

Owner-pet blues softened with PetBot, dogs send selfies

September 3 2015, by Nancy Owano



If your dear companion is your dog, then you will be interested in learning more about how you can stay connected through something called PetBot, now on offer in an Indiegogo campaign.

Its designers cover all the bases here, for [pet owners](#) who leave their pets

alone and worry about them, to the pet's having separation anxiety, pet depression, and missing the owner.

PetBot lets your pet send you a selfie, allows for safety alerts and even trains and entertains your pet remotely. There is a treat dispenser, and users can record their own voice, to call the pet over. Once the pet comes over to the unit, the device can take a selfie and the owner can dispense a treat from a smartphone. Steven Loeb in *VatorNews* said, "It basically incentivizes animals to take [pictures](#) of themselves," said Loeb.

PetBot's team has an \$80,000 goal to make it happen. The Canada-based creators ask that people "help us make pet care smarter!" They want to ship PetBot next year

Users can access PetBot access either with an Android or iOS device. The system's treat dispenser provides for a controlled number of sweets, to avoid overfeeding. The device streams live video or records pet selfies.

Scheduled activities help the pet avoid separation anxiety and "pet depression." Geek.com mentioned some activities that can be scheduled, including dispensing treats, playing soothing music, and your own voice.

You can upload audio of your pet's favorite sounds.

PetBot's team refer to their system's built-in "petificial" intelligence. They do not treat the word too casually, but describe it as artificial intelligence focused on pet interaction and care. Utilizing visual and audio information, they said, it can learn and make decisions on when to notify pet owners and when to interact with pets.

The system can listen for pet sounds (they refer to "pet and bark recognition") and tell you if it determines an unusual situation. Another

useful function is a training mechanism; you can send commands and if the pet responds it gets a treat.

PetBot was born in 2013; the campaign page noted its cofounders have years of [pet](#) training along with experience in machine learning and AI. So far they have focused their testing on dogs, cats and some rabbits. "We are always open to trying PetBot with other types of [pets](#)."

A pledge of \$149 gets the white PetBot unit and a free download of their iOS & Android apps, with estimated delivery in May.

More information: [www.indiegogo.com/projects/pet ... et-monitoring#/story](http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/pet...et-monitoring#/story)

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