



WEBKINZ

**- ADOPTABLE PETS
FOR ONLINE
VIRTUAL REALITY**

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1

THE MYSTERIOUS WORLD OF VIRTUAL REALITY

The world of virtual reality consists of an online environment that never changes unless the users make the changes themselves. This can be completed through their virtual human-based avatars, websites, virtual pets or real toys with online environments, or any imaginary character of choice—with the human user at the wheel. Living in a make-believe world, these adopted virtual reality characters are computerized figures, interacting with each other and with their human user outside of the computer, viewed as a 2-D graphical representation.

Located inside a computer-simulated world of virtual reality, they are viewed as fantasy make-believe characters depicted as living in the real world, adopted by their human user to interact between both worlds. All things considered, the virtual reality environment is a visual experience that is displayed on the computer screen alone, with imagination and data filling in its inner perimeters, using outside world actual figures or plush toys to enhance the experience.

THE HEART AND SOUL OF VIRTUAL REALITY

Within the frantic pace of today's world, virtual reality is one of the few places where an average person has control over their entire life—virtually—in all areas. For those who are just beginning to explore the virtual world, online classes are available to help newcomers become the person of their dreams and achieve that perfect world they have chosen to participate in. Part of this world is an environment of virtual reality pets, allowing the users to have the pet of their desires that they normally could not. Many reasons influence a person not being able to have live pets in their life--finances, work schedules, allergies, pets not allowed, or not enough room where they live.

Available are daily updates from available online public events in a fantasy environment that the user has chosen. What is offered is a virtual traveler's guide for the newcomer, telling about the many aspects of their fantasy world, allowing the newcomer to explore it in many ways.

Many things can be made available in the virtual world of choice with newcomers going online to the get-togethers for many reasons-- finding games to play, meeting other virtual reality characters, checking out businesses to buy or begin, going to virtual parties, checking out stores to shop at, looking at houses to build or buy, grooming areas for virtual pets, beauty salons for their new character shape, shelters to take unwanted pets, places to earn money to purchase virtual reality pet toys, or online stores for the purchase of digital pet extras. There is no end to it and probably never will be in this new and exciting computer world.

HOW DOES VIRTUAL REALITY WORK?

Images formed within virtual reality can be extremely technical compared to the traditional PC computer game, or it can be as simple as pushing a button on a small hand-held device to feed a puppy. Considered simple and line-based with an average of 72 to 600 dots per inch, virtual reality images cannot compare to the high-tech virtual reality images being developed that consist of thousands of dots. These picture elements offer more dots per inch, with the image of a much higher quality.

This newly developed process of super realization gives virtual reality images, which can be manipulated by the user, designed in two ways-- opaque or see-through. The opaque image allows the user or viewer to see entire world of virtual reality, whereas the see-through images are projected or superimposed onto the outer world. The reality world engine of the entire process uses a process called "haptic enhancement", a process where the user can participate in the VR world utilizing a sense of touch, sound, and pressure. Extremely technical and complex, the price of such systems is so high that the only users are military and research applications at the current time.

ALTERNATIVE TYPES OF VIRTUAL REALITY

Not all aspects of virtual reality pertain to high tech games and make-believe worlds, but alternatively are being used for many different applications for the benefit of humanity—medicine, engineering, manufacturing, and training. But like virtual reality where adopted online pets become part of the family, augmented reality (AR) has come to the forefront for not only games but also other areas.

Considered to be an area which deals with both the real world and computer-generated data, AR uses graphics that are entirely computer-generated to

make a make-believe world believable. In other words, it includes virtual reality and the real-world to form an entirely new environment that is accepted by the user's mind.

For example, the field of medicine involves the virtual reality environment--in the areas of surgery, rehabilitation, or diagnostics--slowly enhancing invasive techniques, which eventually will replace open surgical procedures. Virtual reality can involve computer-generated 3-D modeling which can simulate the real-world. Engineering and scientific fields, to name just a few, are also using virtual reality as part of their new developing technology.

2

VIRTUAL REALITY COMPONENTS

COMPONENTS OF THE VIRTUAL REALITY WORLD

An interactive life of virtual reality consists of a wide variety of components for the purpose of altering and enjoying the nature of the online fantasy environment. Powerful computers provide interaction with video displays, gloves, sensors, and electronic headsets. Considered a phantom reality that is designed within the whim of the individual, users not only can see this world online but also can actively participate in it through sensors.

Available are complete bodysuits, which have the ability to immerse the user into their chosen world of virtual reality for those who wish to dive further into it. The field of virtual reality provides not only a new area of entertainment but can open up new areas into business, medicine, and industry on a minute-by-minute basis.

New software and hardware are involved in the development of advancing forms of virtual reality, whether it is with adoptable virtual reality pets or high applications of medicine and industry. Based on the same component as the average PC desktop computer, the many new areas of virtual reality require more of a higher level of "computing" power for the reality engine than does the average user's standard PC.

In many types of typical advanced virtual reality, the headsets are mounted on the user's head, using a small screen or alternatively a screen for each eye worn in a helmet or pair of glasses. This allows the individual to see an image from different directions and angles, moving their head to change the field of vision. A more complex unit, the HMD unit uses a cathode ray tube or liquid crystal display to reflect a particular image into the eyes of the user, allowing the person to not only experience the world of virtual reality but also to see the outside world simultaneously. The advantage is to allow the user to view the virtual world while operating a device in the outer world.

In comparison, the less complex LCD technology does not have as high of an image quality. The LCD monitor to each eye displays two different images.

These are processed by the brain, which in turn will merge the two images into a single 3D view. The advantage of the LCD is price, slimmer, and lighter, which make it, better suited to the average home consumer.

In addition to the rapidly advancing sensors, finger sensors, and joysticks, another tool for the user of virtual reality is the wearing of a VR glove, which allows the user to fully interact with the world of virtual reality. If the user picks up a puppy with the glove, in the virtual world the puppy will be picked up in another environment. If the hand with the glove pours water into a bowl in the outer world, in the VR world the VR puppy will be watered. This act is analyzed by the corresponding information through the fiber-optic cables of the gloves, projecting the hand movements into the VR environment. Tracking systems are magnetic which keeps track of the hand's location in relation to the VR world.

A much more simple method of virtual reality is small toys with a device inside of it which allows the user to input data—how many times the adopted VR pet was watered by adding each act to the device, or feeding them. If they are fed and watered but no data is submitted, it will show the animal is not cared for and will eventually "die". Other forms of VR toys are those which can be purchased in real physical form yet due to codes can be allowed to interact online in a virtual world.

VIRTUAL REALITY AND SECOND LIFE

With the popularity of a 3-d online world called second life, the avatars are called Residents, creating the world they want while inside the computer's software. Exploding since its origin in 2003, it is now a global phenomenon where anyone can use digital content to buy land, build a house, entertain, form any unique experience, and be the person they have always wanted to be in looks, personality and desires. What makes this unique is that each Resident retains their own individual intellectual rights of property in their new creation. This allows them to buy, sell or trade with other Residents who also live in Second Life.

With 13 million registered users, approximately 6.5 million are those who live in the alternative universe of Second Life, the founder and former chief executive feels that the popularity of Second Life is attributed to laptops and their instant popularity. But with the latest in improvements for computers, it is felt there should be a huge success in its popularity causing it to grow even more.

SECOND LIFE MARKETPLACE

Money is a beneficial situation to all involved, with the Second Life Marketplace supporting millions of financial transactions in the US dollars alone, through the in-world unit of trade—or the Linden™ dollar of Second Life—with the online dollar being converted to US dollars at online Linden exchanges. Second Life has taken hold of global societies with 13,262,274 total Residents online in the past 60 days, and total spending amount in March 2008: 119,205 users of over 1-500 L\$, Resident transactions 5,460,569 of 1L\$ with sources totaling 14,958,745 in sinks and 383,19,599 in sources.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADOPTABLE VIRTUAL REALITY PET

Virtual reality has set the world on fire, with increasing popularity in many fields—games, toys, software, environmental worlds, alternative lives, digital pets—with even more advancing popularity as technology increases in quality and a wide-range of choices. The pets can be personalized by their users in many ways, mainly through interactions with their users, which in turn allows them to feel closer with stronger feelings for responsibilities for the pet. If this responsibility is left unattended, the virtual reality pet will "pass away".

When virtual reality first began in games, the worlds of online gaming or multi-players were not part of the big picture. The world of virtual reality was not accepted by most, as its beginning steps of technology was in the infancy stages. What helped it was the Sega and Nintendo games, and Nintendo's Virtual boy. Unfortunately, the public was not quite ready for such overwhelming "new" technology and it went under for about ten years or so.

Today, technology has advanced to extremely high levels with the cheaper and smaller LCD screens and beautiful solid 3D graphics, which provide a way for the public to understand and respond more appropriately. Games such as GameCube, PC, and Xbox began to such show extreme popularity.

3

VIRTUAL PET HISTORY

The history of the virtual reality pet began in 1996 with a short run of handheld digital pet devices called the Tamagotchi. Requiring 2 x LR44 batteries, this became the historical basis of virtual reality in games, pets, and toys. With sales quickly becoming phenomenal in the toy's success, the tiny key chain LCD video game was made to promote care and responsibility for the user—feeding, scolding, cleaning up, playing, giving medication, and many other things.

THE TAMAGOTCHI, OR THE ORIGINAL VIRTUAL REALITY PET

Originating in Japan, the small egg-shaped Tamagotchi device has sold way over twenty million units since, with its first 10 million sold within the first year-and-a-half. The newer Tamagotchi devices were begun with the Japanese toymaker Bandai Company created by Aki Maita, which is a unit of the Namco Bandai Holdings, Incorporated. The latest technology has brought about huge sales, as compared to the ill-prepared traditional Japanese company's rough start with only 1,000 employees—which was developed by a Japanese executive who had a tremendous love for pets.

Sales hit so rapidly in those early days among young women and the high school girls, that theft was a major concern, preventing the Bandai employees from carrying bags into and out of work. Not being able to meet the demand, by the time the Japanese company caught up with the orders the boom was over, forcing them to restructure and take a financial loss.

Reviving the earlier Tamagotchi versions, Bandai is hoping the advanced new steps of cautious marketing and more interesting characters will offer them their second chance for the little adopted virtual reality pet. These newer devices still have the same designs and cost approximately \$25 or under. They are designed with communication abilities so they can meet and interact with each other, allowing the virtual reality pets to play games with each their users through an infrared sensor. They also can grow with adequate care, evolving into another character based on that level of care.

Able to grow into adults that can hold down some form of employment and raise a family of twins so the two owners have a child, the Tamagotchi adult

parents will go online through their personal computer to visit Planet Tamagotchi—with 999 generations able to be raised if the care is adequate. But if the user raises their pet Tamagotchi, it will grow up to be a snake or even a thief. Not only are key chains a popular product, but plush toys and decals are offered with two new games are coming by the summer of 2008.

GAME BOY

A game by Nintendo that sold only one year, the 8-bit Game Boy virtual reality handheld game console was released in 1989—a predecessor of many addition lines of the Game Boy series. By 2006, it had sold 118.7 million units throughout the world but competed heavily with Sega's Game Gear. Featuring a 160 by 144 pixel that was monochrome with four shades of gray, it was still a huge improvement over previous game. But even more important was its newly developed software, bundling Game Boy with Tetris—the number one reason many people actually purchased the set.

When Nintendo released the Virtual boy in 1995, it was supposedly designed after the virtual reality helmets there were well-known in science fiction, offering its players a really 3-D experience they had never had before. But physically, it ended up giving its players headaches and back pain which caused it being discontinued about a year later, combined with not too many titles of products. Touch screens, microphones, and Wi-Fi capabilities were innovations that arose from their work, and future games began to grow into new game experiences of virtual reality games today.

THE VIRTUAL REALITY PET NOW EXISTS IN MANY DIFFERENT APPLICATIONS

The use of pc computers and monitors for virtual reality pets offer popular websites that adopt online virtual reality pets to their members, in addition for their interactive use in the websites chat groups. To enhance it even more, the virtual pet can be adopted online, which require the user to develop their own website with the chosen virtual reality pet.

With virtual reality taking everyone into the third dimension, the PC monitor needs to allow one into more possibilities than the old-fashioned flat screen monitor. What has been designed to accomplish this is a huge range of products that allow the user to navigate and view the entire third dimensional world, moving forward and backward, left and right, and also up and down. Every 3-D game and virtual reality experience is required to

accomplish these movements, and are required to be viewed on the computer monitor. With this in mind, it is easy to see how virtual reality pets that are adopted by their users can become as real as their own furry pets sitting beneath their computer chair.

A very low level of activity defines interaction with the high tech computers and monitors, yet it is the key to the entire process. Pat the virtual pet on the head and it will respond to kindness, with data showing that the user is caring for their virtual pet—anything different will cause the pet to make dreadful sounds and die. Pour them food and water, and the program's software show this act of caring in data format. All simple commands and deeds, yet together they are demonstrating actual caring for a pet that is not real. The PC monitor has over the year become a window into a world that is not real, yet to many is more real and exciting than the outside world they actually live in, through additional technology that enhances this reality.

GIGI PETS

Some of the virtual reality pets of the Gigi Pets are Digital Doggie, Compu Kitty, Micro Chimp, Bit Critter, Baby T-Rex & Virtual Alien, and others within one hand-held digital screened computer. One of their new 1998 lines was the new GigiPound Pet, which responded to its user's voice, but the entire Gigi Pet line had several features:

- Caring for one to four puppies as a litter
- Offering four starting breeds and four hidden breeds
- New tricks and activities for the user to teach their new virtual reality puppy they adopted
- Real sound effects like a real puppy
- Easier training as the Gigi Pound puppies responds to voice response

The Gigi Pet has several virtual reality pets—Terriers, Labradors, etc.—and if the user cares properly for their adopted pets, only then can they add another to their care. Eventually, the user will be able to care for up to four pets at one time within one Gigi Pet. In comparison to the Gigi Pound to GIGi Pets, the Pound pet offers a choice of a Beagle, a Terrier, Great Dane, or a Labrador. Left and right buttons allow scrolling for the user to select their breed of choice, which each breed barking within their own type. Games offered are chasing balls, chasing frisbee, tug-of-war, with voice activation bringing the dog onto the screen when it leaves.

WEBKINZ VIRTUAL REALITY PETS

The Webkinz pets come with special Internet codes to allow their users to interact online with them once they are registered. Bringing the new adopted virtual reality pet to life, these plush toys with the Webkinz online reality can be slept with or played with offline while interacting through the Internet. Online—virtual chores and jobs can be done with the virtual pet such as feeding them and putting them to bed, creating rooms and playing games, dressing and caring for them—the world is wide open for the user. Offline—hugs and kisses offer great companionship and comfort for their owners.

The online Webkinz World is updated every couple of weeks for new things to explore and do, teaching the user responsibility for their pets. With each pet totally unique, they come in a wide variety—the Black Bear, Lion, Pig, Hippo, Golden Retriever, Poodle, Love Frog, Yorkie, Black Cat, Duck, Yellow Lab, and many, many, more.

4

NEW VIRTUAL REALITY PETS

When Japan's original VR game, the Tamagotchi device, formed its first baby steps for this new marketing area of virtual reality, their marketing audience was mainly young girls and women. A lot had to do with the culture where something small and cheap was offered for an audience that wanted something new. Today with this new digital realm, everyone is involved whether it is male or female, child or adult. The early computer games of virtual reality actually pioneered VR into a world of commerce that has no boundary.

The market today involves thousands and thousands of people who create businesses and homes through worlds of virtual reality, such as Second Life, where they are allowed intellectual property right for their creations. What is making it even more complex is whether or not the income from a world of virtual reality can be taxed, with the Joint Economic Committee of Congress studying this particular market and setting new ground rules. Marketing is not a simple thing in virtual reality when commerce is involved, and virtual pets are involved.

RIGHTS OF THE VIRTUAL REALITY USER

When a virtual reality pet is adopted, the user has rights to it until they are given up or taken to a shelter. Sometimes another player will take over the responsibility of the virtual reality pet, or they die due to neglect of proper care. Some users even state their artificial intelligent sheep dog takes care of a herd of livestock during the night (as they are bred to in real life) but when problems develop, they send you a video or call you on his cell phone regardless what time it is. How fun is that at one in the morning?

Future markets of users for virtual reality pets will change in the same way as change occurs in the real world. Imagination will bring about all kinds of virtual living pets with a natural selection occurring through sales and adoptions choosing the most popular while those less desired will become extinction—just like in real life. Virtual pets will be designed for users to care for them, many before or in exchange of having real pets. Therapy virtual reality pets can be used for hospitals, nursing homes, military, prisons, college students, or anyone who cannot have one due to the type of

environment they live in. Many of the marketing will focus on computer applications, while just as many will not for non-computer users.

DEVELOPING PRODUCTS OF THE VIRTUAL PET LINES

The home computer and in school have evolved to a place of such high importance in the lives of children, adolescents, and adults that we take for granted what impact it actually has on our daily lives—pleasure, work, school, medical, business, technology—the world is wide open. Platforms of artificial intelligence and virtual reality have brought about the development of VR products that are changing as we speak. For children and youth, the little hand-held pleasure VR devices with virtual reality pets has opened up doors to the pets being used for therapy, clinical studies, surgeries, burn victims, education, and teaching disabled/dysfunctional children to cope. Long lists of products have been, are, and will be developed to utilize this progress even more—keeping up with the advances in high technology for humanity.

KEYCHAIN VIRTUAL REALITY PETS

This line was the number one item in the beginning days of virtual reality pets. Japan's Bandai made their virtual reality pets into different types of key chains—clip on key chains, beaded chains, and link type key chains. Eventually, several of these key chains were released into special Asian Edition "Tamagotchi" for the collectors, representing the different cultures of surrounding countries: the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, and Malaysia. Eventually they made their way to the United States with English packaging.

Over time, instead of little girls and young women adopting the little Tamagotchi virtual reality key chains, adults began to be interested in them. Products changed as the marketing target changed, with the key chains sold in boxes that did not indicate what color they were, adding to the collectors market of rare and prized colors. Premium prices were extremely rare-colored virtual reality pets on key chains. Eventually the special collector's editions became "minted" at top dollar prices.

ROBOTIC PETS

Who would have ever thought we would have a world to live in that consisted of robotic animals who are maintained by their owners, and have the same feelings, affection, and attributes of real animals. In "Live Science" studies have shown that these virtual reality pets have the same ability to raise the same emotions in children, youth and adults that real pets do.

Robotic pet studies have shown that their "death" caused so much grief in children they were sent to counseling in school. Other pet owners became so distraught when they had to leave their pet unattended while they were in school that a day care center was set up at home or they were left with friend or family member to lessen the anxiety in the child.

A University of Missouri study showed that adult levels of cortisol dropped when petting a dog-shaped robot, a hormone that shows stress in the body. The robot dog is similar to a real pet—responds to the human voice, to being petted and stroked, and chases balls and toys. Other similar studies involved school children playing with the robotic pet, with 70% of those involved feeling it was a good companion or pet.

In Japan, \$10 million dollars was spent on a cuddly little robotic baby seal that was called "Paro", designed by their National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology. It was found that these little robots interacted with the elderly and disabled in positive manners, the same as with real pets. Brain activity increased about 50% in dementia patients after 20 minutes with the robot, while in the elderly moods were elevated and depression decreased. Communication and social behavior also was encouraged with an interaction with the little virtual robot Paro.

PLUSH PETS

The Sega Toys in June of 2007 announced the first plush animal line—high quality plush robotic pets with the ability to deliver life-like experiences to human owners. But what influenced the plush line of virtual reality pets the most was the Dream Pets first made by a sheer coincidence, having their first origin in 1957 with R. Dakin & Company had imported battery powered toy trains from the country of Japan.

The trains were packed with little stuffed animals, made from velveteen scraps filled with sawdust so the trains would be protected. When asked what they were, the Japanese company making them told Dakin they were

considered Dream Pets. This was because those who made could simply dream their choice of animal in its design. The idea appealed to Dakin so much he kept the name and began making them, with the idea taking off tremendously by the public.

Applause LLC, which was to be the parent company of Dakin, signed a three-year licensing agreement with the Sega Toys in 2004. As stated in the Virtual Reality blog, it was stated that Dakin, the Wallace Berry Company, or Applause had several licensed plush lines: Dream Pets, Snoopy, characters in Star Wars, Cat in the Hat, Finding Nemo, and so on. These were all considered the base for the future virtual reality pets of today.

COLLECTABLE CARDS FOR VIRTUAL REALITY PETS

The company Ganz released the stuffed animal line Webkinz in 2005, with specific codes assigned to each virtual reality Webkinz World. Part of this world is the Webkinz Trading Cards, with two card series used to play a challenge game. Booster card packs are available, consisting of five playing cards and the pack's code card. Also are free pet codes hidden in each pack, a special card that the virtual pet's owners find invaluable.

Of the two series, number one is "Curio Shop Curiosities" and "Webkinz Doodlez", while in the second series is "At Paw Level" and "W-Tales Snapshots". Eighty base cards were released in the first series, while the second series consist of 85 cards. Series one have 12 challenge cards, with eight Curio Shop Curiosities, and eight Webkinz Doodlez. Meanwhile, series two has 15 challenge cards, with eight "At Paw Levels" and eight "W-Tales Snapshots". Each one coming with two to five code cards, one code is for a virtual pack of trading cards while the remaining ones unlock prizes, exclusive themes, and coupons.

WEBSITES WITH VIRTUAL REALITY PETS

Not all virtual pets are physical robotic virtual reality toys or plush toys that interact with virtual reality websites. Many of them are entirely accessible online, with the user able to socialize, connect, and learn in a 3D virtual reality world of virtual pets. With online worlds such as 3D Planets and Active Worlds, members can have virtual pets, buy and sell things, hold a job or go to school, and so on.

A top one is BoomBang where a member can look after their pets online in an animated environment. The ability to create their own avatar, make friends, express feelings and emotions provide a place to invite friends over while earning credits. Providing a new gift every day, opening a box makes every day Christmas while collecting chocolate eggs make you a winner. Creativity takes on a whole new meaning in these cartoon animations that allow the user the freedom of the tropical islands.

WIRELESS VIRTUAL DEVICES FOR REAL PETS

As virtual reality pets advance with higher forms of technology, innovations such as wireless devices are becoming more and more popular in the virtual reality market. This is a form of technology that originally was so expensive in its early days nobody could afford it but a few.

Today, the wireless virtual reality headsets has changed that with the latest technology, where sending the video to the headset through a wireless transmitter allows the user to be part of any environment within the video. The wireless headset isolates the user from the reality they live in, allowing another environment of choice through buttons, d-pads, and so forth.

A device called the GlobalPetFinder helps the user keep track of their real pets, allowing them to build a virtual fence of any size online. The fence will be created via the wireless GPS and 2-way wireless technology by prompting a name, address, and fence size where the fence will be downloaded. This is via the computer to the GlobalPetFinder device's memory where five fence locations can be stored. A pet monitor, the GPC tracking wireless system can also defines the fence's parameters, informing the user when their pet strays or uses the pet's environmental temperature to let the user know if the pet is too hot or cold.

5

A LOOK AT OWNERSHIP OF THE ADOPTABLE VIRTUAL REALITY PET

The online pet for virtual reality can be an artificial or fictitious furry companion, kept for enjoyment or companionship or a high complex system that allows the user to become part of the virtual environment. For children, if the user does not like to deal with a furry friend, they design one without fur that can be trained to respond to commands and interact with their user as much as any real-time animal. If they have allergies, the adoptable online pets of virtual reality are perfect as they are not real with hair and fur. How good can it get?

THE CHOICES OF ADOPTED VIRTUAL REALITY PETS

Choosing An Adopted Virtual Reality pet may be hard for those who do not desire or even like pets to understand the entire idea of virtual reality pets, but for those who do desire their companionship it needs to be understood that pets assist human beings in many ways while offering them company on different levels—yet having a live pet can sometimes be difficult if not impossible for several reasons. The hard thing to understand about virtual reality pets is that everything is becoming digital in the world we live in, which includes the modern reality of having a free virtual pet, or a digital pet, formed through technology.

Whether or not to have a virtual reality pet to own or to adopt one depends on the individual who chooses to use the latest technology and graphics to make their own online pet a reality. Realistic effects are used in the virtual reality pet market today, allowing the user to play or interact with their pet, offering a sense of reality of having their own little companion without the hard work and all the mess. And if the user chooses to not own a pet but adopting instead, no ties are formed and it can be on a temporary basis.

COMPANIONSHIP FOR THE MIDDLE-AGED AND ELDERLY

It is common knowledge that virtual reality can play a major role in the lives of elderly people, or even mentally ill and disabled individuals. Hundreds of virtual reality techniques assist in the training of both groups with virtual environments and simulations, helping with such things as balance dysfunctions using systems or software that combine virtual reality with visual stimulation

Hard as it is to believe, a fair sized audience for the adoptable virtual reality pet is the middle-aged individual and the elderly. Being able to touch a puppy or kitten, something fuzzy and soft, make the elderly person less lonely and a little more loved.

The elderly individuals have their own online pet, yet they do not have to take their pet out in the extreme elements for toileting or down to the groomer to keep them neat and tidy. Very few hassles are involved with having a virtual online pet or even adopting one. It seems to be the easy choice for a certain audience who does not have enough room to bring home a 25-pound Cocker Spaniel or 30-pound American Eskimo into their lives, or need a therapeutic virtual reality pet to make their life better with no allergies involved.

COMPANIONSHIP FOR THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH

It stands to reason that children would respond to the adopted virtual reality online pet, as not only do children and pets go hand-in-hand, but they are fascinated with something different. The virtual reality pet teaches responsibility for the care of something, in addition to training both the simulated pet and the young user to do what is right and responsible. Online pets began with the children as the major audience, as they seem to be more receptive to something new and different, not only with the product but also the unique virtual reality simulation of their interactions with each other. Who is teaching whom? This question is part of the over-whelming popularity of the virtual reality world for children, as the children teaches and cares for their pet while the pet teaches the child how to care for them. Each child trains their online pets in different ways as individual methods are applied.

The virtual reality adopted online pet can be used as a prep-course for the child's future live pet. The child is learning how to become responsible in its

care—feeding, watering, toilet training, grooming, training, exercise—all aspects which many children are unaware of when they go out and bring a live pet home. The care of the pet almost always will end up in the hands of the parent or eventually the animal shelter as neglected unwanted pets.

PREVIOUS OWNERS OF LIVE PETS

In many cases, people who have had previous pets have found themselves unable to properly care for them—allergies, illness, not enough room, pets not allowed in their homes or apartments—all ending with the owners not being able to have one in their life anymore.

The virtual reality pet that is adopted or owned can replace this void while simultaneously removing all obstacles that are previously in the way. A virtual reality pet does not cause allergies as it lives in a simulated world online and they do not require any exercise or large areas. Yet it offers companionship and something to care for that fills a void in the life of lonely people or animal lovers.

CARE OF THE VIRTUAL REALITY PET

It sounds crazy, but taking care of an adoptable virtual reality online pet still requires a certain amount of responsibility for its user to keep it alive online and cared for. We cannot get out of everything, can we? But the real fun of having a virtual pet is the experience in the virtual reality world, where a meter is online with a certain code and database for this newly purchased virtual pet on some brands. The code allows a user to adopt their pet, such as the plush toys of the Webkinz pets that come with a virtual reality online environment to adopt them, and then go online to enjoy Webkinz world.

With the Tamagotchi virtual pet, the goal was to see how long a user's pet could live and how well they could care for it. According to the Tamagotchi manufacturers, their virtual reality pet could live 30 years (days) or so with proper care, otherwise its neglect would decrease this to 6 to 9 years (days).

The newer version of the virtual pet allowed the user to pause its life or turn it off. Pausing involved pressing the B button, allowing it to go to the clock format, then hitting the A and C button at the same time, stopping the clock (life) of the toy.

Caring for the virtual pet involves feeding it, picking up its waste or feces, and playing games with it. Beginning its life with the original egg hatching, the virtual pet will go through its life stages as it teaches its user the

responsibility of owning a pet. Without love from its user, the virtual pet will not be able to survive.

KEEPING TRACK OF THE VR PET THROUGH ONLINE DATA

Once online, the virtual reality pet can be monitored to let a user know how their pet is doing. If the pet is happy and well-adjusted through steady feedings and water, healthy, and clean, then their meter will go up. And we all know what will happen if they are not properly cared for—their meter will go down, showing neglect and abandonment.

Part of the care for a virtual reality pet is to find out the pet's name, whether it is a boy or girl, and when they were born when the user goes online or has the information inside its little monitor. When a person "adopts" their virtual pet, many come with secret code tags that are one of a kind for that particular pet. Once this code is submitted online, many things can be found out about the new arrival such as their favorite color or favorite food, what they like to do or what their favorite toys are.

THE EVOLUTION OF VR PETS TO HIGHER LEVELS

Through the use of physical effects, the adopted virtual reality pet is alive to its user. This realistic ability is formed through the power of the imagination and realistic effects, interacting through each other to form a complete sense of reality. Referred also as a digital pet or a personal pet, the adopted virtual reality pet can be used as a training tool for growth on several levels, requiring a certain amount of evolving to go from one level to another, as each is one reached.

VIRTUAL REALITY ADOPTABLE PETS EVOLVING IN THE LABS

If alien pets are the thing for you instead of the typical cat and dog, electronic test tub aliens can be grown in a lab, with the user activating it and then monitoring its growth in a darkened room. The story theme involves the environment of the test tube, with the virtual reality test tubes being maintained in the research lab until the dying planet of Naratuko is replaced with something more suitable. Fascinating, this demonstrates the wide variety of online pets that can be adopted or maintained as part of the user's life on a permanent basis. They can be diagnoses or their interaction

time can be maintained, with age checks, panic mode, health checks, or coma modes provided with a flick of the mouse as its health progress data is checked daily.

In addition to online avatars or plush toys with virtual reality online software, there are also those that are self-contained and fit into palm-sized computers—the Tamagotchi, Digimon, and the Giga Pets. Anything can be given life online through the power of technology and the imagination, with technology adding to this rapidly growing field.

GOAL-ORIENTED AND NON-GOAL-ORIENTED SOFTWARE FOR ADOPTED DIGITAL PETS

Regardless of the type of virtual reality pet, adopted or owned permanently, they are able to evolve onto many different levels depending on the type of software used, the type of pet involved, and the age of the user. The only thing that separates virtual reality or digital pets is the hardware that operates them and their forms or design.

How the adopted digital pet interacts with each other and their users is entirely goal-oriented or not, depending on its development but the fact lies that how the user interacts with it and its ability to stay alive and grow. If it is goal-oriented, when it grows it develops into different progressive forms. It needs fed, played with, and groomed to accomplish this. But if it is not goal-oriented in its development, the pet can simply be enjoyed and played with, forming a bond or relationship with its user for pure enjoyment. Either way, the software has visual effects embedding into it or specific types of interactions to make the virtual reality pet seem real to its user.

Even though the many types of adopted virtual reality pets have different types of software to run them, they are similar in many ways to enable them to give a feeling of reality to their users. They are able to communicate, not only with each other but with their user even though they do not show message boxes or icons to allow their users to recognize their health variables. What is understood is the interpretation of many things for inter-communication—body language, expressions of the face, actions—all showing what is being felt and needing. This makes natural behavior occur rather than a step-by-step calculation that is cold and rigid.

ADOPTABLE ONLINE VIRTUAL REALITY PETS TO CHOOSE FROM

The tools of virtual reality are on the move as we speak, with a use of artificial intelligence combined with robotic physical virtual reality pets. Additionally, a huge jump within the PC computer levels with components of virtual reality will make a huge difference in what will be developed—increased qualities of graphics with texture, graphic design, and animation—with advanced intelligence interactions making learning more fun and realistic, a wide variety of usage will result from the adoptable virtual reality pets for everyone.

THE ADOPTABLE VR TOYS

A prime example of the physical virtual adoptable pet is the Tamagotchi, a hybrid form of virtual pet and physical virtual pet from Japan based on the original version—now defined as a physical unit displayed as a computer pet. It is so popular a black market for the instant seller has begun at twenty times the list price. Presently, digital pets are now taking place of real animals—dogs, cats, birds, snakes, frogs, and hamsters—kept for enjoyment and companionship without the time frame and extra responsibility. The three different types of evolving virtual reality pets are gadget-based virtual pets, web-page based virtual pets, or application-game based virtual pets.

GADGET-BASED VIRTUAL PETS

A successful marketing virtual pet is the "gadget-based" virtual reality pet, consisting of a self contained computer that fits in the palm of the hand. On this little computer is small screen where the little pet, or image of the pet, appears. Different buttons for the user to push will perform different tasks, such as washing them or even playing with them. If the pet is not satisfied with the care they receive from their user, the little adopted virtual reality pet will emit a beeping sound and die, depending on the amount of poor care they have received.

A few gadget-based virtual reality pets are within the game the Sonic Adventure 2 for their Dreamcast. Used in the Sonic game or moved to the Visual Memory Unit, the virtual pet can be transformed from either game based or to gadget based. Another is the Tamagotchi virtual pet.

WEBSITES THAT PROMOTE VIRTUAL REALITY PETS

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of websites associated with virtual reality pets. This varies from interactive games, environments, pets, communities, chat groups, and anything in-between. A lot depends on the age of the user and what they want in particular. The problem is there are too many to choose from, causing an overwhelming feeling every time you go into search, unless it is a field already experienced in.

CHECKING OUT VIRTUAL REALITY PET WEBSITES

This involves novices who know literally nothing about virtual reality pets and would like to know about them before purchasing or adopted one for their child, their friend's birthday youth, or their self. Some good ones can be found by typing in "virtual reality pet websites" through Google or Yahoo. The hard part is to pick out of 1,040,000 results. Narrowing it down even more could be done by adding the subject of choice to those search words—sales, history, games, wireless, plush toys, etc.

The primary need for websites about virtual reality pets is to adopt one, buy one, or use a website that gives information about store locations near the user to purchase the physical robotic pets or items such as the plush toys of Webkinz, where a Webkinz World website is required to register the toy and interact.

COMMON FEATURES OF ALL VIRTUAL REALITY PETS

Studies have shown that virtual reality is used as a tool in communication, which involves many technical areas. Most users recognize the fact that virtual reality involves a computer as part of the technical hardware. Also is a 3D animation software system that appears real, with a head-mounted display and data gloves. But the field has evolved into many other VR areas, beginning with the fact that nothing but a physical and emotional response to caring for a virtual reality pet can change worlds for the better.

COMMON FEATURES OF ALL ADOPTABLE VIRTUAL REALITY PETS

- The pet will respond to be called
- The pet will respond to being touched
- The user can train the pet
- There are places to purchase supplies or toys for the pets
- The pet can be dressed up
- There can be shows, competitions, or trials among pets or species
- Pets can meet other pets or tradeoff between users
- The pet has the ability to let the user know it needs more care

ACTIONS AND BODY LANGUAGE

Virtual reality began in the early 90s with changes in the computer-person communicative interactions. Originally people were considered as simply "users of the VR systems" instead of being considered as participants and actors immersing themselves in a self-chosen environment. Over the years, these individuals have begun to act more independently and have a specific reason for their choices. These choices have changed the virtual reality market, especially with VR pets as part of that social context.

The five senses involve those of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste—limited senses compared to what we know are available to us. The virtual reality technology is pushing humanity forward to access these other senses.

TOUCH COMMUNICATION

A new field of research, any communication is available through VR devices and the Internet. The real world involves touch and manipulation on a physical level, whereas in the world of virtual reality it involves the Internet as a medium for transferring touch--through an interactive technology that changes on a daily basis. When a child or adult moves the mouse to "stroke" their virtual reality pet, or push a button on a device to simulate the same feeling, the response is considered a haptic sensation for remote users, as stated previously.

Studies have shown this sort of physical interaction is revolutionary between a person and an animal. The days of yesterday are full of stories about the caring relationships between an animal and their owner. Today things are different. People are on a fast pace and city people have too small of living quarters for pets to be part of their life, with the world of today causing people to grow further away from each other. Nature is a thing sought after, instead of naturally being part of it, which has caused feelings of extreme

isolation. Because of this, the virtual reality world has filled lives of many people by removing the feeling of loneliness and increasing their self-esteem. The world has become wide open to the alternative environments, and the VR pets that offer the same feelings of comfort and companionship of live pets they are unable to maintain and keep.

SENSE COMMUNICATION

Virtual reality is a tool to extend the senses—changing a person's perceptions to the point the user actually thinks they are in another environment through their total immersion. The virtual reality pets have become so real to the young users they sense they are as real as live one. This is done through online images or physical connection, where the presence of the pet is enhanced through all levels of senses. These senses and their interaction to virtual pets contribute immensely to the socialization, due to the children or youth being stimulated mentally.

Studies on virtual reality have shown that the two senses-- sight and sound-- can be duplicated perfectly through technology we have developed today. This leaves the senses of touch, smell, and taste remaining, which require the manipulation of the human brain to accept the immersion into a VR environment.

THE VR PET AND SELF-ESTEEM OF A CHILD

When the virtual reality pets come to mind it is with games, fun, environmental interactions, and what the "virtual fad" of the moment is. But as more and more virtual reality pets are advanced through studies and technical growths, the picture becomes more pronounced. Presently virtual reality technology through VR pets and interactions are being used for disabled children and young burn victims, increasing their self-esteem and using virtual reality as problem-solving approaches for them.

In the regular world, these children are heavily influenced by their peers (who are not disabled). What is needed is an increase in positive attitudes at a time when they esteem and pain levels—physical, emotional, and mental-- is at their lowest. Each new aspect of advancing VR pets as tools to use require the identification of what these children are facing with barriers and constraints. The 1999 Disability Awareness Virtual Reality Project had previously identified such barriers: physical barriers in their environment, isolation, bullying, lack of understanding or awareness.

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HOW TO CREATE AN ADOPTABLE VIRTUAL REALITY PET

Creating a virtual reality pet online or buying a plush Webkinz pet at store that is able to interact online is slowly replacing the purchase of a real pet. Before that children and youth depended on their own imagination to generate another world of play and make-believe. Today the world of virtual reality involves electronic devices, emerging technology for games, and websites that allow the real-life toys to interact online as virtual reality pets. Other worlds of virtual reality evolve immersing the child's life into the computer screen and 3D world of choice.

Their owners in can name toys in: the Bratz or My ePets world of toys. The child can play games with them, do beauty makeovers, buy new clothes, care for the puppy, go to doggy spas, With the Tamagochi line and Tama Town as forerunners, children are fast becoming the main consumers of the virtual reality world with their toys keeping pace with adult technology. Below are some of the virtual reality pets that children are adopting or creating through the world of virtual reality:

- Dogs
- Aliens
- Fish
- Puppies
- Horses
- Cats
- Kittens
- Bears
- Tigers
- Plants
- Reptiles
- Imaginary creatures with no bearing to the real world
- Webkinz line of all types of plush pets

MORAL AND ETHICAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE VIRTUAL REALITY PET

Presently, researchers are creating software that is being used in the control of avatars to learn and teach. Artificial intelligence is being embodied in each developed virtual pet to develop a higher level of intelligence by his or her interaction with its human controlled avatar. In the works by individual firms are to develop talking parrots and babies.

REAL PETS OR VIRTUAL REALITY PETS

A wide-open world, the physical virtual pets offer the full experience and benefits of pet ownership for their users, while promoting a full sense of reality. There are documented cases where counseling has been provided to children when their virtual reality pet has passed away, demonstrating that new realms of pet ownership have entered our real world.

These realms involve all segments of society with their own interests and certain types of environments. New fields have opened in the virtual pet arena, while even more will develop in the future with strong computer capabilities. The idea is for children to become more responsible with the teaching of virtual reality pets—feeding, watering, grooming, training, exercising, etc. or for those unable to enjoy a pet to have a virtual pet for companionship.

DEVELOPING INTELLIGENCE OF VIRTUAL REALITY

The latest form of VR, whether human, pets, or individual items, is the recent developments of artificial but highly evolved living, whereas the mind is the artificial intelligence and the body is the online virtual reality world, the developmental firms are designing a "Cognition Engine" which is developed to act as the "artificial intelligence thinking aspect." With specific programs to not only achieve certain goals and behavior that are scripted, the engine will also be capable of reasoning in order to achieve each user's aims yet restricted by the programming. Businesses and research corporations are using virtual worlds for their artificial intelligence developments.

With this in mind, a ready market is already in the making for highly evolved virtual reality pets, with companies such as the ones involving artificial intelligence claiming that the virtual pets on the market having very little intelligence. Virtual pets are being designed to achieve their own goals or virtual pets that will allow their users to train them to do specific things. The ones in mind are dogs and monkeys, with a branch toward talking parrots and virtual babies. The virtual babies will be an 18-year goal oriented task to teach them to talk and walk by the new "parents" or "parent."

ADOPTABLE VIRTUAL REALITY PET SITES **ONLINE**

Presently there are 2,260,000 sites on Google when looking for a virtual pet, as compared to looking for an adoptable online virtual pet that narrows the field down to 711,000 sites with opportunities to adopt a pet instead of the full-time responsibility of owning one, and then having to relinquish it to a virtual shelter or another avatar who wants a pet. Considered as an online business, there are many websites available for virtual pets to play with for adoption and online games.

POPULAR VPS WEBSITES

Considered as "virtual pet sites", the vps are websites where one can find virtual pets with a wide assortment of pets to play with. Playing is not limited to walking on a leash but grooming, dressing them, changing the color of their fur or skin, follow your orders to roll over on down to drinking virtual milk from a virtual bowl. Another advantage is they can be available on a small, self-contained computer held in the palm of the hand with device buttons to control the pet's actions

SHOW DOG.COM

Websites such as The Dog Show Game, from ShowDog.Com allows its users to enter rings and show specific show breeds without leaving their homes. The virtual reality environment allows the user to actual run a kennel of show dogs consisting of 180 breed types to choose from. This artificial VR pet world lets the user raise their breed from a small puppy to one of the top champions—step by step.

The shows involve two choices—all breed or specialty—or both can be entered. If the user chooses to enter more than one of their breeds, they can do so as once they choose their breed, they are fully responsibility for the

rearing of it: breeding, owning, handling, training, and grooming. The entire show is limited only by the user's decision-making process.

FURRY-PAWS.COM

This free website game allows virtual reality pets to be raised, trained, played with, fed, and showed by its user. Similar to the Dog Show, over 190 breeds are listed with 15 sport dogs. Once the user signs up, they will receive a confirmation email to click on before entering the website. But if the user wants to just check it out for a while, they can sign up as a guest before joining.

After taking the beginning step of "getting started tutorial, the member who has signed up will received a \$5000 FP Cash fee. The tutorial involves how to purchase your own virtual reality dog and care for it. To do that , the user needs to understand how it needs fed and played with. Training a dog for a dog sport is taught, and also how to compete in many competitions. The tutorial will take about 45 minutes to do.

CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF THE ADOPTED VIRTUAL REALITY PET

According to the latest research, the virtual reality pet is here to stay with continuous evolving technology. Already rising in new designs and formats—key chains, games, game boxes on television, robots, and mobile phones—new media technologies will explore areas of virtual reality that have never been touched, such as the use of holograms. Traditional technology of pets will be born into new areas, with the violence and abuse in children and youth of today required a new form of interaction. But hundreds of other fields are utilizing virtual reality, with virtual reality pets as a tool for the human mind to handle situations just one major—medical, social, and many other.

WHAT WE CAN EXPECT WITH VIRTUAL REALITY BY 2010?

Considering the fact that over 500 years ago humanity was dealing with black magic and witches, it should come to no surprise that the first commercial computer was sold only 450 years after that. Another big milestone was that the range of computer software that corners the market today was non-existent about 35 years ago. And last but not least, when the computers began approximately twenty years ago to enter the average home, very few professionals or experts felt it would ever make a "go" of it, stating it was a bad move.

Here is the present. Here is now. Where once the computer was treated as something highly unimportant, it is now one of the most powerful driving forces behind every evolutionary step of humanity. It is now estimated that the computerized information technology is driving our economic growth up more than 35 percent. Existing today also are the seeds of radical technology that few average every day Americans recognize, even though they are in the beginning processes and part of our world. Many are already here, such as virtual reality pets and games, alternative environments with 3D visions,

hearing, tactile sensations, and olfactory that are surrounding us, medicine, surgery, burn centers, care homes, and so on.

A Polish individual by the name of Wlodzislaw Duch in 2001 wrote an article titled, "Future of the information society and information technology" where he estimated that by the year 2010 there would be supercomputers faster than the process of the human brain, used for large scale simulation projects.

The separate fields of media, telecommunication and information technologies would be unified, according to Duch, allowing communication devices using intelligent browsers to access any information desired. This would be due to live translation between languages, which is known to be available at the present. Also, he estimated that virtual reality content would be able to be viewed through a person's glasses with the image projected on the eye's retina. Most of this is here now, a couple of years sooner than expected. And virtual reality pets are slowly taking over the pet market, compared to the market of live animals.