

# FIELD NOTES

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**Introduction:**

The organization we visited is downtown Toronto Animal hospital. This organization offers a variety of animal veterinary services as well as monitored pet boarding.[1]. According to the Canadian Pet Market Outlook in 2014, 57 percent of Canadian Households own pets [2], hence I believe there will be a lot of opportunities in animal health care. Based on my personal experience of owning two dogs for years, I am particularly interested in the area that is related to animals. Personal interest in animals allows me to gain a better understanding in this field. We choose downtown Toronto animal hospital due to its vicinity to university, which allows us to interact with stakeholders more frequently and more conveniently.

**Summary:**

The hospital is two stories high. The front desk is located at main floor which mostly deal with phone calls from customers. They also sell dogs/cats food, and animal accessories like toys and treats in the waiting area [3]. The pharmacy is behind the front desk where staffs organize and sort all the medications and put them on shelves. The top shelf is more than 2 meters high, which is hard to reach for people of average height. [4]

The hospital includes boarding facilities on the second floor that allows pet owners to leave their pets in the hospital while they are away. Dogs and cats are separated into two different rooms. It can supports maximum of 8 small breed dogs, three large breed dogs, and about 10 cats. Each pet has it's own crate that has one clipboard hanging in front of it.[4]. It include all the relevant information about the pets, including breed, age, feeding schedule, allergies, and contact info on several pieces papers. Those papers are of different sizes, and they are not in order. The odor is pretty strong on the second floor, and dogs were barking really loud.

There are two surgery rooms on the second floor as well. One is used for ordinary procedures like giving a shot, nails trimming, grooming. And another one is for major surgery that involves more complicated procedures. It has a x-ray machine and all the other surgery apparatus. [7]

**Evaluation:**

One thing I learned from personal interaction with stakeholders is detailed procedures of how they operate the hospital on a daily basis, and some of the most common cases they are dealing every day. Those kind of information can not be found on their website. Walking around in the hospital in person allows me to pick up some other information that cant be obtained from plain text.[9]

I have learned from the veterinarian assistant in the animal hospital, Greg, that the most common illness they see in pets are vomiting and diarrhea. Those are usually caused by ingesting wrong food. And one of the biggest difficulties they encounter during daily work is the strong odor from animals and the constant noise. The excessive barking is common in hospital because pets get scared when they are away from their familiar environment and away from their owners. This can be confirmed by articles online [8]. The best way to distress the pets is using the pheromone spray[11] or forcing them to wear thunder shirt.[6]

Another difficulty for staff is that different pets have different feeding schedules and diet requirements, which makes it very hard for them to follow and keep track of.

One opportunity that I believe is worth pursuing is to redesign the crates to provide solutions to multiple issues at the same time.

I can design a crates that can store a large amount of food but only give certain amount food to pet at a certain time, and the user can set the quantity and time using the tablet integrated in this design. This relieve the staffs from the redundant feeding procedures. Additionally, I would like to include the nozzle inside of the crate that can spray the pheromone to reduce the anxiety of pets. Including a digital system allows the staff to store information about pets electronically, without worrying about loosing the only paper copy.

From the observation, the hospital has a relatively small capacity for big breed dogs. Greg explained to us that there are more small breeds dogs in downtown area, so they have more spots available for small breed dogs. So the crate would be designed for small breed dogs.

**Next step:**

Next step is to prove the legitimacy of this opportunity by doing substantiate amount of research to back up the technology. First of all, I need to find out if there is any existing solution that can address the proposed problems, and if there is any solution I can find out if I can improve that design to make the existing solution better. I would do a lot of research to find out the potential side effect of pheromone, or any alternative option available to reduce anxiety, and the feasibility of the auto feeding mechanism. I would keep in touch with the animal hospital to see if they are interested in my idea, and I would email more hospital to see if this design can be applied to broader areas.

## REFERENCE

[1]Downtown Animal hospital – Tronto Veterinarians

<http://www.downtownanimalhospital.ca/site/hospital-services/>

### Vet Services

Downtown Animal Hospital offers a full compliment of animal care services that cater to your pet's special needs. We know our client's appreciate good value in quality veterinary care, so we offer specialty services and extended weekday hours to help serve you better.

#### Preventative Health Care

Preventive veterinary medicine can discover problems before they become critical, saving time, money and possibly even your pet's life.

- Examinations
- Vaccinations
- Dentistry
- Nutrition
- Veterinary Diets
- Parasite Control

#### Contemporary Diagnostics & Hospitalization

Identifying problems while they are still in the beginning stages is the best way to prolong your pet's life. At Downtown Animal Hospital we are proud to use the latest diagnostic techniques to rapidly diagnose and treat your pet.

- Annual Diagnostics
- Endoscopy
- Laboratory Services
- Outside Laboratory Services
- Cardiac Monitoring
- Radiology
- Ultrasound
- Hospitalization
- Spaying & Neutering
- Surgery
- Pocket Pet Health Care

[2] static of pets ownership.

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis14914](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis14914)

#### Introduction

Fifty-seven percent of Canadian Households own pets which equates to 7.5 million households. Cats are more popular pets than dogs. Thirty-seven percent of Canadian households owned one or more cats, 32% owned dogs. Overall Canada is home to roughly 5.9 million dogs and 7.9 million cats. Nine percent of Canadians owned other types of pets, including fish, birds, small mammals and herptiles.

[3]



[4]



[5]



[6]



[7]





[8]

### Why Dogs Bark

Barking is one type of vocal communication that dogs use, and it can mean different things depending on the situation. Here are some reasons why dogs bark:

**Territorial/Protective:** When a person or an animal comes into an area your dog considers his territory, that often triggers excessive barking. As the threat gets closer, the barking often gets louder. Your dog will look alert and even aggressive during this type of barking.

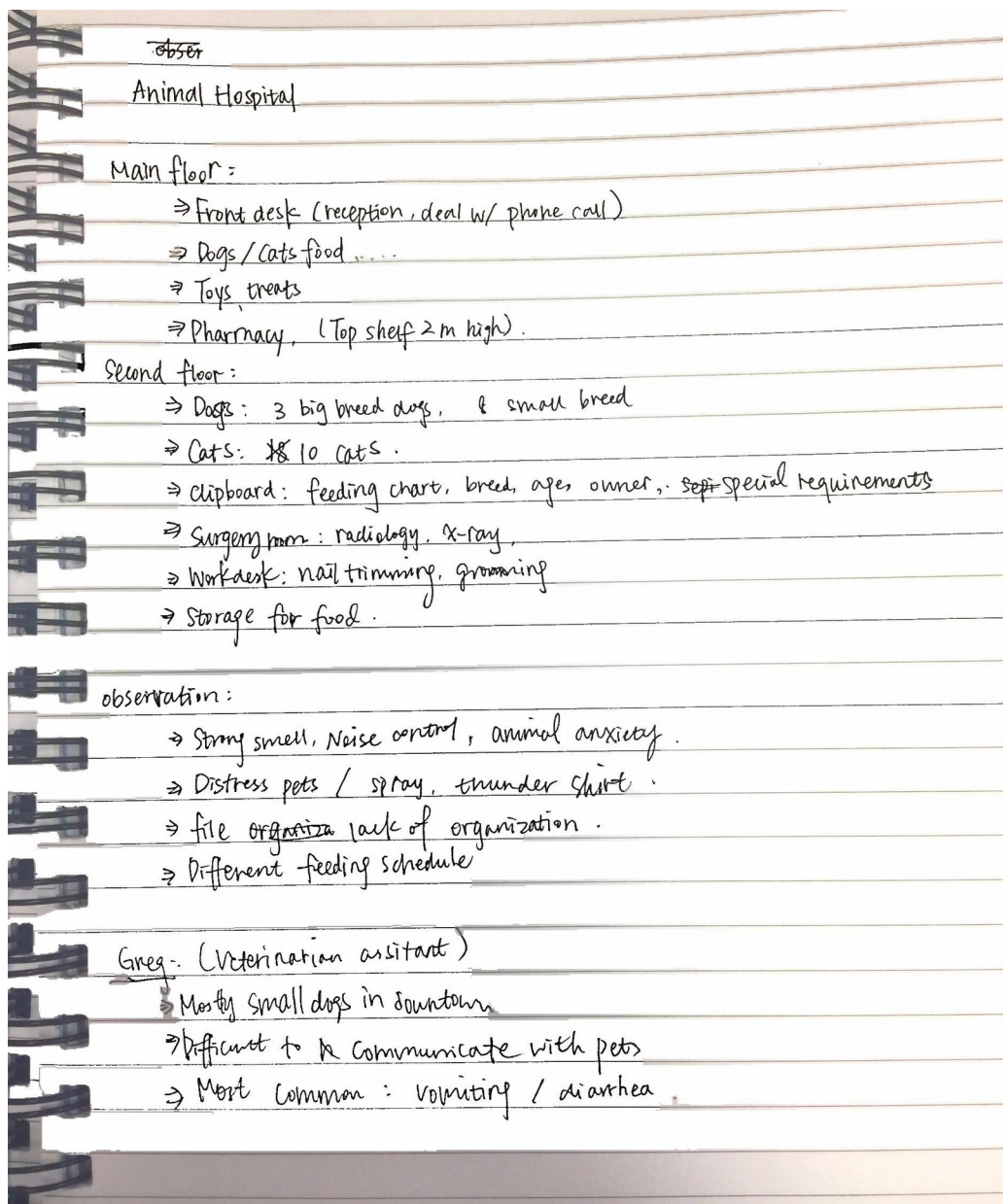
**Alarm/Fear:** Some dogs bark at any noise or object that catches their attention or startles them. This can happen anywhere, not just in their home territory.

**Boredom/Loneliness:** Dogs are pack animals. Dogs left alone for long periods, whether in the house or in the yard, can become bored or sad and often will bark because they are unhappy.

**Greeting/Play:** Dogs often bark when greeting people or other animals. It's usually a happy bark, accompanied with tail wags and sometimes jumping.

**Attention Seeking:** Dogs often bark when they want something, such as going outside, playing, or getting a treat.

[9]



[10]

## product highlights

ThunderShirt Dog Anxiety Shirt is designed to provide a calming effect when your dog experiences fear or general or separation anxiety. The shirt is fully adjustable for a snug, comfortable fit. The shirt delivers constant, gentle pressure to create a dramatic calming effect. With a success rate of more than 80%, the shirt is ideal for fear and anxiety relief from thunder, fireworks, separation anxiety and travel.

### Features:

- Great for Thunder, Fireworks, Separation Anxiety, Car & Air Travel, Barking & Licking
- Most Effective Anxiety Solution as voted by vets
- Over 80% Success Rate
- Recommended by Veterinarians & Trainers

[11]

Pheromones are volatile chemical signals that are widely used for animal communication. When emitted by one individual, pheromones are then detected by other individuals from the same species, and affect their behaviour.

The message released targets other individuals but is also a reminder for the emitting animal.

Different body structures secrete pheromones (which are different from hormones), associated with different functions, such as social relationships, territorial marking pheromones, sexual pheromones, maternal appeasing pheromones or alarm pheromones.

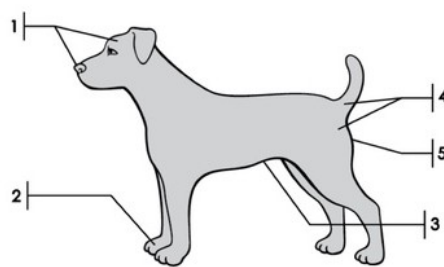


Diagram of dog pheromone producing areas.

1. Facial Area. 2. Foot Pads. 3. Mammary region. 4. Perianal area.  
5. Urogenital region