



The first search engine for conscious adoption in Italy

Danila d'Angelo ¹, Luigi Sacchettino ¹, Lorenza Silvestri ², Annamaria Barbaro ³, Luigi Avallone ¹, Francesca Ciani ¹, Francesco Napolitano ¹⁻⁴

1 Department of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Production, University of Naples Federico II, 80137 Naples, Italy;

2 Psychologist of Marketing, Communication & Positive Technologies, Naples, Italy;

3 MSc ESCP, Management consultant, Naples, Italy;

4 CEINGE-Biotecnologie Avanzate, 80145 Naples, Italy



Why Empethy?

Empethy was created with the aim of promoting a system of conscious adoptions offering support to those who are looking for a pet.

Each animal has its own history and needs, which can fit more or less with the lifestyle and needs of the future owner.

Empethy ads are built with the aim of highlighting these features in a clear and detailed manner, to accompany and support future adopters during all the choice process.

One of the main challenges of the 21st Century



Below some worrying data that can no longer be underestimated:

- **~256 thousand** dogs and cats kept in shelters / rescue and awaiting adoption;
- **~EUR 126 million** spent per year on keeping dogs in kennels;
- **~500-700 thousand** stray dogs;

Despite this, only **~22%** of italians who currently own a pet, claims to have adopted it through **animal shelters, rescue groups**, etc..

Focus on the problem

The current online channels used to find and adopt pets do **not fully meet** either the **demand** (pet adopters) and the **supply** (shelters, rescue, volunteers).



Pet adopters
(the demand)



Shelters / Rescue
(the supply)

1

You can't easily compare different pets in the absence of a **single search engine**

You can't easily connect with your audience in absence of an appropriate **promotion tool**

2

You can't easily find the pet that best suits your needs, in the absence of a **personalised search**

You can't easily choose the best application from those received in the absence of an **automated screening**

3

You can't easily control the status of your request in the absence of an appropriate **monitoring tool**

You can't easily interact with different requests in the absence of an appropriate **management system**

Our solution

Empethy is a **digital platform** that connects people looking for a pet to adopt with animal shelters, rescue groups, volunteers taking care of abandoned animals.



End-to-end process

A unique platform that supports users throughout the entire adoption process (pet search, application form, interview scheduling, etc)



User-friendly

User-friendly digital platform entirely designed to make the adoption process much easier.



Transparency

An advanced feedback system to assess rescue groups / shelters and create a reliable online community.

Home page

The screenshot shows the home page of the 'empethy' website. At the top left is the 'empethy' logo. In the top right corner, there is a 'Login' button and a menu icon. The main heading is 'Find your pet alter ego'. Below this, there are two search filters: 'Type' with the placeholder text 'What kind of pet are you looking for?' and 'Region' with the placeholder text 'Where are you?'. A 'Search' button is located to the right of these filters. Below the search filters, there is a large illustration of a grey cat and a brown dog. To the left of the illustration, the text reads 'Welcome to empethy' and 'The first search engine for a conscious adoption'. At the bottom of the page, there are three feature highlights, each with an icon and a title: 1. 'Reduce search time' with a clock icon, 'selecting the criteria most in line with your needs'. 2. 'Compare ads' with a scale icon, 'from the different dog and cat facilities'. 3. 'Make a conscious choice' with a thumbs up icon, 'Having all the necessary information'.

The screenshot shows the search results page for 'Our pets looking for a home'. At the top right, there is a 'Sort by' dropdown menu set to 'Date'. Below the header, there are four pet cards. Each card features a photo of the pet, its name, location, age, gender, size, and a 'Complete card' button. The filters on the left side of the page are expanded to show the following options: 'Previous' (dropdown), 'Age' (0-12 months, 12 months-3 years, 4-6 years, 6-12 years, Over 12 years), 'Gender' (Male, Female), 'Size' (Small, Medium, Medium, Big, Giant), and 'Suitable for' (Living with other male dogs, Living with reserved male dogs, Living with other female dogs, Living with reserved female dogs, Living with male cats, Living with female cats, Living with other species, House without garden, Pet insurance).

Name	Location	Age	Gender	Size
PUSH	Caers	4 Months	Male	Small
Pio	Napoli	8 Months	Male	Small
Forrest	Napoli	5 Months	Male	Small
Luca	Calabria	5 Months	Male	Small

How to promote a **conscious** choice ?

The aim of emp**ethy** is to encourage the adoption of abandoned dogs and cats by promoting a responsible and conscious care

Get ready to welcome your pet!

Adopting is not only an extraordinary gesture of love, but also of responsibility

[Start your consultation](#)



Empethy offers a personalized online consultation service in order to provide an array of useful tips and advices aimed at "preparing" the future adopter for a conscious and responsible adoption of the future dog/cat

Do you have any idea the age of the dog you want to adopt?

- Yes, I'd like a puppy or a dog between 11 and 18 months
- Yes, I'd like an adult dog
- No, I have no age preferences

Think that puppies and, sometimes even young dogs, tend to bite everything and their liveliness can cause some damage. In the first months of life, the cubs will have to take a nap in the house, and most likely they will cry if left alone. Do you have the patience? Remember that there are educational courses dedicated to the proper education of puppies, with the aim of preventing the emergence of future behavioural problems that may be more difficult to solve



Close

Pre-adoption consultation

If you decided to do this short consultation is because you are aware that adopting not only represents an extraordinary act of love, but also of responsibility. Finding your pet must be a conscious choice, and to do so you must have all the necessary information

[Continue](#)

[Go back](#)[Close](#)

Pre-adoption consultation

1. Which kind of pet are you looking for?

- Dog
- Cat

[Continue](#)

[Go back](#)[Close](#)

Pre-adoption consultation

2. It is important to understand the type of house: is there a balcony or a garden?

- No, none.
- Yes, I have a balcony, but not a garden.
- Yes, I have a garden.

If you have a garden, make sure to secure it with a fence, because dogs can run away and remember to pay special attention to any risks such as the presence of parasites and ticks, and poisonous flowers/fruits that could be toxic to the dog if ingested. The garden should never be an alibi for not letting the dog out. Dogs that live in an house with a garden shouldn't be prevented from going out on the street as they have the same needs to socialize as all other dogs

[Continue](#)

[Go back](#)[Close](#)

Pre-adoption consultation

2.1 Where will the dog sleep? Outside or inside?

- Inside
- Outside

Sleeping in the garden is not an optimal condition for a dog, even if it is used to live outside. Dogs should sleep at home because they suffer from cold, and even more they suffer from loneliness and may not feel safe. If this is not possible, you must ensure a warm, quiet and silent kennel and always take into account potential risks associated with living in an outdoor area such as the presence of parasites and ticks and poisonous flowers/fruits.

[Continue](#)

[Go back](#)[Close](#)

Pre-adoption consultation

5. On average, how long will you leave the dog alone during the day?

- 1-3 hours
- 3-6 hours
- More than 6 hours

It's very important to teach your dog to tolerate loneliness. You should create a safe and quiet environment where you can leave your dog when it is left alone.

Some dogs could suffer loneliness more due to abandonment, personality or past experiences. In these cases, it is advisable to contact professional figures such as veterinarians with experience in behavior, dog instructors, dog kindergartens, who can take care of your dog without increasing its suffering related to your absence.

[Continue](#)

[Go back](#)[Close](#)

Pre-adoption consultation

6. Do you have any idea of the age of the dog you want to adopt?


- Yes, I'd like a puppy
- Yes, I'd like a dog between 11 and 18 months
- Yes, I'd like an adult dog
- No, I have no age preferences

Think that puppies and, sometimes even young dogs, tend to bite everything and their liveliness can cause some damage. In the first months of life, puppies will have to take a nap in the house, and most likely they will cry if left alone. Do you have the patience? Remember that there are educational courses dedicated to the proper education of puppies, with the aim of preventing the emergence of future behavioural problems that may be more difficult to solve.



Pet's details

[← Back to ads](#) [Save ads](#) [Share ads](#)



Kuma ♀ Napoli 🏠 Kennel

Monday, February 20, 2023 👁 100 views 📩 8 requests

📍 **The form was compiled with the support of a dog educator**

Something about me
Accustomed to living at home, following orders and commands, raised with a child, she walks perfectly on a leash. She is looking for a new home now.

My characteristics

Age	9 Months	<input type="checkbox"/> Vaccinated
Gender	Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Dewormed
Size	Big	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutered 1x
Hair	Medium	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interdypted
Weight	25	

My preferences

- Suitable for living in a house without a garden
- Not suitable for living with intact males
- Suitable for living with neutered males
- Suitable for living with intact female dogs
- Suitable for living with neutered female dogs
- Not yet tested with cats
- Not suitable for living with a

Are you interested in adopting this pet?

[Send your request](#)

Associazione
Civiltà piena
pace felici









★★★★★ 0.0
(0 Reviews)

associazione che si occupa della protezione di animali e ambiente, lotta al randagismo e che si pone c...

[Scopri di più](#)

giulio@panepanofelici@gmail.com
+39 329 0645100
Pagine Facebook: 1.500

My needs

-  I am very lively you will have to keep up with me
-  I will need the help of a dog educator to be able to fit into my new family
-  I'm a little bit unruly, you'll have to give me some rules
-  I am shy I will need time to adapt
-  I suffer from loneliness, keep me close to you
-  I am particularly delicate I will need a lot of attention
-  Sharing is not my strong point. You will have to teach me to be less possessive
-  I am a little impulsive you will have to teach me to manage my emotions

Some needs to investigate in the dog before adoption

How to make a right match?

Our experimental project

Several scientific articles are dedicated to the study of the level of satisfaction of the human-dog bond, based on evidence that not all relationships are functional.

Recent studies have shown how the match between the dog's personality traits with the owner's personality traits plays a role of fundamental importance.

In our vision, an accurate screening tool,- able to combine socio-demographic and behavioural characteristics of the human together with those of the dog-, may direct the future owner to a better conscious choice.

To build the “match” questionnaire we based on two main articles: The Relationship between Personality Match and Pet Satisfaction among Dog Owners (Curb et al., 2013) and Dog and owner demographic characteristics and dog personality trait associations (Kubinyi et al., 2009)

The first article attempts to reconstruct the dog's personality in 8 traits, defining the micro behaviors observable for each dimension.

The second article, instead, focuses more on the personality traits of the owner, having the BIG FIVE model as reference.

Our first results (until August '21)

200

Associations on empethy



600

Dogs show on empethy



100

Cats show on empethy



70

Adoptions through
empethy



Thank you so much for your attention



References

- Barnard, S., Marshall-Pescini, S., Passalacqua, C., Beghelli, V., Capra, A., Normando, S., ... & Valsecchi, P. (2016). Does subjective rating reflect behavioural coding? Personality in 2 month-old dog puppies: an open-field test and adjective-based questionnaire. *PLoS One*, 11(3), e0149831.
- Beverland, M. B., Farrelly, F., & Lim, E. A. C. (2008). Exploring the dark side of pet ownership: Status-and control-based pet consumption. *Journal of Business Research*, 61(5), 490-496.
- Bouma, E. M., Vink, L. M., & Dijkstra, A. (2020). Social-cognitive processes before dog acquisition associated with future relationship satisfaction of dog owners and canine behavior problems. *Anthrozoös*, 33(5), 659-672.
- Chopik, W. J., & Weaver, J. R. (2019). Old dog, new tricks: Age differences in dog personality traits, associations with human personality traits, and links to important outcomes. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 79, 94-108.
- Dwyer, F., Bennett, P. C., & Coleman, G. J. (2006). Development of the Monash dog owner relationship scale (MDORS). *Anthrozoös*, 19(3), 243-256.
- Curb, I; Abramson, C.; Grice, JW.; M. Kennison, S. (2013) The Relationship between Personality Match and Pet Satisfaction among Dog Owners, *Anthrozoös*, 26:3, 395-404.
- Kubinyi, Eniko & Turcsán, Borbála & Miklosi, Adam. (2009). Dog and owner demographic characteristics and dog personality trait associations. *Behavioural processes*. 81. 392-401. 10.1016/j.beproc.2009.04.004.
- González-Ramírez, M. T. (2019). Compatibility between humans and their dogs: benefits for both. *Animals*, 9(9), 674.
- González Ramírez, M. T., Landero Hernández, R., & Vanegas Farfano, M. (2017). Dog-owner compatibility index of activity preferences. *Human-Animal Interaction Bulletin*, 5(1), 58-68.

- Gosling, S. D., Kwan, V. S., & John, O. P. (2003). A dog's got personality: a cross-species comparative approach to personality judgments in dogs and humans. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 85(6), 1161.
 - Holland, K. E. (2019). Acquiring a pet dog: A review of factors affecting the decision-making of prospective dog owners. *Animals*, 9(4), 124.
 - Hsu, Y., & Serpell, J. A. (2003). Development and validation of a questionnaire for measuring behavior and temperament traits in pet dogs. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 223(9), 1293-1300.
 - Mirkó, E., Kubinyi, E., Gácsi, M., & Miklósi, Á. (2012). Preliminary analysis of an adjective-based dog personality questionnaire developed to measure some aspects of personality in the domestic dog (*Canis familiaris*). *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, 138(1-2), 88-98.
 - Payne, E., Bennett, P. C., & McGreevy, P. D. (2015). Current perspectives on attachment and bonding in the dog–human dyad. *Psychology research and behavior management*, 8, 71.
 - Payne, C., & Jaffe, K. (2005). Self seeks like: Many humans choose their dog pets following rules used for assortative mating. *Journal of Ethology*, 23(1), 15-18.
 - Protopopova, A., Mehrkam, L. R., Boggess, M. M., & Wynne, C. D. L. (2014). In-kennel behavior predicts length of stay in shelter dogs. *PLoS one*, 9(12), e114319.
 - Roy, M. M., & Nicholas, J. C. (2004). Do dogs resemble their owners?. *Psychological Science*, 15(5), 361-363.
 - Svartberg, K., & Forkman, B. (2002). Personality traits in the domestic dog (*Canis familiaris*). *Applied animal behaviour science*, 79(2), 133-155.
 - Tesfom, G., & Birch, N. J. (2013). Does definition of self predict adopter dog breed choice?. *International Review on Public and Nonprofit Marketing*, 10(2), 103-127.
 - Turcsán, B., Wallis, L., Virányi, Z., Range, F., Müller, C. A., Huber, L., & Riemer, S. (2018). Personality traits in companion dogs—Results from the VIDOPET. *PLoS one*, 13(4), e0195448.
 - Zilcha-Mano, S., Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2011). An attachment perspective on human–pet relationships: Conceptualization and assessment of pet attachment orientations. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 45(4), 345-357.
-