Focal Point: Virtual Pets

Digital petting

Tamagotchi 4.0

Pet Fun in Virtual Reality

Whoever still thinks of the egg-shaped Tamagotchis of the 90s when hearing “virtual pets” has slept through the development of the past few years: The possibilities for virtual pets are limitless. The Tamagotchi app, for example, is still enthusiastically downloaded. The Pou app, which does a little more than the Tamagotchi app, has more than 500 million downloads, proving the keen interest in this form of entertainment. Even in the innovative social network *connect*, you do not have to do without the fun of an animal companion. In addition to network capabilities such as video calling, chat, messenger services, access to multimedia content, and the ability to send pictures, videos or GIFs, users can also avail of cute virtual pets that need to be nurtured and cared for in a much more complex manner than those available in the previously mentioned apps. Since *connect* is VR capable, the pet can of course also be experienced as a three-dimensional companion using the VR glasses.

The right training

There is a range of different animals which, with varying probability, hatch from an egg bought for one euro. The most common ones are chicks and ducklings, but with a bit of luck, a crocodile or, even rarer, a turtle baby could be your new pet. More animal species will follow. Depending on the "training methods" of their owner, the pets will be shy or confident, well behaved or cheeky. If they are fed too much, they become chubby. And with a little effort and well-timed rewards, they can learn tricks — even somersaults are in their repertoire. Since *connect* wants to live up to its name, the pets can of course be swapped among the users or even given away as presents.

Incredibly rare tiger ducks and feathered crocodiles

In the near future, a complex breeding system is planned in which mature pets — with much love — can produce their own offspring. The children take on the physical and mental characteristics of their parents, so that the very rare successful crossing between a crocodile and a duckling could produce a feathered crocodile baby. Strictly limited tiger ducks, each of which has its own unique coat markings, can only be acquired as a reward for a generous donation during the crowdfunding campaign on Kickstarter. This means that the donor’s support for us is also an investment for him or her-self. Assuming *connect* has millions of users, through the principle of supply and demand these rare ducklings will become very valuable and allow high returns.