



Students turned their love for their pets into a business breakthrough

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An entrepreneurship program encouraged a group of students to brainstorm and power through a few roadblocks as they created an app for pet lovers

Americans love their pets. Turns out, two out of every three American homes include a pet, and [95 percent of households](#) consider their pets to be family members.

But where do those pet parents turn to when they need help? How do you know if your pet is getting the proper nutrition? We wanted to provide a resource for overwhelmed pet owners and created [WellPets](#).

Paws for thought: WellPets

We are a group of pet-loving student entrepreneurs from Roslyn High School, located on Long Island, 20 miles from New York City, and are the creators of WellPets.

We developed the business as part of a youth entrepreneurship program at our school called [INCubatoredu](#). It gives students the opportunity to work with mentors to create their own start-up

businesses while getting a taste of the real world. At the end of the course, students “pitch” their ideas to a group of local community professionals and entrepreneurs for a chance to win funding and continue their work.

From grooming to nutrition—WellPets is an app to assist pet owners in keeping track of their pet’s health information. All you have to do is enter their breed and size. The app provides the proper nutrition plan for your pet. Notification features remind owners of grooming needs or a trip to the vet. The app will also give users the option to shop for pet products and compare prices for those products.

Owners can eliminate the stress of shopping for their pet by subscribing to the monthly gift box filled with food, toys, cleaning products, and accessories tailored to the specific needs of the pet.

Pedicures, pivots, and profits

The journey toward the creation of WellPets was full of trial and error, but we used what we learned in class about the real-world tools and methodologies of entrepreneurs to rise to the challenge. We started out with a paw-cleaning device called Paw Pedicure but weren’t able to create a functional prototype. We pivoted pretty late in the year and wanted to change our idea but still keep the pet component. Although a switch in strategy, we realized much of our extensive research and customer feedback still applied since we were staying within the same market.

Once the concept for WellPets was ready to be pitched, we saw an opportunity for additional revenue by creating a subscription box. The financials took some work, but we got there and worked through it as a team.

Accountability in remote learning

COVID-19 drastically changed the way we attended classes. The shift to online or hybrid learning meant we were unable to interact with each other in person. Holding business meetings was especially difficult as the team members were not in school on the same days, and some were learning from home full time. Technology like Zoom and group chats helped us stay in touch. We adapted to the environment by texting the group and constantly communicating to make sure we got our work done on time.

Being that we were all on different schedules, we quickly realized the need to focus according to our personal strengths and interests. For example, Sasha has an interest in general business, Ben in the financial part, and Michael more marketing, so we each focused on those areas. We held each other accountable and learned to work as a team to accomplish our goals and meet deadlines.

Announcing the players of the future

High school students may join entrepreneurship or business programs for a variety of reasons. Many are attracted to the fun and collaborative atmosphere. Others appreciate the opportunity to create and develop

a product or start-up under the guidance of teachers and mentors while gaining valuable insight into the world of business.

Jason enrolled in the course with an exciting career already in mind. My dream is to become a sports play-by-play announcer. In order to do that, I must be a very good speaker. The coursework teaches us how to speak in front of colleagues, mentors, and potential investors, encouraging eloquence and self-confidence. Going through the INCubatoredu course, we have learned so much regarding the elevator pitch and how to speak publicly.

WellPets won first place at our school's pitch competition and the team plans to continue marketing to gain awareness and brainstorming methods for revenue generation. WellPets simply started from our love of pets and we will continue to expand it to make sure all pets stay healthy.