

HomeStretch

Closing the gap to homeownership for first-time homebuyers

Spec Status: Draft / Peer Review / Mentor Review / **Complete**

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Peer Reviewed by: Samantha Cook and peers

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I want to move forward to build this product with a cross-functional team in the Co.Lab Program

Yes

No

Summary

What is it? Think of this as your elevator pitch for your product. Limit it to a few sentences

HomeStretch aims to close the disparity gap in homeownership, especially among people of color and younger generations, by educating them on the home-buying process and connecting them to resources that eliminate barriers to homeownership.

Problem Background

Who is the customer, and what is the need or problem we're addressing? Why should we address this problem now? What are all of the things we know? How do we know this is a problem?

According to *Simply Insurance*, about 66% of Americans currently own a home.¹ The independence and pride of owning your own home, while building equity, receiving tax benefits, and establishing stability, drives people to purchase property. As of 2022, 26% of homebuyers were first-time homebuyers.² Most first-time homebuyers begin their home-buying process by searching online through websites

¹ Sa El . (2022, April 11). *How many homeowners are there in the U.S.? 51+ statistics!* Simply Insurance™. Retrieved December 7, 2022, from <https://www.simplyinsurance.com/how-many-homeowners-in-the-us/#t-1622558689003>

² Caginalp, R. (2022, August 23). *2022 first-time Homebuyer statistics*. Bankrate. Retrieved December 7, 2022, from <https://www.bankrate.com/mortgages/first-time-homebuyer-statistics/>

like Zillow, Redfin, etc, not realizing that the home-buying experience begins *before* looking for a property. Below are quotes from the survey launched to understand why people struggle when buying a home for the first time:

“There were a lot of steps that I had no idea about during the process”

“Typically buyers are not prepared for the the process”

“There were a lot of expenses I wasn’t aware of”

This lack of education and knowledge of the home-buying process can cause frustration, confusion, and stress. User #5. revealed in her user interview that she was “not at all knowledgeable” about the home buying process and was “extremely frustrated” when denied and disqualified for a loan due to her credit score. She was also revealed once she signed a contract to move forward with new construction, she did not have proper representation during her home buying process because she did not know she had to include the name of a real estate agent on the “contact card” *prior to* signing the contract. She was not allowed to get a real estate agent afterwards. She explained that not having a real estate agent, “made everything hard moving forward”. She said, “We didn’t have anyone to advocate for us ... and almost lost out on our incentives”. User #6, revealed that she had a difficult time understanding the information in the contracts.

Disparities in homeownership are especially significant by age and race. 65+ year-olds have the highest homeownership rate among all age groups at 79%, while homeownership under 35 years old is only 38%. White homeownership rate is among the highest at almost 75%, while homeownership rates among Black and Hispanic groups are 45% and 48%, respectively.

Ultimately, Homeownership is the principal source of wealth creation, thus, translates to an even larger wealth gap for marginalized communities. Younger generations and marginalized communities. First-time homebuyers should be connected directly to resources that address barriers to home ownership, especially for younger generations and minoritized communities.

Goals

- Educate first-time homebuyers on the home-buying process
- Connect first-time homebuyers to resources that address barriers in the home-buying experience.
- Allow users to collect documents and information in an easy-to-access place.
- Provide a simple and easy-to-use experience

User Stories

Put 3-5 user stories here. Keep it high level. As a <type of user>, I want to <goal to be accomplished>, so that <reason for the goal>.

1. As a first-time homebuyer, I want to be educated on each step of the home-buying process so that I am confident during the home-buying process.
2. As a first-time homebuyer, I want down payment, closing cost assistance, and credit repair to alleviate the financial costs during the home-buying experience.
3. As a user, I want to keep track of important documents so that I can easily access information when needed.
4. As a user, I want a seamless, interactive, and individualized learning tool that reduces the time it takes to consume home-buying information.

Proposed Solution

What are you proposing is the solution to the problem being tackled? Keep this to a few sentences, again focusing on the WHAT, not the HOW.

HomeStretch will be a web app that educates first-time homebuyers on the home-buying process by instructing users on each step of the home-buying process (including credit score, saving for a down payment, getting pre-approved for mortgage, etc). HomeStretch will provide resources to assist users in the home-buying process, such as down payment assistance, credit repair, etc. HomeStretch will allow users to track their progress. HomeStretch will allow users to store and access important information in one place.

Scenarios

What are your key scenarios (based off your user stories)? What is the definition of done (or acceptance criterion) for each of them? Note: This should be finalized as a team.

User Story #1: As a first-time homebuyer, I want to be educated on each step of the home-buying process so that I am confident when purchasing a home.

- User will login to their profile
- User will see a dashboard of the homebuying process outlining each step (credit score, downpayment, mortgage pre-approval, etc
- User can update their status as they progress through the home-buying process

User Story #2: As a first-time homebuyer, I want down payment, closing cost

assistance, and credit repair to alleviate the financial costs during the home-buying experience.

- User will be prompted to create a profile
- User will enter basic information (name, email address, phone number, etc)
 - Can use Google login
- User will answer a questionnaire (current credit score, current salary, city they are looking for properties in, profession, etc)
- Once the questionnaire is complete, profile is published
- User will log into their account and be prompted with resources and recommendations based on their questionnaire answers.

User Story #3: As a user, I want to keep track of important documents so that I can easily access information when needed.

- Users can input information at each step of the homebuying progress dashboard
- User will select the attach file button
- The attach file button will give the user the option to attach a file from their PC, Google Drive, and Dropbox
- User will be able to rename the document and add a description
- Users can upload multiple forms
- User will have access to a storage with all of the documents and easily access them

Measuring Success

Co.Lab Success Metrics

What would you consider success to look like by Demo Day for your team? What would be the definition of done for your product by that point? Note: This should be finalized as a team.

- A functional prototype that users can create a profile, access the progress dashboard, and access resources.

Product Success Metrics

Consider metrics you'd want to measure to consider the product a success. How would we know if we've solved the problem? What are the things we'd want to measure?

- Number of profiles created
- Weekly active users
- Average time spent on the webapp
- Number of steps completed/progress

Milestones & Timeline

Timeline	Milestone
Week 0	<i>Preparation and Introduction</i>
Week 1	<i>Present problem space + additional user research</i>
Week 2	<i>Brainstorm Solutions</i>
Week 3	<i>Prioritize features & create Lo-Fis</i>
Week 4	<i>Make progress on development + create Hi-Fis</i>
Week 5	<i>Demo & Check-In</i>
Week 6	<i>User feedback</i>
Week 7	<i>Finalize</i>
Week 8	<i>Recap</i>