



Physiotherapy



Autism



Educational Support

Follow-Me Technology & Therapy Animal Certification



Emotional Support



Touch Therapy



Puppy Training



Service Animals



PTSD

Introduction

A very overlooked online educational market is in the certification training of therapy and service dogs trainers and handlers. The difficulty with this type of training is that the instructor needs to see that the student is able to apply the theories taught when working with these animals. A solution to this problem may be the use of robotic cameras or follow-me drones.

Robotic cameras and drones would enable more people who are interested in training service and therapy animals to receive certification. You would no longer have to live near a facility that offers this type of certification.

How it Works

Put simply, robotic cameras and drones work through remote tracking or GPS technology. The “camera” (tripod mount / camera / drone) is connected electronically to a wearable device, either a specific tag, beacon or a phone. An algorithm tells the “camera” where the “tag” is and points the “camera” at the subject.

The Market

The world of drones is exploding. There are so many follow-me drones out there it is hard to choose, in contrast there is a limited number of follow-me cameras. The following follow-me devices have been chosen for their potential use in a Therapy and Service Animal Trainer Certificate program.



[Video Introduction - CLICK HERE](#)

Competing Follow-Me Products

	Follow-Me Camera and Tripods			Follow-Me Drones	
	Soloshot	Pixio	AI Me Pro by JigaBot	GhostDrone	Air Dog
Price	\$1,200.00	\$3,212.00	\$5,000.00	\$350.00	\$2500.00
Equipment Camera / Tripod / Drone	Comes with DSL camera, but can be sold separately. Tripod sold separately.	Mounts on tripod. Compatible with Sony and Canon Cameras - purchased with or without.	Mounts on tripod. Works with almost any small digital camera, video camera or phone. (GoPro Hero)	Drone comes with 4K camera	Drone Purchase separately GoPro Hero 3 and or 5.
Zoom / Focus	Automatic - built in.	With compatible cameras	With compatible cameras	Automatic - built in.	Automatic
Distance	Up to 600 ft	Up to 330ft	Up to 300ft	.8 km for 60 min	1 km for 16 min.
App	Phone remote Control of camera Tag on subject	Remote control Tag on subject Can record to tablet / phone.	None Tag on subject	Phone App Tag on subject	Airdog Leash - set the distance to follow Tag on subject
Obstacle Avoidance	N/A - Stationary	N/A - Stationary	N/A - Stationary	Follows or hovers.	Yes.
Audio	None	Voice Transmitter to/from coach	None	None	None
Noise	None	None	None	Whirring	Whirring
Waterproof	No - can purchase a camera cover	Water resistant	No - put a clear bag over it.	No	Water resistant

Detailed Description

[Soloshot](#)

Advertised as “Your Personal Cameraman”. One of the nice features of this camera is that it has a mic so audio is recorded, and it also automatically finds the best clips and does some of the editing for you. Video sharing and live streaming is an added bonus. Although it does not have audio a coach watching a live stream could also be conversing with an student via phone at the same time.

The Soloshot comes with its own camera, or you can choose to purchase just the Soloshot which is a device that connects between the camera and the tripod and purchase a camera adapter. The camera adapter allows for a variety of Camcorders and DSLR cameras to be used.

[Pixio by Move N'See](#)

There are different versions of Pixio, which is advertised as, “Your Personal Robot Cameraman.” I choose to look at the more expensive bundle, the Pixio Live Coaching Pack. (Careful some of the packages do not come with a camera.) This package allows coaches to work with students live in real time. The camera follows the student while the coach is giving verbal feedback via voice transmitter. Multiple cameras that switch automatically, or by remote control can also be set up. As well multiple “tags” can be used at the same time and the camera will follow the person with the closest tag.

The Pixio is a piece that connects between the camera and the tripod and is compatible with many Sony and Canon cameras. This means that you can use your camera for other things as well.

[AI Me Pro](#) by JigaBot

AI Me Professional can have multiple cameras that switch automatically between multiple tagged subjects based on position. It is advertised as compatible almost any digital camera or video camera, but reviews recommend using a GoPro Hero 3 or 5.

[GhostDrone](#) by eHang

This drone has a lot of neat features like waypoint mode, companion mode, avatar mode, and flight planning mode. The different modes mean the drone just doesn't follow you . You can set it to meet you somewhere and go to it so you have video from not just above and behind like many follow-me type drones. The drone also knows when it is running low on battery power and will safely land itself as close to you as possible before the battery runs out.

[AirDog](#)

A neat feature about AirDog is that it comes with a waterproof “watch” that not only works as the tag (leash), but enables you to control the drone. This allows you to check battery life and place the drone to hover ahead of you. AirDog also has a safe landing low battery detection feature.

Recommendations

Follow-me cameras/tripods would be more beneficial drones for certifying service and therapy dog handlers. The drones can be noisy and distracting, are better used outdoors than in and so are not as versatile. At first glance the Pixio, because of the Live Coaching Package looks like it would be more useful as a training tool, but the Solo, like the Pixio, also allows for remote control via a smartphone by the instructor, who could communicate with the student via a cell phone while watching over the camera. Either of these devices would be very useful for an online therapy / service animal handlers / trainers program.

Conclusion

There is an increasing need for therapy and service animal handlers and trainers as the benefits of these programs become more apparent. Service dogs remain expensive and unavailable because of the lack of certified and trained trainers and puppy raisers. Volunteers and trainers interested in working with or developing therapy animal programs are unable to get training and certification. Follow-me technology is just a small, but important piece, in setting up and infrastructure that would allow more individuals to become certified and enable more people to benefit from therapy and service animals.

Sources:

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- <http://www.movensee.com/>
- [National Service Dogs of Canada](#)
- [St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Certification](#)
- <https://soloshot.com/>