



## Paws & Claws

Around 6.5 million companion animals enter U.S. animal shelters nationwide every year, mostly cats and dogs, and each year, about 1.5 million shelter animals are euthanized. Those are a lot of pets! Paws & Claws wants to change this. By partnering with shelters all over the country, we've successfully created a platform that allow people to see all available animals in any shelter close to them. Here's how I designed the solution.

### 01. Project Details

**Challenge** | Design a country-wide pet finder website

**Client** | Paws & Claws (fictitious project)

**Duration** | 3 weeks

**Role** | Lead UI UX Designer: Design Researcher, IxDesigner, Visual Designer

### 02. Design Goals

- Deliver a strong, responsive web experience across multiple device platforms

- Formulate company identity
- Create an intuitive, smooth experience for potential adopters and shelter owners by leveraging existing design patterns and user expectations

### 03. Tools Used

**Research** | Industry Research, Competitive Audit, Contextual Inquiry

**Synthesis** | Empathy Map, Trello, Persona

**Product Strategy + Ideation**  
| Whiteboard, POV + HMWs, Goal Mapping, App Map, LucidChart

**Interaction Design + Testing**  
| Pen + Paper, Task Flow, Illustrator, Photoshop, MarvelApp, Apowersoft Recorder

**Delivery** | Zeplin

## Research & Synthesis

## 01. Industry Research

Before building the platform, research was needed to understand the current animal rescue landscape, as well the needs and interests of both the animal owner and the shelter employees. Thus, I began my research for this project with a quick secondary scan of statistics which helped me contextualize the pet homelessness situation. My goal here was to understand the current animal rescue industry, specifically, "What is the difference between adoption / rescue versus purchasing from a pet store / breeder?" and "What are the repercussions for choosing stores over shelters?" Here's what I learned:

**Stat #1:** For every puppy or kitten who is deliberately produced by any breeder, an animal in an animal shelter dies.

**Stat #2:** Animal shelters across the nation are forced to stretch their resources to the brink to accommodate an overwhelming population of homeless and at-risk animals.

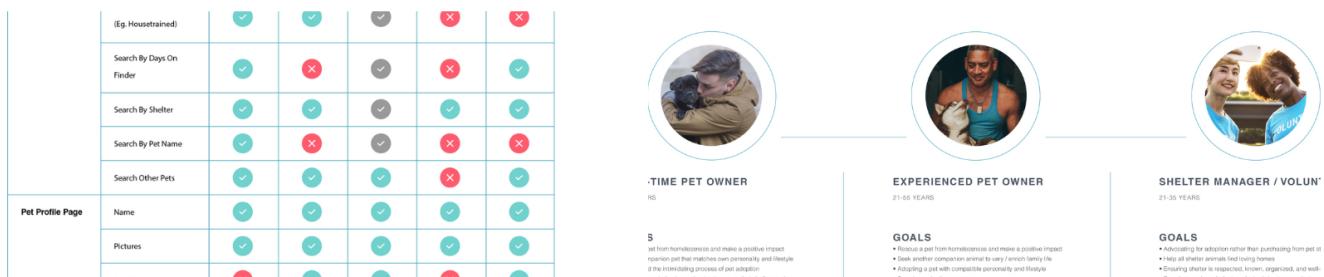
**Stat #3:** Approximately 6.5 million companion animals enter U.S. animal shelters nationwide every year. Of those, approximately 3.3 million are dogs and 3.2 million are cats.

**Stat #4:** Each year, approximately 1.5 million shelter animals are euthanized (670,000 dogs and 860,000 cats).

## 02. Competitive Analysis & Provisional Persona

With this initial information, I compiled a snapshot of notable pet matching sites currently out for use. A quick search for "animal shelters near me" brought to light my top competitors: local animal shelters of various sizes (although they are indirect competitors, they are also partners with us) and pet locators that are aggregates of shelters (with Petfinder, AdoptAPet, and AllPaws being the most popular). I conducted a quick site audit of my top 5 competitor's website to help identify the strengths and weaknesses of each and surveyed pages for trend and feature implementations so to know where best to invest our resources.

In order to facilitate future design decisions, I aggregated and interpreted the data results into **provisional personas**, (relatable, representational customer profiles), focusing heavily on user behavior and motivation. I had created them early on to begin thinking about who might make up the customer base of Paws & Claws.



| Pet ID          | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Videos          | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ |
| Story           | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Vet Care Status | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ |
| Shelter Info    | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Favorite        | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ |

## Competitive Analysis

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <p>nowhere base about pet care, so that she can be a<br/>bit easier</p> <p>what type of dog or cat to get and may feel over-<br/>protective</p> <p>any knowledgeable about pet care, he/she may not<br/>find it in his/her ability to raise a one<br/>and the difference between rescuing and purchas-<br/>ing</p> <p>now where to start the pet search due to the amount of<br/>area</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• becomes adoption process</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring employee/colleagues/mentee pet ownership are</li> </ul> |
|---|--|---|

## Provisional Personas

## 03. Contextual Inquiry

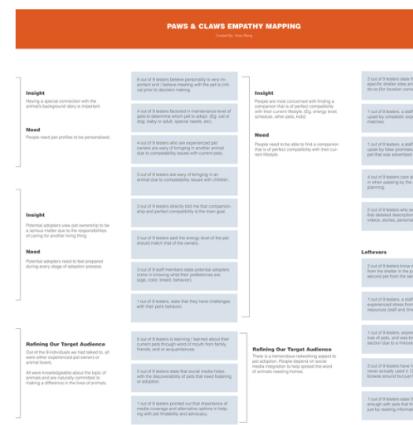
Driven by curiosity in learning more about my users, the development of my interview plan was built upon a foundation of working assumptions and unknowns. Using my secondary research, unknowns, and assumptions, I developed an interview guide to structure my contextual interviews. To understand the procedures for pet adoption, the services and programs offered, and the channels and roadblocks for adopting pets, I visited my local rescue shelter. There I struck up conversation with 9 individuals (employees and potential adopters) who fell within the aforementioned archetypes and analyzed their attitude towards pet adoption.

## 04. Empathy Mapping & Persona

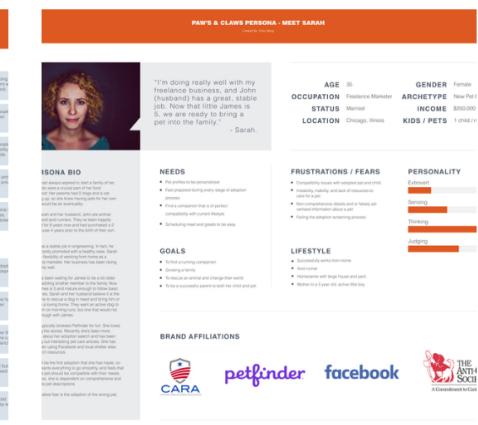
From the contextual inquiry, research data was mapped out and analyzed to identify patterns, similarities, and contrasts. By doing so, we uncover insights from my observations and move towards identifying implicit user needs. Based on the opinions and views shared by participants, a primary user persona (Sarah) was created to encompass all common ideologies between users.



## Empathy Mapping



Trends, Insights, and Needs



## Persona Development

# Defining And Ideation

## 01. POV Statements / HMW Questions

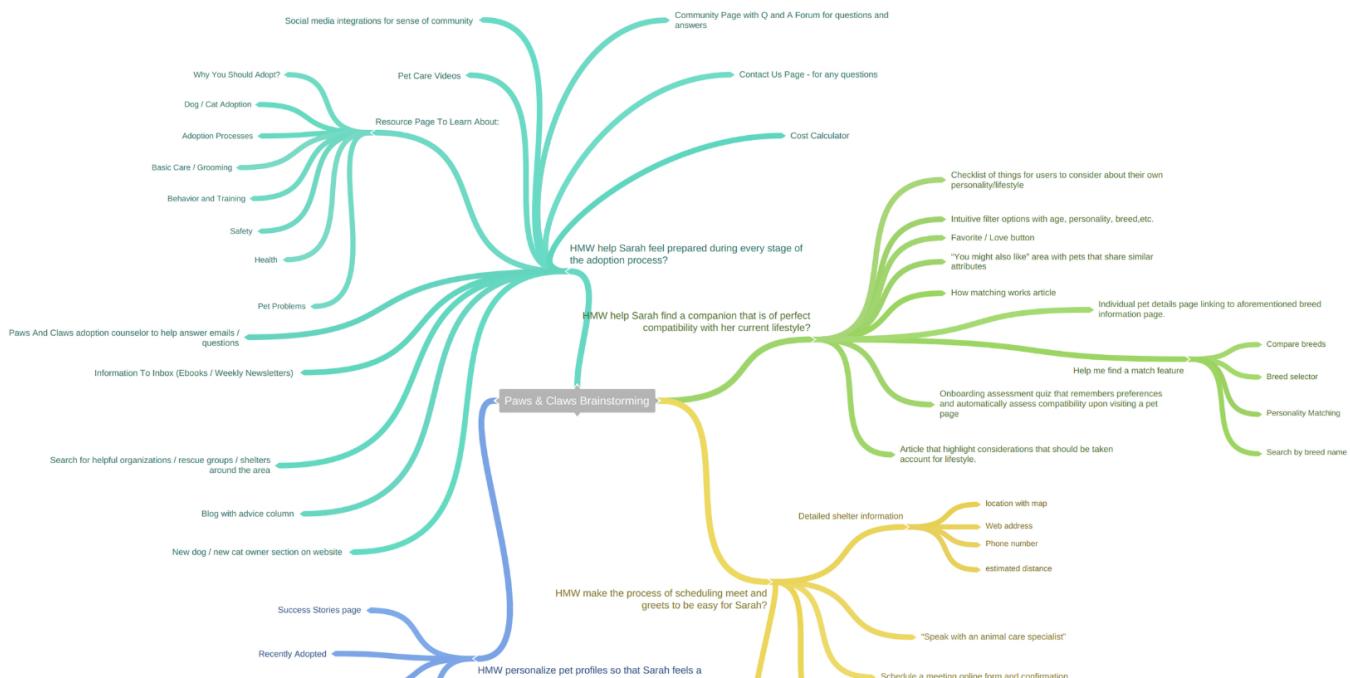
With my primary persona established, I moved onto translating the insights and needs of Sarah into defined "Point of View" statements. Afterwards, I crafted a set of "How Might We" questions to help ideate the best possible solution for each design challenge.

| Insights   | Needs   | POV Statements   | HMW Questions  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Having a special connection with the animal's background story is important.   | People need pet profiles to be personalized.  | Sarah needs pet profiles to be personalized because having a special connection with the animal's backstory is important to her.   | HMW personalize pet profiles so that Sarah feels a connection with the animal's backstory?   |
| Potential adopters view pet ownership to be a serious matter due to the responsibilities of caring for another living thing.                                     | Potential adopters need to feel prepared during every stage of the adoption process.                      | Sarah needs to feel prepared during every stage of the adoption process because she views pet ownership to be a serious matter due to the responsibilities of caring for another living thing. | HMW help Sarah feel prepared during every stage of the adoption process?                     |
| People are most concerned with finding a companion that is of perfect compatibility with their current lifestyle. (Eg. energy level, schedule, other pets, kids) | People need to be able to find a companion that is of perfect compatibility with their current lifestyle. | Sarah needs to be able to find a companion that is of perfect compatibility with her current lifestyle because she fears adopting the wrong companion.   | HMW help Sarah find a companion that is of perfect compatibility with her current lifestyle? |
| Meeting the pet to confirm information accuracy is important.  | People need the process of scheduling meet and greets to be easy.   | Sarah needs the process of scheduling meet and greets to be easy because meeting the pet to confirm information accuracy is important to her.  | HMW make the process of scheduling meet and greets to be easy for Sarah?                     |

### POV Statement and HMW Questions

## 02. Brainstorming

I then posted my HMW questions onto a whiteboard and generated as many ideas as possible, which I planned to review, sort, and refine during later stages. Where ever possible, I grouped my ideas by theme and relationship: Organizing ideas in this way helped me to expand on some of the ideas further.



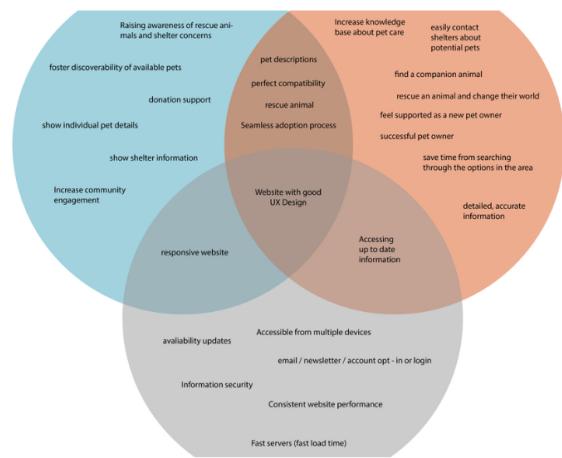


Brainstorming

# Product Strategy

## 01. Business and User Goals & Feature Roadmap

To help define minimal viable product features, I mapped the overlaps of business goals, user goals, and technical considerations. After a thorough cross examination of my brainstormed ideas with the business user goal map, I created a **product roadmap**, with features presented in order of priority in terms of development and investment. I also included metrics so that the impact and effectiveness of the features can be analyzed during testing phases.



Business / User Goal Mapping

| Metrics                                       | Adoption Process Page   | Social Media Image Gallery   | Love / favorite button and list  |
|---|---|--|--|
| Track number of clicks for guest inquiry form | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Intuitive Sort</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Includes: Recently Added, Available Longest, Nearest</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b>Pet Info Page</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Includes: Name, Picture / Video, Pet ID, Story, Availability Status, Vet Care Status, Confirmation of checked filters, Link to Shelter Info, Guest Inquiry Form</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b>Why Adopt? Page</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stat info about rescue animals</li> <li>- Before after gallery</li> <li>- Success stories</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b>Shelter Info Page</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Includes: Contact info with email and phone, Link to shelter's personal site, Location, About / Mission, Adoption Process Info</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Safety</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health</li> <li>- Problems</li> <li>- Videos / Articles / E-book manual</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b>Adoption Process Page</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost calculator</li> <li>- What to expect video / reads</li> <li>- "Help Me Match"</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b>Blog</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tip and tricks</li> <li>- Dog and Cat related articles</li> <li>- Paws n' Claws highlights</li> </ul> </li> <li>- <b>Mailing List</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Email form</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share option with social media network</li> </ul> |
| Track video and article clicks, views         |   |  |  |
| Track number of questions posted              |   |  |  |
| Track clicks on call number and email         |   |  |  |

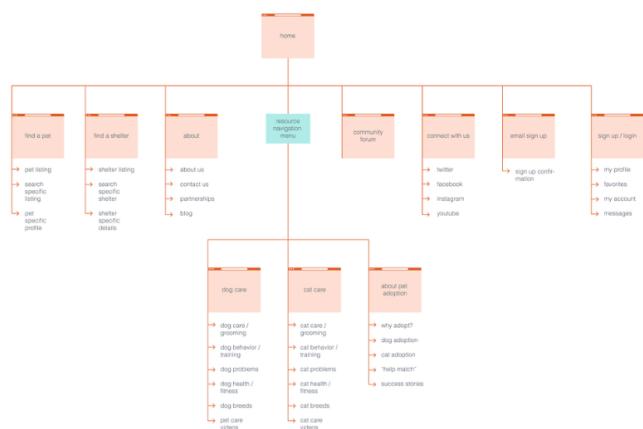
Feature Roadmap

# Information Architecture

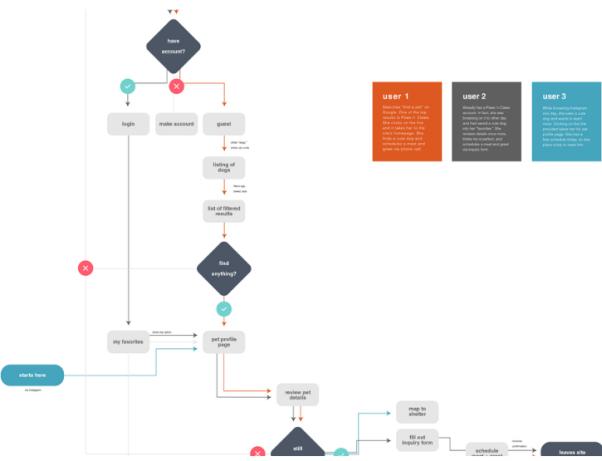
## 01. Site Mapping & User Flow

Using the features furnished in my Product Feature Roadmap, a sitemap was created showing the content architecture proposed for Paws & Claws. With the site map in place, I created a user flow based on some simple use cases for Sarah. Doing so ensures that the organization of pages flow in a logical and smooth manner. The diagram below outlines 2 primary tasks Sarah may use during site navigation: 1. Searching, filtering, and reviewing

or pet information, and 2. Contacting the shelter by filling out an inquiry form.



Site Map

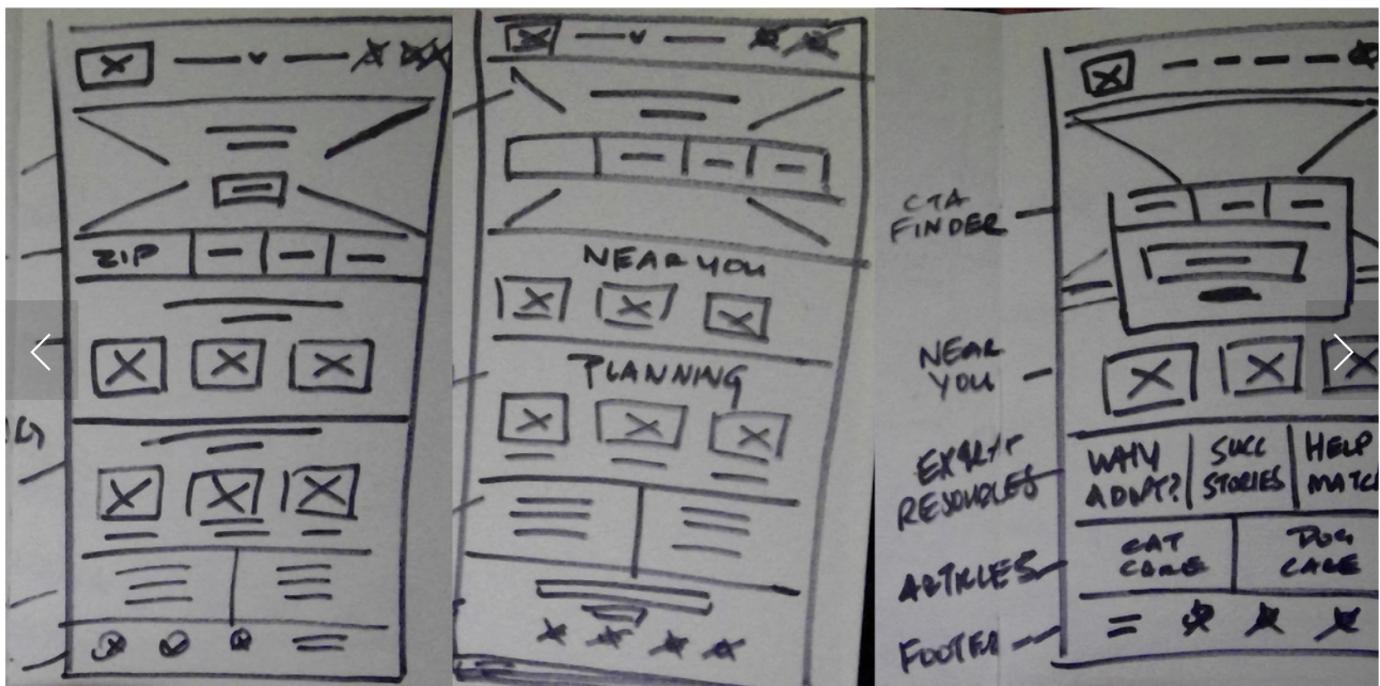


User Flow

# Interaction Design

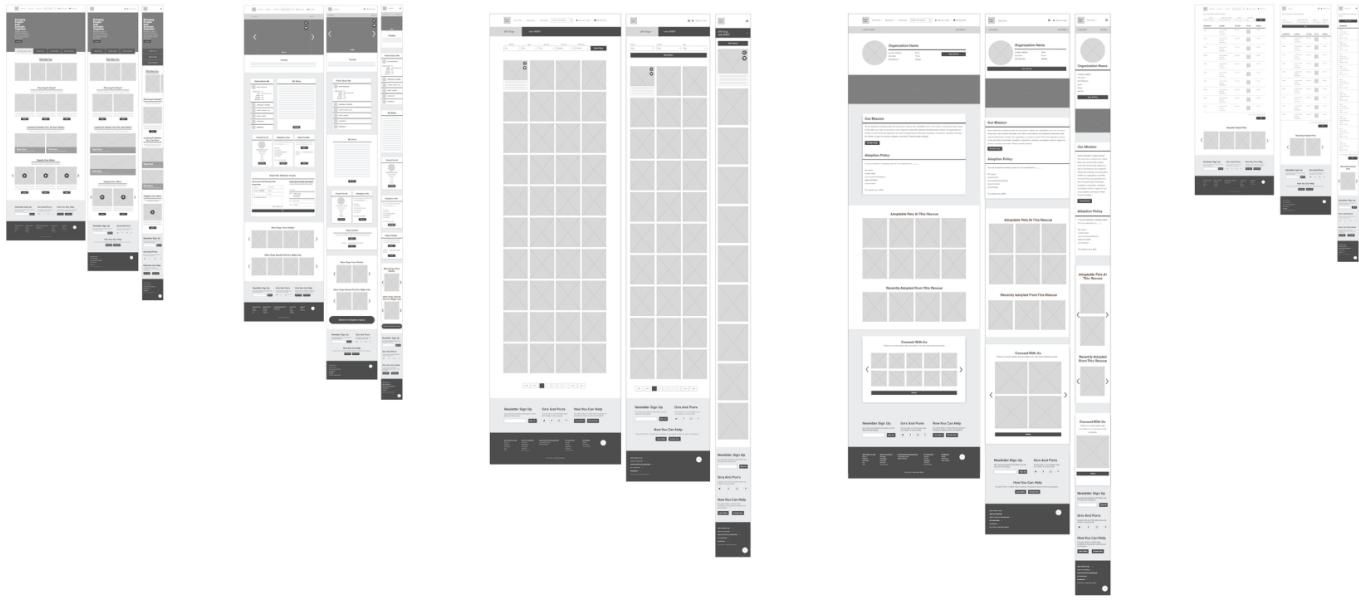
## 01. Sketching

Before moving to digital wire-frames, initial sketches were made to build variations on the homepage design.



## 02. Mid Fidelity Wire-framing

Subsequently mid-fidelity responsive frames (corresponding to the user flows I originally mapped out) were created. These mid-fidelity frames were developed with the goal of quickly translating them into a prototype so that I could begin testing my design early in the process.



## Prototyping

An interactive mid-fidelity prototype of Paws & Claw's desktop website was created using Invision. The prototype functionality is limited to four major task flows.

- **Task 1:** Search the site and filter for a Labrador Retriever, Male, Large, Adult that is good with children, cats, and dogs
- **Task 2:** Switch your residential zip code (60613) to your workplace's (60645), and search for a compatible dog with the same filter criteria as before.
- **Task 3:** Search the pet profile page for the following information: multiple pictures, pet's story, appearance, energy, health, compatibility, and personality information. Afterwards, send an adoption inquiry and schedule a meet and greet.
- **Task 4:** Search for Alive Rescue Shelter and navigate to Alive Rescue's info page to view all their pets. Narrow your results from all pets to just dogs.

Below is a quick walk through of this mid-fidelity prototype. If you'd like to personally interact with it, [click here](#).



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# Usability Testing & Validation

## 01. Usability Testing

To determine the level of efficiency of design and usability within the user interface of the interactive prototype, moderated usability testing was conducted. Due to time constraints, I recruited 3-5 willing participants. The test was designed to:

- Identify features that were successfully implemented in helping users accomplish tasks and uncover features that were missing / breaks user expectations / could be improved upon.
  - Obtain feedback from users in regards to any obstacles, pain points, or frustrations during site interaction.
  - Identify successes and room for improvements in the navigation, information architecture, flow, and design of the site.
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## 02. Affinity Charts

An affinity map was created based on errors and issues observed during usability testing. I segregated data into 3 groups of findings: successes, challenges, and observations to distill insights. From there, I translated my insights into a recommended course of action to address our user's issues.

| User Research Findings Summary   |  |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| Successes  |  | Challenges   |  | Observations  |   |
| High Priority  |  |  | Low Priority   |   |   |
| No issues with viewing pet details, and pet factual information.   | No issues with viewing pet details, and pet factual information.   | Recommended adding a button to the search bar to display all pets in a specific color with favorite.   | 1 out of 3 testers believed it would be easier if the "facts about me" dropdown had a "show all" option.   | Used the CTA search bar on the top of the page. Underneath the hero image rather than navigation bar to begin pet finding process.        | 3 out of 3 testers did not have issues with the layout and hierarchy of pet information on the profile page.  |
| No issues with viewing pet details, and factual information.   | No issues / difficulty finding pictures in the hero image, strict, or simple filters. Found it "very easy and simple".                                       | Was unable to find the organization shelter section on the dropdown menu for the first 3 minutes.  | After giving up and down the page for 4-5 minutes, the tester found the organization section and clicked on it.  | Used the CTA search bar for navigating. In fact, he never used the navigation menu bar.   | 100% completion rate. 3 of 3 testers were able to switch zipcodes with relative ease. While 1 tester was initially confused, no major issues arose. |
| No issues at all when changing out the zipcode.  |  | Had difficulty finding the shelter that housed Francis.  | I expect the very last item to be the one I click on first, so those are things I go for first.  | Searched for dog via CTA search bar name than navigation menu bar.  | 3 of 3 testers filtered for a compatible pet with no errors 100% of the time.   |
| After glancing at the filter area, he immediately attempted to complete the task. Overall no major issues.   |  | I was thinking it should be towards the top. (Referring to the shelter section on this pet profile page about shelter.)  | Clicked there because I expected this section to be the most important on the actual page.   | Used the CTA search bar on the top of the page. Underneath the hero image rather than navigation bar to begin pet finding process.        | 3 of 3 testers located the adoption inquiry form. Filled it in, and received confirmation with ease 100% of the time.                               |
| No issues with changing the zip from 60613 to 60645. Didn't find the button readily.   | Initially confused (for just a few seconds) about how to use the top code from 60613 to 60645.   | Couldn't find the organization page at all and finally asked for assistance.   | Said the "organization" page was too small for him to have noticed because he was skimming.  | Used the CTA search bar for navigating. In fact, he never used the navigation menu bar.   | While 1 tester had some initial trouble, 3 of 3 testers were able to locate the "view all pets" button on the shelter page with relative ease.      |
| 100% completion rate. 3 of 3 testers were able to switch zipcodes with relative ease. While 1 tester was initially confused, no major issues arose.                            |  | 3 out of 3 testers had trouble finding the shelter section on the pet specific page. 2 stated it should be placed higher. 1 said it was too small.   | Scrolled all the way down to "More Dogs From Shelter" to attempt to find the specific shelter page.  | Scrolled all the way down the page for 4-5 minutes, the tester found the organization section and clicked on it.                          | 3 out of 3 testers used the CTA search area to begin finding a pet. None used the search dropdown from the navigation area.                         |
| No issues with filtering and sorting of results based on the pet. Found the "filter" step was necessary to make it functional.   | No issues with filtering and sorting of results based on the pet. Found the "filter" step was necessary to make it functional.                               | When asked to narrow results to "more dogs" she had to click "filter" step, then click on "More Dogs" button.  | He took 1 minute of interacting with the dropdown, then clicked "filter" instead of the dropdown. Under the "filter" button.                           | Had clicked on the "filter" button instead of the "facts about me" dropdown. Clicked on the "more filter" button instead of the dropdown. | 3 out of 3 testers had scrolled to the "More Dogs From Shelter" carousel to find the shelter page versus clicking on the shelter section.           |
| 3 of 3 testers filtered for a compatible pet with no errors 100% of the time.  |  | "Now that I think about it, it makes more sense to be in the dropdown, click on it, then scroll down. It was kind of weird."   | Said it would be easier to click on the "filter" button instead of the dropdown. Under the "filter" button.  | Had clicked on the "filter" button instead of the "facts about me" dropdown. Clicked on the "more filter" button instead of the dropdown. | 3 out of 3 testers had scrolled to the "More Dogs From Shelter" carousel to find the shelter page versus clicking on the shelter section.           |
| No issues with adoption inquiry submission.  | Did perfectly fine with submitting an adoption inquiry. No frustration or difficulty at all.   | User realized that it was missing the "filter" step, she finally used the dropdown from the filter strip.  | User's mistake. For saw the pet dropdown and was able to complete the task successfully.   | Used the CTA search bar for navigating. In fact, he never used the navigation menu bar.   | 1 out of 3 testers had used the navigation dropdown search as a last resort after having trouble finding the pet shelter.                           |
| 3 of 3 testers located the adoption inquiry form. Filled it in, and received confirmation with ease 100% of the time.  |  | While all were able to complete the task. 3 of 3 testers had issues narrowing down "all pets" to just "dogs" from the filter strip. All had clicked on "more filters" / "sort by" instead of the dropdown. | Eventually clicked on "find a pet" ap button in the search bar to search for the shelter.  | Scrolled all the way down the page for 4-5 minutes, the tester found the organization section and clicked on it.                          | 3 out of 3 testers had used the navigation dropdown search as a last resort after having trouble finding the pet shelter.                           |
| No issues viewing all pets.  | No issues viewing all pets.  | Scrolled back up to the top of the page to the "ALIVE Rescue Dogs" page.   | Expecting a list of the pets, she was underneath the dropdown and not the search bar. She tried to have it stand out from the rest.                    | Used the search "Pet Article Area" for the search bar. Says he is always dependent on the search bar to find the information.             | 2 out of 3 testers had used the navigation dropdown search as a last resort after having trouble finding the pet shelter.                           |
|  |  | expecting a list of the pets, she was underneath the dropdown and not the search bar. She tried to have it stand out from the rest.  | Shelters under the dropdown, and not the search bar. Using shelters under the dropdown. (Referring to the dropdowns).                                  | Used the search "Pet Article Area" for the search bar. Says he is always dependent on the search bar to find the information.             | 1 out of 3 testers had used the search bar and "pet search" button to find information that they were unable to locate on the first try.            |
|  |  | 1 out of 3 testers stated that the placement of information (particular shelter) on the search bar and dropdown confused him.  | Went back to "Pet Search" button and used the search bar to track to find the information.   | Used the CTA search bar on the top of the page. Underneath the hero image rather than navigation bar to begin pet finding process.        | 1 out of 3 testers had used the search bar and "pet search" button to find information that they were unable to locate on the first try.            |
| While 1 tester had some initial trouble, 3 of 3 testers were able to locate the "view all pets" button on the shelter page with relative ease.                                 |  |  |  |   |   |
| High Priority  |  |  | Low Priority   |   |   |
| Insights   |  |  | Suggestions  |   |   |
| No tester Section. While layout and hierarchy throughout the site and process proved fairly successful, improvements in the shelter section size and placement should be made. | NAV: Users typically / primarily will use the CTA search bar to begin finding a pet. Navigation search is reserved for when users are unable to locate info. | Search Bar(s): Remove "shelter" from the search bar and split the search for dogs and cats. Place "find a shelter" as a single entry in the navigation.  |  |   |   |
| High Priority  |  |  | Do away with the "pet article search" and/or remove the "pet" from the search bar. Make the search for 3 options - shelters, pets, and articles.       |   |   |
|  |  |  | Do away with "find a pet" search in the homepage navigation. This is no longer needed knowing that users will primarily use the search bar on the CTA. |   |   |
|  |  |  | Pet Type Filter: Allow users to narrow pet type into dogs or cats using "more filter" button.  |   |   |
|  |  |  | Remove "shelter" from the pet type filter dropdown.  |   |   |
|  |  |  | Pet Type Section: Place shelter section higher up on the pet profile page and enlarge it for easier visibility.  |   |   |
|  |  |  | Link last box on "More Adoptable Pets At This Shelter" carousel to full listing of shelter's pets.   |   |   |
|  |  |  | Zipcode Change Button: Meddle around with the size / copy of the button / interactive state of so that it is more noticeable to users.                 |   |   |
|  |  |  | "View All Pets" Button: Enlarge the button so that it is more noticeable on the page.  |   |   |
|  |  |  |  |   |   |

# User Interface Design

## 01. Mood Board

The prototype was further updated to accommodate the affinity map recommendations. During this iterative stage, I also developed the site's visual design, first creating a mood board to draw inspiration for my color palette, imagery, logo, branding, type-faces, and icons.

Although pet adoption is a rather serious and heart-wrenching topic, I wanted users to be greeted with an air of positivism and professionalism. Users should feel warm and optimistic about the opportunity to add a new member to their family, and the site should be reflective of that.

Given the over-population of blacks, browns, grays, and whites from pet coats, I ended up going for a mid-century theme with blue and orange accent colors to add a pop of vibrancy from the rather neutral focus colors.

### PAWS & CLAWS MOOD BOARD

Created By: Vicki Weng

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**BRAND ATTRIBUTES**

- Bold & Vibrant But Not Childish
- Optimistic & Welcoming
- Friendly & Caring
- Professional & Trustworthy
- Clean & Minimal

**LOGO INSPIRATION**

Logos / branding that meet some / all aforementioned attributes.

Used for early inspiration for logo and brand development



**COLORS**

Should counter-balance the neutral coat colors (black, brown, white) and patterns of pets.

Should be vibrant so can also be used to draw attention to certain design elements (Eg. CTA Buttons)

#45A5BD
#DE5920
#E9EBED
#FFF4F5

Opted for Mid-Century Color Palette:  
Vibrant, but earthy orange, perfect for accenting browns and blacks of pet coat color.  
Blue pairs nicely with lighter, minimal background.

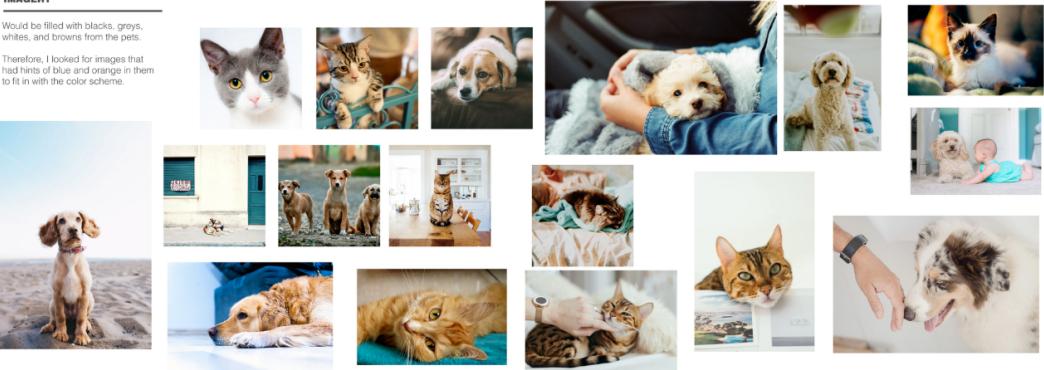




**IMAGERY**

Would be filled with blacks, greys, whites, and browns from the pets.

Therefore, I looked for images that had hints of blue and orange in them to fit in with the color scheme.



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## 02. Logo Design

My logo is a graphical representation of the name itself: I wanted the logo to be representative of the site's mission, and believed the best direction would be to incorporate imagery of a dog and cat. I went for a silhouette with a play on positive and negative space to conserve real estate on the site's navigation area.



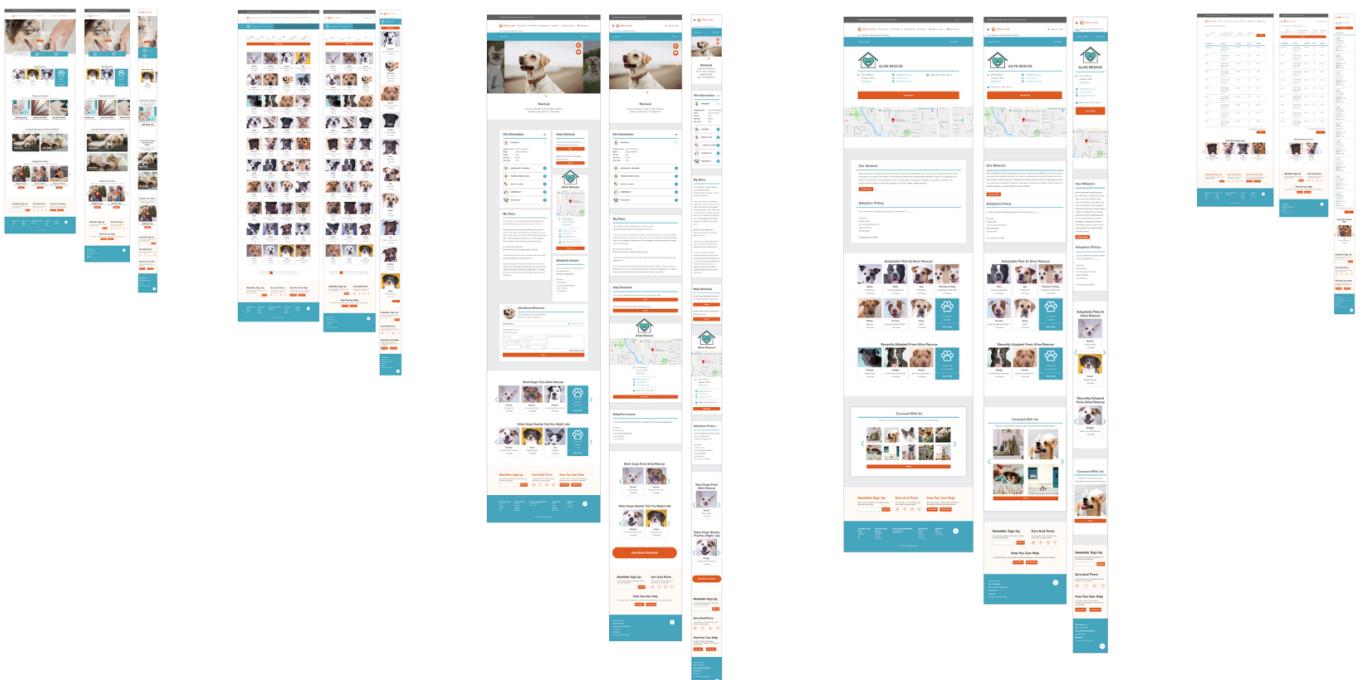
Final Logo Design. Influenced by the following central characteristics: bold and vibrant (but not childish), optimistic and welcoming, friendly and caring, professional and trustworthy, clean and minimal

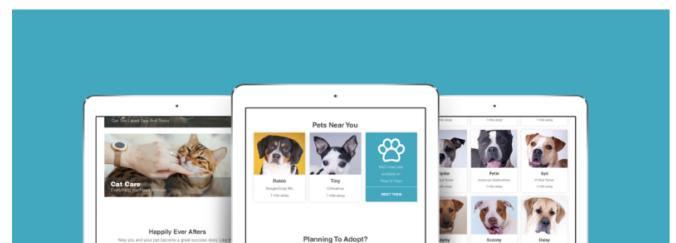
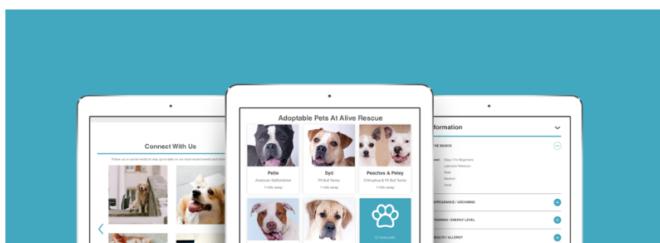
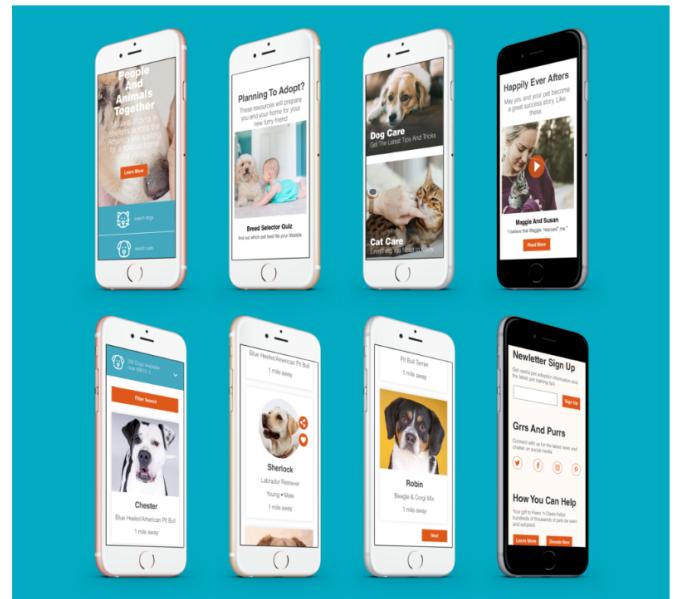
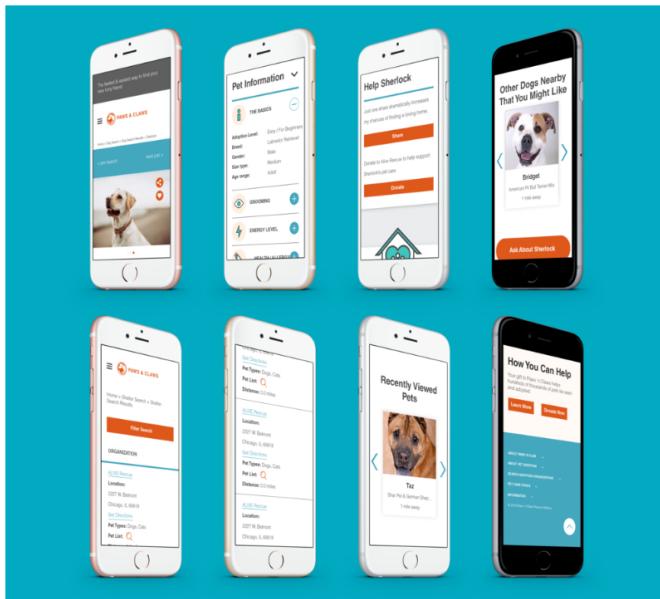
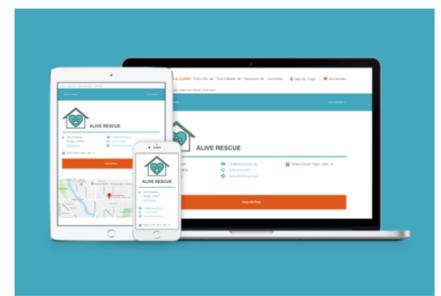
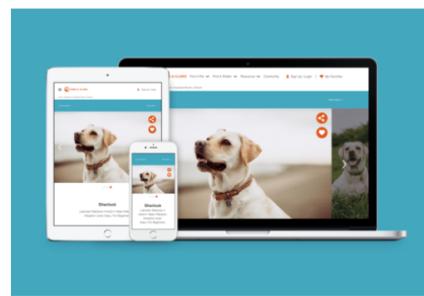
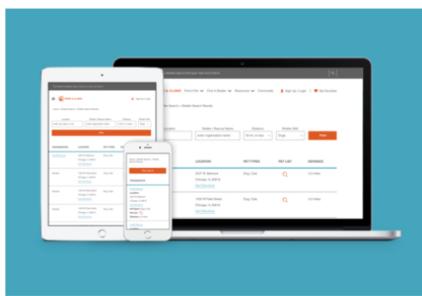
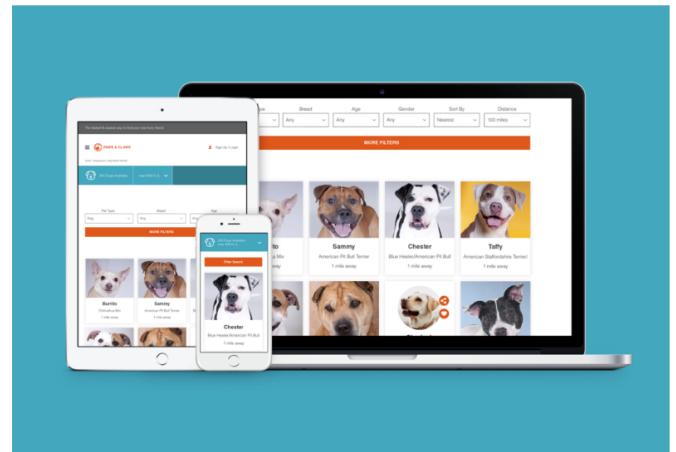
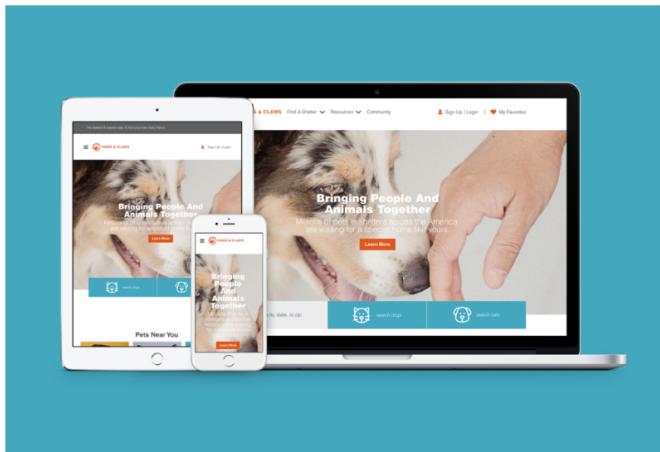
## 03. Style Tile & UI Kit

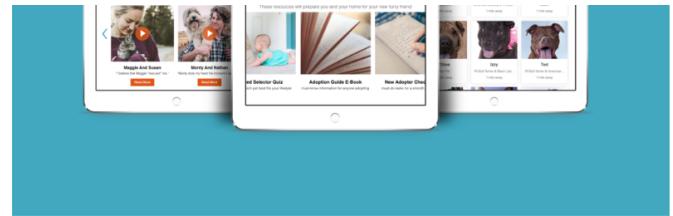
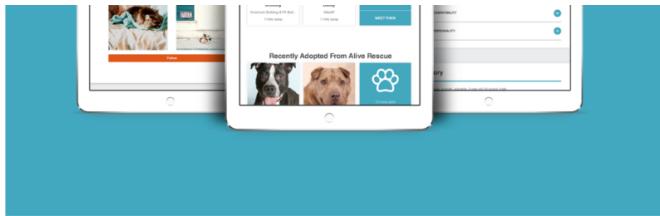
I then created a style tile by compiling the elements from my mood-board, logo, and additional visual elements. This served as a guide for when I applied the visual design to my final high-fidelity wire-frames. I had also created a UI Kit to serve as a reference for anyone working on the site. Should any additional iterations / add ons / changes need to be made in the future, having this guide will ensure consistency of styles and elements across all screens.

## Final High Fidelity Frames

With the affinity map recommendations and visual design now set in place, I developed a revised set of high-fidelity responsive wire-frames for a second round of prototyping, as this would offer us another opportunity for user testing before site implementation.







## Takeaways & Next Steps

The overall findings were quite successful given the time constraints on this project. Now that we have corrected for round 1 issues, during next stages, I would like to move forward with implementation of priority 2 (educational resource screens) and priority 3 (community / social) features. I'm most excited for the design and development of a community forum, as the organization of content and information architecture would likely be a fun challenge.

All / Google Aria / Capital One / **Paws & Claws** / Mirror



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