

Interview Transcript: PupPal App User Research with P06

Interviewer: hi there thanks for joining me today can you hear me okay

P06: yeah i can hear you fine thanks for having me

Interviewer: great before we start can i record this session it'll help me with my notes later and no one else will see it except my professor

P06: um sure that's fine i guess will i be on video or just audio

Interviewer: just audio is fine you can keep your video off if that makes you more comfortable

P06: oh that's perfect then yeah go ahead with the recording i'm actually in my pajamas right now to be honest haha

Interviewer: no problem at all so before we dive into the questions i wanted to thank you for participating in this user research it's for my product design class where we're exploring ideas for a dog care app

P06: sounds interesting i'm happy to help especially if it might be something useful for service dog owners like me

Interviewer: that's great to hear actually first i'd like to tell you a bit about the app idea we're working on if that's okay

P06: yeah go ahead i'm curious

Interviewer: so the app we're designing is called puppal it's meant to be the ultimate dog parenting assistant the main problem we're trying to solve is that dog parents often struggle with tracking their pet's health training progress nutrition and socialization needs while balancing a busy schedule and right now there's no single app that combines ai-powered recommendations real-time health tracking and social networking for dog owners

Interviewer: some of the key features include a smart health tracker that syncs with vet records vaccinations and medications and has an ai-powered symptom checker for early illness detection

Interviewer: there's also a personalized nutrition guide with ai-generated meal plans based on age breed weight and allergies plus a barcode scanner for dog food ingredient analysis

Interviewer: we're looking at a behavior and training assistant with step-by-step training modules and an ai-powered bark and body language interpreter

Interviewer: then there's a dog social network to find nearby dog parks and playdates with compatible dogs plus chat groups and forums for breed-specific tips

Interviewer: we also want to include emergency and safety alerts like a lost dog mode to notify nearby users with a dog's last location and real-time weather alerts about unsafe walking conditions

Interviewer: there would be a smart daily routine planner with customizable feeding exercise and potty reminders and adaptive walking route suggestions

Interviewer: and finally a vet and groomer booking hub for one-tap appointment booking that syncs with google calendar

Interviewer: so that's the basic idea what do you think about it

P06: oh wow that sounds really interesting um as someone with a service dog i'm always looking for better ways to manage his care since he's not just a pet you know he's essential to my daily independence

P06: i'm especially drawn to the health tracking features with jake that's my lab i absolutely need to stay on top of his health if he gets sick that affects not just him but my mobility too the medication reminders would be super helpful since he takes joint supplements to keep him comfortable while working

P06: the emergency alerts feature could be a lifesaver there have been times when i've needed to quickly find a vet in an unfamiliar area when we're traveling that lost dog mode gives me peace of mind too though jake is trained not to wander

P06: i'm curious though would there be specific settings or features for service dogs versus regular pets our needs are a bit different like the social network part is nice but jake isn't really supposed to play while he's working and the bark interpreter well service dogs are trained not to bark unnecessarily

P06: what i'd really love to see is something about service dog regulations and rights maybe a quick reference i could pull up when a business incorrectly tries to deny us entry and perhaps tracking his working hours to ensure he's getting proper rest periods

P06: do you think the app could accommodate those specialized needs for service animal owners like me

Interviewer: those are really excellent points and definitely something we should consider thank you for bringing that up now if you don't mind i'd like to ask you some more specific questions about your experience as a dog parent

P06: sure go ahead

Interviewer: great so can you tell me about your dog breed age any special needs

P06: jake is a 5-year-old black lab he's a fully trained service dog who helps me with mobility assistance tasks since i use a wheelchair he's healthy overall but starting to get a bit of arthritis in his front shoulders which we're monitoring

P06: he's actually lying right next to my chair right now i think he knows we're talking about him his ears just perked up

Interviewer: aw that's sweet what does your daily routine with jake look like in terms of feeding walks playtime training that sort of thing

P06: our day starts early jake gets fed at 6 30 am before he puts his vest on then he helps me throughout my day at the non-profit where i work retrieving items opening doors hitting elevator buttons things like that he gets a lunch break where his vest comes off for about 30 minutes

P06: in the evening we have a solid routine of dinner some light training refreshers and relaxation time where he gets to just be a dog he sleeps in my bedroom but not on the bed he has a special orthopedic mat nearby

P06: oh and on weekends we try to do something fun like going to the beach in la jolla where they have those accessible beach wheelchairs i can rent he loves the water but i have to be careful about sand getting in my wheelchair it's a whole thing

Interviewer: that sounds like you have a good routine what would you say are the biggest challenges you face as a dog parent

P06: honestly keeping track of his health is my top priority if jake isn't well i lose my independence also managing public interactions can be exhausting people wanting to pet him while he's working or occasionally businesses not understanding service dog laws and finding wheelchair-accessible places for both of us can be challenging

P06: like yesterday we went to this new coffee shop and there was this tiny step at the entrance maybe two inches but enough that i needed help getting in and jake wasn't able to find an alternative entrance because there wasn't one so we just left it's frustrating when that happens

Interviewer: i can imagine that would be frustrating how do you currently track jake's health like vet visits vaccinations medications

P06: i keep a binder with all his vet records and set calendar reminders for his appointments and heartwork medication i also have a notebook where i track any unusual behaviors or health concerns it's pretty old-school and i worry about forgetting something important

P06: actually last month i almost missed his quarterly check-up because i had put it in my phone calendar but somehow didn't set the alert properly so now i double-check everything which takes extra time

Interviewer: do you follow a specific feeding plan for jake how do you choose the right food

P06: jake eats a prescription joint support formula recommended by our vet i'm pretty strict about his weight management since extra pounds would make his job harder and worsen his

joint issues i measure his food carefully and limit treats though he does get special work treats for assistance tasks

P06: feeding him is actually one of the easiest parts of our routine because it's so consistent but i do worry sometimes if his nutrition is optimal for his service work you know if there's something i could be doing better

Interviewer: what would you say is the most difficult part about training or managing jake's behavior

P06: jake is well-trained but maintaining his skills requires consistent practice the hardest part is when we encounter unusual situations that might distract him like construction noise or other dogs behaving aggressively keeping him focused in those moments is crucial

P06: um there was this time at the mall when another dog lunged at him and jake just stood there perfectly calm which was exactly what he should do but i realized we hadn't practiced that scenario in a while and i felt bad that i hadn't been more consistent with his training maintenance

Interviewer: have you ever needed urgent pet care like if jake was lost or suddenly ill how did you handle it

P06: last year jake had a sudden paw pad injury while we were visiting my sister in another city finding an emergency vet that was wheelchair accessible was incredibly stressful i ended up having to rely on my sister to take him in because i couldn't access the facility easily

P06: it was really scary because i felt so helpless like i couldn't even help my own dog who's always helping me you know what i mean it made me realize how vulnerable we both are when something unexpected happens

Interviewer: that sounds really difficult do you use any apps or tools to manage jake's health training or care

P06: i use a basic medication reminder app but nothing specifically for pet care i've tried a couple of general pet apps but they weren't designed with service animals in mind so many features weren't relevant to us

P06: like they'd have all these reminders about dog parks and playdates and things that just don't apply to our situation but then they'd be missing features that would be really helpful for service dog owners it's like we're this forgotten demographic or something

Interviewer: what features would be most valuable to you in a dog care app

P06: i'd love something that combines health tracking medication reminders and vet records in one place also a feature showing nearby accessible vet clinics would be amazing and maybe something that tracks his working hours to ensure he's getting appropriate rest

P06: oh and maybe something that could help me keep track of his service tasks for recertification we have to document the types of tasks he performs and how regularly he does them to maintain his certification it's a lot of paperwork

Interviewer: are there any pet-related tasks you wish were easier or more automated

P06: scheduling and tracking vet appointments definitely also documenting his training maintenance and service tasks for his recertification requirements

P06: and honestly anything that could help with the public education aspect of having a service dog like maybe a quick way to show people the laws about service animals when they try to give us trouble i know that's not exactly an automated task but it's something that would save me a lot of emotional energy

Interviewer: do you engage with other dog owners for advice or socialization and if so where

P06: i'm part of a service dog owners facebook group and i attend a monthly meet-up with other service dog handlers in san diego it's invaluable to share experiences with people who understand our unique relationship

P06: we actually met at a training center initially but then formed our own group we stay in touch through a group chat and try to meet in person at accessible restaurants once a month it's nice to not have to explain everything about service dogs sometimes you know

Interviewer: would you be interested in an app that helps connect you with other dog parents or pet services nearby

P06: i'd be interested especially if it connected me specifically with other service dog handlers our needs and interests are often different from recreational dog owners

P06: like i don't need to find the best dog park but i do need to find restaurants or stores that have been verified as truly accessible and service dog friendly by other wheelchair users that would be really valuable

Interviewer: if you had a magic wand what one thing would you improve about dog parenting

P06: public education about service dogs if i could wave a magic wand everyone would understand not to pet distract or question legitimate service dogs and their handlers

P06: um sorry if that's not exactly about dog parenting but it's a daily struggle and it affects how jake and i navigate the world together i guess a more direct answer would be maybe something that makes all aspects of healthcare easier to manage for both of us

Interviewer: no that's a perfectly valid answer and would you be open to testing an early version of the app in the future

P06: absolutely i'd be happy to test an early version especially if you're interested in making it more inclusive for service dog handlers like me

P06: i think it's great that you're doing this kind of research before building the app and i would definitely want to provide feedback on how it works for someone in my situation

Interviewer: that's fantastic thank you so much for all your insights this has been really valuable

P06: oh no problem happy to help is there anything else you need from me for your assignment

Interviewer: actually i was wondering if i could include this transcript as part of my submission to my professor would that be okay with you

P06: yeah that's totally fine as long as you keep my video off which you said was okay anyway i'm good with you using the transcript hope it helps with your project

Interviewer: it definitely will thank you again for your time and for sharing your experiences this has been really helpful

P06: you're welcome and good luck with your app i hope it works out i'd definitely use something like that especially if it had those service dog specific features we talked about

Interview Notes:

- p06: service dog owner, needs app that suits service dogs
- interested in health tracking, emergency alerts, very specific to service dog needs
- jake: 5 yr old lab, helps with mobility, starting to have arthritis
- routine: assists at non-profit, trained for specific tasks, also has downtime
- biggest challenges: managing jake's health, public interactions, accessibility issues
- uses binder for health tracking, calendar for meds, worries about missing something important
- feeding: strict diet for joint health, prescribed by vet
- training: consistent but needs refreshers, difficult in unusual situations
- urgent care experience: paw injury, accessibility issue at vet, very stressful
- uses basic reminder apps, finds general pet apps lacking for service dogs
- wants app with health tracking, vet record integration, accessible vet locations, tracks working hours
- needs easier vet scheduling, training documentation, public education tools
- part of service dog owner groups, values community with similar experiences
- interested in app connections with service dog handlers, not regular dog parks
- wants public education improvement for service dog awareness
- open to testing app, especially if tailored for service dogs, eager to give feedback

Prioritized List of needs from application:

- Health Management
- Accessibility Features
- Service Dog Specific Features
- Emergency Preparedness
- Public Education
- Task Documentation
- Community and Networking
- Routine Management
- Behavioral Training Maintenance