

Competitive Audit Report: Food Customization App For Organic Pet Food Brand

1. Competitive audit goal(s)

Compare the purchasing experience of competitor's apps for new and returning users, who are looking to purchase pet food based on pet's individual health and dietary needs. Another goal includes comparing competitor's apps for getting pet food delivered quickly and efficiently.

2. Who are your key competitors?

Our key competitors are: PetPlate, a subscription-based gourmet dog food brand; Petco, a large chain across the US, and Puerto Rico that offers over 776 brands of pet food for all types of pets; Chewy, An online store for pet food offering over 2000 brands; Ollie, a subscription-based brand for human grade dog food, with no artificial flavors or fillers; Petsmart, a large chain across the US, Canada, and Puerto Rico that offers all different types of pet owners pet food from over 430 brands; and The Farmer's Dog, a subscription-based dog food brand that uses vet nutritionalists to craft fresh and balanced meals.

Our direct competitors are PetPlate, Ollie, and The Farmer's Dog. Our indirect competitors include Petco, Petsmart, and Chewy.

3. What are the type and quality of competitors' products?

PetPlate has a basic website that allows users to order their gourmet dog food. Their website has large distinct font, making it accessible and easier to find information. The website is concise and easy to follow, directing users to how to order. They make great use of color, design, and branding to match the high-quality appearance of their product. However, they favor quality ingredients, product and branding over functionality of their website and user experience while purchasing their product. As well, they do not have an app, which would make it much easier for returning users to re-order and track deliveries.

Chewy's app is very well organized, allowing for an efficient and pleasant purchasing experience. They have excellent options to encourage follow-through of orders, such as: customer recommendations section, review system, and discounts. The app is well designed, the visuals are modern, placement of text and icons is ideal, and menu items are easy to find. There are various useful accessibility options. Chewy has a lot of search and filter options allowing for this type of customization. Although in terms of food customization, they offer brands that have no customization based on allergies, food preferences and other factor's tailored to one's individual pet. They excel when it comes to delivery and shipping options as they have fast shipping, autoship options, and a straight-forward checkout process.

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Petco's app offers lots of options for customizing search and filters; users have the ability to sort food options from a long list of options (price, rating, etc), as well as being able to refine search based on many criteria that one can choose from (flavors, ingredients, brand, etc). It is intuitive and easy to use, with simple icons to find "pet type", menu options, and subcategories. Each interaction from page to page flows well into the other and users can easily make purchases. New users have a good experience, with not needing to commit and make an account. On the other hand, returning users are rewarded for creating an account with rewards system and discount options. The downside to their service is that they can not offer customizable pet food options, such as altering ingredients, because they are selling from other brands. They excel at having easy and efficient delivery.

Ollie does not have an app, and instead relies on website purchases. They have an eye-catching visual design that is simple, clean, and modern. Brand values and messaging is clear but this appears to triumph over accessibility and user experience of their website. Ollie does not have pricing info readily available, universal icons that make it easier to find information, or an app for checking order without internet connectivity. There is rigidity in the order process, and users can't add things to cart and continue browsing website without having to exit transaction altogether. Where they struggle with the purchasing process they make up with a high quality dog food with the ability to customize ingredients. They have limited meal options but focus on quality ingredients and pet's individual health and dietary needs.

Petsmart's app is similar to Petco's in design and function in that there are many search and filter options. They keep to a simple yet playful aesthetic with consistent branding. They have a useful review system, well-organized menu and category options, and excellent user flow from beginning of the process to the end. They have numerous incentives for new and returning users like their rewards program, coupons and discounts, ability to save favorites, and autoship and delivery options. They need to work on accessibility options in their search. Furthermore, they do not have options to customization each pet food because they sell other brands food. Their target demographic is average pet owners and they focus on selling on to the average.

The Farmer's Dog does not have an app. They have a website that needs work in its layout. They do not provide enough specific information about the product without having to create an account or provide information about yourself to send you information. Thus, there is a poor experience for new users who can't view items, prices, or making purchases without committing to the service and creating an account. For returning users though, they have autoship each month and there is ease to the delivery process. The Farmer's Dog creates fresh meals with simple ingredients but you can't customize these options. They focus on making meals for all dogs of all health and situations.

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4. How do competitors position themselves in the market?

PetPlate positions itself in the market as selling custom meals based on user's dog's size, breed, and allergies. They use 100% human grade ingredients and meals are cooked fresh. However the user experience of their product is lacking because they do not have an app, search and filter options, as well as a loyalty program for returning users.

Chewy is able to offer the most brands and options because they are online based. As such, the overall user experience of their app is excellent and delivery is made easy as this is their primary focus. Their downside is not being able to offer customization of pet food, although users can filter their search to find one that best fits their needs.

Petco has a storefront and their app extends the storefront into being able to find more options and for users to get items delivered. They offer a number of incentives to encourage customer loyalty and return users.

Ollie sells human-grade dog food with no artificial flavors or fillers. They focus on product quality and sell the idea to health-conscious dog owners. There is much rigidity in the order process, which can make for a frustrating experience as a user. They do not have an app for users.

Petsmart positions itself in the market as being primarily storefront based, but with an app that extends into being able to making mobile orders. Their energy goes into establishing brand loyalty through incentives, a reward system, rating system, discounts, and coupons.

The Farmer's Dog uses vet nutritionalists to create foods that are fresh and balanced. The emphasis is on quality ingredients and creating meals that are individualized to user's pet's needs. They do not have an app. The ordering process on their website needs work for easier purchase and delivery.

5. How do competitors talk about themselves?

PetPlate markets itself as a having personalized meals for your pet that are fresh and portioned, and delivered on time.

Chewy markets itself as offering convenience— delivering toys, food, treats, and more directly to consumer's homes.

Petco markets itself as providing the best care for customer's pets through grooming and vet services, pet supplies and pet products

Ollie markets itself as teaming up with vet nutritionalists to develop cooking methods and personalized formulas that are based on science.

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Petsmart markets itself as selling pet food, pet supplies, and pet accessories. As well as providing grooming, veterinary care, daycare and boarding, and dog training. The Farmer's Dog markets itself as turning their unconditional love for dogs into uncomplicated care. They reimagine dog food from the ground up.

6. Competitors' strengths

PetPlate:

- customizable options to build meals
- Excellent branding that sticks to company's values of commitment to quality

Chewy:

- Good layout of app, great user color to categorize menu options
- Seamless flow from page to page
- Returning customers can re-order with ease
- Accessibility options in search
- Easy navigation on site
- Search and filter options for finding pet food that meets specific needs
- Great shipping options, including autoship
- Saves "my Pet" info and preferences

Petco:

- Rewards system and discount options
- Lots of brand and food options, search and filter customization
- Saves pet information and tracks needs
- Some accessibility options in app design
- Well organized app layout

Ollie:

- eye-catching visual design, strong branding
- Clear and simple language with detailed information under items
- Pet profile saves dog's info
- Customized meals based on your individual dog

Petsmart:

- Lots of brand and food options, search and filter customization
- Reward program for customers, review system, coupons and discounts
- Use of universal icons in addition to text
- Consistent branding
- Common menu options across bottom of app
- Easy checkout for guests and returning users, auto ship directly from items list

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The Farmer's Dog:

- Customized fresh meals with real and simple ingredients
- Thoughtful website design. Unique images with animations as you scroll through page
- Excellent branding and modern design

7. Competitors' weaknesses

PetPlate:

- No app
- Can't purchase or get more information about product without an account
- Inability to search and filter for pet food options
- Not enough accessibility options
- Does not use universal icons (ie, cart, menu, profile)
- Pet food for animals other than dogs not available

Chewy:

- No coupons or discount options
- Can't customize pet food

Petco:

- Most search filter options are limited to "yes/no" format, no drop down menu
- Can't customize pet food
- Issues with review system design; review button is not clickable and does not bring you to reviews. Must scroll to bottom (both website and app)

Ollie

- Pet food for animals other than dogs not available
- No app
- Don't use universal icons that would easily identify actions
- No accessibility options considered

Petsmart:

- Can't customize pet food
- More accessibility options needed in search
- Occasional cluttered info under items

The Farmer's Dog

- Pet food for animals other than dogs not available
- No app
- Brand can't customize food type. All food is raw diet food
- Difficult to get recipe or meal information without creating an account

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8. Gaps

- The indirect competitors are larger brands that offer great app and purchasing experience but have no food customization options
- Direct competitors offer unique quality dog food but have no app and the user experience on these websites was often frustrating
- Direct competitors don't make pet food for animals other than dogs

9. Opportunities

- Provide customizable pet food options where they can choose to add or remove ingredients
- Provide quality pet food, for a variety of pet types, with fresh ingredients that can be purchased on an app
- Provide incentives to encourage new and returning customers to create an account