Siberian Husky, so she would get charged the rate for medium sized dogs. That’s $11.00, right? Plus, since you have to give her medication, she would be charged an additional $1.00 per day. Now, your note here looks like it says she is eating her own food, rather than one of the kennel brands.

*Sally.* Right…

You. So, she would get a 10% discount on the daily rate because the owner’s brought their own food. Oh, no. Wait. You said that only applies to large dogs. So, is that everything on the daily rate?

*Sally:* Yes, oh, unless the same owners bring in more than 2 dogs at a time or if they have two dogs sharing the same run. Then they get a bit of a discount.

You: How much?

*Sally.* Well, if two dogs share the same run…now, we don’t normally like to do this because the dogs usually need their own space, but sometimes it works really well – a couple of poodles or something)… Anyway, if they share, they get 10% off the daily rate. And then, if an owner brings in 3 dogs or more, they get a 7% discount.

You: Great. Well, I know I have enough to get started with. I’m going to take all these notes away and try to organize my thoughts about how the system works. It will take me about two weeks, working with my partner to get everything done. In the meantime, I may have to call you or email you with a few additional questions. Then, I’ll come back and show you what I’ve done and we’ll make sure that we have everything nailed down. When we come back, I’d also like to talk to you about what you’re looking for on the web.

*Jim/Sally:* OK. We’ll talk to you soon. Bye.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | ‘Spot” Allan OWN FOOD, playtime | 40 |  |
| 2 |  | 39 |  |
| 3 |  | 38 |  |
| 4 |  | 37 |  |
| 5 |  | 36 |  |
| 6 |  | 35 |  |
| 7 |  | 34 | ‘Rhabytt’ Compeau OWN FOOD  pills – Extroxin 2xdaily - grooming |
| 8 |  | 33 | ‘Thumper’ French SHURGAIN |
| 9 |  | 32 |  |
| 10 |  | 31 |  |
| 11 |  | 30 |  |
| 12 |  | 29 |  |
| 13 | ‘Chelsea’ Willis IAMS (out today) – walk, grooming | 28 |  |
| 14 |  | 27 |  |
| 15 | ‘King’ Davies DOG CHOW – twice a day, playtime | 26 | ‘Toby’ Mann DOG CHOW –playtime |
| 16 |  | 25 |  |
| 17 | ‘Brandi’ McDonald IAMS (out today) – walk, playtime, grooming, 1 prednisone  ‘Katie McDonald IAMS (out today) - playtime | 24 |  |
| 18 | ‘Jasper’ McDonald IAMS (out today) – walk, playtime | 23 |  |
| 19 |  | 22 |  |
| 20 |  | 21 |  |

**NOTES:**

1. Shaded runs (27-34) are covered
2. Underlined runs (13-28) have large doors to accommodate larger dogs
3. Runs 21-40 face the back of the kennel property

Owner: Jane Smith

202 Poodle Path

Gatineau, QC J8A 1R2

(819) 555-1111

Dog: Scrabble, Llasapoo, spayed, female

Food – Science Diet Allergy

Allergic to pollen

Medication: predisone – twice a day

Vet: Dr. I Care (819)555-2122

Other dogs: Archie

Note: Scrabble is terrified of hot air balloons.

Owner: Jane Smith

202 Poodle Path

Gatineau, QC J8A 1R2

(819) 555-1111

Dog: Archie, standard poodle, spayed, female

Food – Iams

Vet: Dr. I Care (819)555-2122

Other dogs: Scrabble

Note: Archie is extremely shy and very timid around other dogs – she does not do well in an open playtime

Happy Valley Kennels Inc.

**Boarding Contract**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | | July 8, 2013 | |  |
|  | |  | |  |
| **Customer:** |  | |  |  | | | |  | |  |
| **Name:** | *Allan McDonald* | |  | **Emergency Contact:** | | | |  | |  |
| **Address:** | 123 Nowhere Land | |  | **Name:** | | Frank | | | |  |
|  | Ottawa | |  | **Phone:** | | 111-2222 | | | |  |
|  |  | |  |  | | | |  | |  |
|  |  | |  |  | | | |  | |  |
| **Reservation:** |  |  | | |  | |  | |  |  |
| **Start Date:** | July 8, 2013 | **End Date:** | | | July 12, 2013 | | **Number of days:** | | 4 |  |
|  |  |  | | |  | |  | |  |  |
|  |  |  | | |  | |  | |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Pet** | |  | **Services** | | |  |  | | | **Daily Rate** |
| 1 | **Name**: *Brandi\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* |  | Boarding | | |  |  | | | 12.00 |
|  | **Size:**  S M L |  | daily walk | | |  |  | | | 4.00 |
|  | **Special Needs/Notes** |  | daily playtime | | |  |  | | | 2.00 |
|  | One prednisone tablet every other day |  | grooming No of times | | | 1 |  | | | 4.00 |
|  | Brought pet stuffed pink elephant |  | medication | | |  |  | | | 1.00 |
|  |  |  | Pet Discounts: | | |  |  | | |  |
|  |  |  | Share with Katie (10%) | | |  |  | | |  |
|  |  |  |  | | |  |  | | |  |
| 2 | **Name**: *\_Jasper\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* |  | Boarding | | |  |  | | | 12.00 |
|  | **Size:**  S M L |  | daily walk | | |  |  | | | 4.00 |
|  | **Special Needs/Notes** |  | daily playtime | | |  |  | | | 2.00 |
|  |  |  | grooming No of times | | |  |  | | |  |
|  |  |  | medication | | |  |  | | |  |
|  |  |  | Pet Discounts: | | |  |  | | |  |
|  |  |  |  | | |  |  | | |  |
|  |  |  |  | | |  |  | | |  |
| 3 | **Name**: *\_Katie\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* |  | Boarding | | |  |  | | | 11.00 |
|  | **Size:**  S M L |  | daily walk | | |  |  | | |  |
|  | **Special Needs/Notes** |  | daily playtime | | |  |  | | | 2.00 |
|  | Brought green chuck-it and 6 tennis balls |  | grooming No of times | | |  |  | | |  |
|  |  |  | medication | | |  |  | | |  |
|  |  |  | Pet Discounts: | | |  |  | | |  |
|  |  |  | Share with Brandi (10%) | | |  |  | | |  |
|  |  |  |  | | |  |  | | |  |
| **Customer Discounts** | | | |  |  | | |  |  |  |
|  | Three or more dogs brought in (7%) | | |  |  | | |  |  |  |
|  |  | | |  |  | | |  |  |  |

I understand and agree to the terms and conditions of this contract (see reverse side) and agree that Happy Valley Kennels is not liable for loss or illness of my pet.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Allan R. McDonald | July 8, 2013 |
| Signature of Owner | Date |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Invoice | | | | | Date: 7/12/2013  Invoice # 100 | | | | | | |
| Happy Valley Kennels  123 Chemin Scott  Chelsea, QC J9B 1R6  819-123-4567  info@happyvalleykennel.ca | | | To | | | | | | Allan McDonald  123 Nowhere Land  Ottawa, ON  613-555-1111 | | |
| Reservation Start | Reservation End | | | | | | Number of days | | | Payment Terms | |
| July 8, 2013 | July 12, 2013 | | | | | | 4 | | | Due on receipt | |
|  | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Description | | | | | | Daily Rate | | Number of days | | | Item Total |
| Boarding – Brandi | | | | | | 12.00 | | 4 | | | 48.00 |
| Sharing Discount (10%) – Brandi | | | | | | -1.20 | | 4 | | | -4.80 |
| Daily Walk – Brandi | | | | | | 4.00 | | 4 | | | 16.00 |
| Daily Playtime – Brandi | | | | | | 2.00 | | 4 | | | 8.00 |
| Grooming – Brandi | | | | | | 4.00 | | 1 | | | 4.00 |
| Medication – Brandi | | | | | | 1.00 | | 4 | | | 4.00 |
| Boarding – Jasper | | | | | | 12.00 | | 4 | | | 48.00 |
| Daily Walk – Jasper | | | | | | 4.00 | | 4 | | | 16.00 |
| Daily Playtime – Jasper | | | | | | 2.00 | | 4 | | | 8.00 |
| Boarding – Katie | | | | | | 11.00 | | 4 | | | 44.00 |
| Sharing Discount (10%) – Katie | | | | | | -1.10 | | 4 | | | -4.40 |
| Daily Playtime – Katie | | | | | | 2.00 | | 4 | | | 8.00 |
|  | | | | | |  | |  | | |  |
|  | | | | | |  | |  | | |  |
|  | | | | | |  | |  | | |  |
|  | | | | | |  | |  | | |  |
|  | | | | | |  | |  | | |  |
| Subtotal | | | | | | | | | | | 194.80 |
| Discount – 3 or more pets (7%) | | | | | | | | | | | -13.64 |
| Subtotal after discount | | | | | | | | | | | 181.16 |
| GST | | | | | | | | | | | 9.06 |
| Total | | | | | | | | | | | 190.22 |
|  | |  | | Make all cheques payable to Happy Valley Kennels  Thank you for your business! | | | | | | | |