An In-depth Look at Zillow

A Usability Analysis
Executive Summary

The following is a report centered on Zillow, an online real estate database. The report is prepared for Zillow Corporate Officers Spencer Rascoff and Hernan Savastano. It addresses the complaints that Zillow has been hearing from their users. User analysis methods were employed to discern wherein the weaknesses and problems lie with the Zillow website. The ultimate aim of this report is to facilitate the most effective and efficient use of the website for homebuyers, home sellers, homeowners, renters and professionals working within the real estate industry.

Zillow, a Seattle-based company founded in 2004, make their revenue from advertising and subscriptions from real estate agents. All of the company services are offered online and solely centered on valuation of property. Zillow has data on millions of homes across the United States. In addition to the up-to-date market value estimate of property, Zillow also purports to show the fluctuating value over 1 to 10 year time span. Ongoing mortgage rates are also available for those thinking of buying property. Not only are many of homes listed from a birds-eye aerial view, but some of them actually have photos of what the homes look like from the inside.

Ultimately the report should impact the intended users who are some way engaged in the real estate industry in the United States. The intended users of the website reflect the wide array of services Zillow aims to offer. The typical user of Zillow is the prospective homebuyer. Then there are the people who are trying to market their homes and may use the website to check on the estimated value of their home as well as other homes in their area. People who are interested in the renter’s market may want to see what the going rate is for rent. Then there are the mortgage lenders who are in need of a reference point to ensure that the house being considered for a loan is not overvalued. With increasing tendency for people seeking information on the internet for decision-making coupled with the volatile economy, an online real estate database has become more pertinent.

At the outset, it would seem that the criticism targeted at Zillow would be a reflection of the current housing market. However, key findings have demonstrated the need for more marketing in terms of the Web 2.0 features of Zillow. Many users are approaching Zillow as if it does not have any interactivity features. People are not realizing the full potential of how much Zillow could assist them in their search of property as well as in the selling of a home. Zillow users and anti-users are speaking as the website only has the very basic features. The following report will demonstrate this major finding with competitive analysis, sentiment analysis, structured interviews and personas of user types.
Overview

In 2011 Zillow began offering stock options that ultimately performed very well. However, in recent months there has been a drop of 7 percent in investment shares because of a recent report by Citron Research citing the fallacies of Zillow’s business model. The report contends that the Zillow company is operating in terms of Web 1.0 as opposed to Web 2.0 as they rely heavily rely on real estate agents to purchase services. In this discussion Web 1.0 can be described as having a static existence on internet and Web 2.0 is more interactive. The report goes on to say that Zillow needs to be more than just a company that sells online services in order to have more long-term sustainability. It needs to take on the power of interactivity that Web 2.0 invites.

In spite of the drop in stock shares, many still do refer to the Zillow website. However, there have been complaints about the inaccuracy of the website’s home values. Although there is a significant amount of information available on the website, there is room for improvement in terms of facilitating efficient navigation for the various types of users.

Further, there seems to be a lack of consistency for all homes and even during different time periods. For example, similar homes have different values. Some homes have more information than others. Some users are complaining that it doesn’t take into account other variables such traffic, privacy and nearby landmarks. So many problems have been cited, that real estate agents have called for the Zillow website to be dismantled. This doesn’t bode well if Zillow revenue is based on their subscriptions.

While the corporate officers of Zillow understand that they have a much sought after tool for assessing the market value of homes, they also understand they have much room for improvement. They are interested in staying a step ahead in the market of real estate information by alleviating concerns users have been having lately and ultimately ensuring long-term sustainability.
Competitive Analysis

of Websites Featuring Real Estate Information
Overview of Real Estate Industry

Before the real estate listing syndication websites became a source of information for homebuyers and home sellers, the multiple listing service (MLS) was used as a means to advertise and seek property for sale. The real estate agent served as broker and counselor all at once as they helped prospective buyers and sellers make major decisions. Now real estate listing syndicated websites have changed the dynamic between all parties in the process of buying and selling a home. Real estate listing syndicated websites are not something you could ignore since they could have invariable impact on how a home is valued in the market.

The proceeding pages are a competitive analysis of three real estate listing syndication websites: Zillow, Trulia and Realtor.com. Each of these websites are well known in the real estate industry. Below is an analysis done by the blog Compete Pulse. The blog author assessed the number of site visits that each of the major real estate listing syndication websites had between 2010 and 2012. As you can see below, Zillow, Trulia, Realtor.com are leading in terms of the number of visits. As such, I have based on the analysis on the top two competitors of Zillow as noted in this graph.

This competitive analysis is centered on the features available for five kinds of users: Homebuyers, Home Sellers, Renters, Homeowners, and Professionals. The professionals would be mostly real estate agents, but they could also include any professional who is involved with the process of buying and selling property.
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<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Zillow.com</th>
<th>Trulia</th>
<th>Realtor.com</th>
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<td><strong>Features for Homebuyers</strong></td>
<td>On the homepage there is a drop-down menu that is available with options including Homes for Sale, Homes for Sale by Owner, Foreclosures, Open Houses and New Homes. With an advanced search feature, locate homes for sale by price as well as number of bedrooms and bathrooms. Links available to find professionals including brokers, lenders, and real estate agents. Get custom loan quotes — anonymously — no name or SSN required. Receive quotes on open marketplace of lenders. School information as well as a demographic profile based on the U.S. Census Bureau. Up-to-date real estate market reports “Zestimates,” features the estimated value of a home. Degree of reliability is available for a home. Comparisons of home values and what they were sold for. History of the home in terms of sales and tax assessment. Access site from mobile phone Notification by e-mail when new homes are added to Zillow that match your search criteria. Zillow Special Offer feature where you get the features you want. Interactivity possible by posting questions and getting advice. Real Estate Guide provides information on all steps for buying a home.</td>
<td>A drop-down menu is available with word “Buy.” Options include Homes for Sale, Open Houses, Foreclosures and New Homes. Search through homes through zip code or city. With an advanced search feature, locate homes for sale by price as well as number of bedrooms and bathrooms. Links available to find professionals including brokers, lenders, builders, developers, property managers. Get custom loan quotes — anonymously — no name or SSN required. Receive quotes on open marketplace of lenders. Market trends available to average list prices and sales in zip code and cities. Find out the demographic profile of neighborhoods, city profiles, compare cities, get school reports. Most popular zip codes, nearby landmarks, mortgage info, home features, property taxes and listing price history homes. Comparisons of home values and what they were sold for. Tax assessed value available. Interactivity possible by posting questions about a property or getting advice. Start a conversation. Tips and advice for steps in buying a home available. Read reviews as well as engage discussion about the areas. The ratings are based on pet friendliness, safety, school, cleanliness.</td>
<td>Search for homes via address, city, zip code, neighborhood, #MLS. A tab is available to click on for resources needed to move from one home to another. Get moving quotes from professionals, a packing survival guide, moving planner, find movers. Find a rent a truck with coupons. Articles on moving are available. Find out the demographic profile of neighborhoods, city profiles, compare cities, get school reports. Comparison of costs between rent vs. buy. Calculator tools available to figure the value of home, home insurance, salary estimates for the area. Tips and advice for steps in buying a home available. Provides analysis letting you know if it is good time to buy, but information sparse. Information available for mortgage loans. Compare lender quotes. Information available on properties located out of the U.S. Information available specifically for senior housing. Information available for commercial property.</td>
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<td>Zillow.com</td>
<td>Post your home for sale on Zillow. Listings are free and are displayed for 60 days. Get</td>
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<td>visibility for your home.</td>
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<td>Test to see if the price for home is reasonable with a feature called Make Me Move® price.</td>
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<td>Get tips on selling your home.</td>
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<td>Use Zestimate® home valuations and comparables to zero in on the price.</td>
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<td>Add Zillow Special Offer to your listing to attract buyers. Listings are free and are</td>
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<td>Use Zillow Directory to find a real estate agent, the seller’s agent, a stager, or other</td>
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<td>Use real estate guide to read articles about selling your home, from where to start to</td>
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<td>Realtor.com</td>
<td>List home for sale, or for rent.</td>
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<td>Price your home by comparing it to other properties that were previously sold.</td>
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<td>Get home selling advice through articles about what to consider before selling, staging</td>
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<td>techniques on a budget, ways to increase the home’s value, strategies for selling in a</td>
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<td>Advice available for hiring a real estate agent.</td>
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<td>Use Trulia Voices How-To Guides to find a real estate agent, the seller’s agent, a stager,</td>
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<td>Trulia</td>
<td>List home for sale, or for rent.</td>
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<td>Get a home value report that includes prices for new listings, what homes sold for near</td>
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<td>you, trends showing if prices are rising, how long it takes to sell in area, data if it</td>
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<td>is good time to buy.</td>
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<td>There is a Home &amp; Garden page that has details for home improvement.</td>
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<td>Do a search on “top-rated” contractors, but the search results are sparse.</td>
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<td>Find listings of realtors</td>
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<td>How-To Guide for selling house available in 4 steps: Getting started in terms assessing</td>
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<td>worth of home, issues related to reselling your home, assessing the state of your home,</td>
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<td>Find homes, apartments, condos, townhouses for rent in any area, and filter by price, number of bedrooms and bathrooms.</td>
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<td>Search for pet-friendly rentals as well as rentals with parking.</td>
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<td>Compare homes for rent.</td>
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<td>Rent zestimates used as a starting point in determining the estimated monthly rental price for a specific property.</td>
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<td>Comparison search to see the monthly cost to rent an apartment vs. cost for a mortgage in that location.</td>
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<td>Get notified by e-mail when new homes are added to Zillow that match your search criteria.</td>
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<td>Learn about schools and the demographic profile of an area.</td>
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<td>Directory for information on property managers, landlords and relocation specialists is available. Post questions, read answers, and get valuable advice on the value of renting vs. buying a home.</td>
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<td>Search for pet-friendly rentals as well as rentals as features including air conditioning, washer and dryer unit, dishwasher, cable, property type etc.</td>
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<td>Find out the demographic profile of neighborhoods, city profiles, compare cities, get school reports</td>
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<td>How-To Guides available providing tips on what to consider before you rent, what to keep in mind as rent as well as how to get along with roommates.</td>
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<td>Find homes, apartments, condos, townhouses for rent in any area, and filter by price, number of bedrooms and bathrooms.</td>
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<td>Search for pet-friendly rentals as well as other features including air conditioning, washer and dryer unit, dishwasher, cable, property type etc.</td>
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<td>Will also allow you the means to search by what kind of view you would want from the property.</td>
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<td>Other notable features include searching senior communities and energy efficient homes.</td>
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<td>trulia real estate search</td>
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<td><strong>Features for Homeowners</strong></td>
<td>Homeowners may be updated on the market value of their home as estimated by Zillow. Zillow provides opportunity to register so you could edit the facts about your home, which could impact your Zestimate value. Sign up for a monthly e-mail with data on your home. Post a home for rent. Listings are free and are displayed for 30 days. Use the Rent Zestimate as a starting point to help determine the estimated monthly rental price. Set a Make Me Move Price, which is a pre-market strategy to alert potential buyers. Browse home photos to get ideas for your next remodel with a feature for dueling digs. With dueling digs you could see the most popular rooms and vote on which ones you like best. Use the Zillow Directory to find a home improvement professional, such as a contractor, plumber, or other pro. You could receive anonymous quotes on custom home equity or refinance loans. There is a discussion forum where you could connect with other homeowners. You may receive advice on how to maintain and beautify your home. Use the Real Estate Guide to learn the ins and outs of remodeling and working with contractors.</td>
<td>Homeowners may be updated on the market value of their home as estimated by Trulia. Caveat provided stating that appraisals should not be based on stated estimate. Trulia provides opportunity to register so you could edit the facts about your home, which could impact the estimated value listed. Post a home for rent using a post-craigslist-tool. The listing would have a mobile platform reach audience through various means. This means access to renters, priority placement in searches and a detail report of listing available. Advice for refinancing available. Blogs and forums are available for tips in improvement, design and décor, remodeling, renovating, and environmental issues for the home. There is a small link for contractors at the bottom, but there aren’t names listed for a lot of places. An entertainment feature is available for looking at celebrity homes.</td>
<td>Homeowners may be updated on the market value of their home as estimated by Realtor.com. Caveat provided stating that appraisals should not be based on stated estimate. Tips for refinancing available. Realtor.com provides opportunity to register so you could edit the facts about your home, which could impact the estimated value listed. Homeowners get could browse through photos to get ideas for home improvement. A very in-depth section is section is available for home improvement. The subsections include gardening tips, environmental concerns, pet issues, digitizing your home, ongoing home maintenance. Tile and carpet calculator available. Free quotes for home renovation jobs. Access a real estate monthly report for the region. Access a daily market analysis. Blogs and Q&amp;A forums are available, but they seem sparse. An entertainment feature is available to look at celebrity homes.</td>
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<td>Criteria</td>
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<td><strong>Features for Professionals</strong></td>
<td><strong>Homes listed for 60 days free.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Premier agent’s listings featured top of the search results.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Add info on open houses</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Post listing by manually entering or by sending a feed.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Advertise listings or personal brand with banners, e-mails, sponsorships, integrated placements. Ads targetable by area</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Zillow Academy help real estate professionals get the most out of Zillow through webinars, virtual classes for real estate technology and much more.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Create personal photo and contact information. You could participate on real estate topics.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Zillow Professional Directory available</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Place Zillow URL on website or blog with special code. When clicked, photo, contact info, and link to Web site will appear at the top of each Zillow page they see.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Zillow Real Estate Market reports so you would get data down to the neighborhood and zip code on home values, sales and foreclosures.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Use real estate and mortgage widgets to display data and information to display data such as recently sold home, local market statistics, and real mortgage rates on web site or blog.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Co-branding when visitors click on widget.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Premier Agent Website with free domain name registration</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>MLS integration and hosting $10 per month.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>IDX Mapping and lead capture tools</strong></td>
<td><strong>There’s a whole tab for professionals located at the very top right hand corner.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Realtors and brokers are invited to advertise and have premium listings.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Enhance your skills through webinars.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Professionals invited to participate on Trulia website by writing a blog post about subjects ranging from open houses to home renovations. There are even tips available for a successful post.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Take advantage of widgets such as the Trulia Slideshow, Trulia Carousel, Trulia Map, and Trulia Snapshop to feature your listings</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Take advantage of widgets such as Trulia Voices so that you have a venue to be the expert voice in the real estate industry</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Take advantage of widgets such Trulia Homeroll, Trulia Ministats, Trulia Chart and Trulia Stat to features statistics on your website.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Use Trulia Publisher Platform to enhance your brand, generate leads, and take advantage of online tools.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Real Estate Agents may join Trulia Pro where they would get the following benefits:</strong>&lt;br&gt;  o Advertise so that you could reach customers based on predefined criteria. Target ads to mobile users, geographies and consumer behaviors.&lt;br&gt;  o Get real estate leads.&lt;br&gt;  o Claim your listing or submit your listings&lt;br&gt;  o Create a website that features your services**</td>
<td><strong>Educational opportunities available to improve skills as real estate agent in the form of webinars and video tutorials. Subjects include how feature your website, creating a market snapshot, enhancing listings and generating listing through social media.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Real Estate Agents may join the National Association of Realtors® where you could obtain the following benefits:</strong>&lt;br&gt;  o Financial and personal protection services&lt;br&gt;  o Insurance for health, home and business&lt;br&gt;  o Travel and automotive discounts&lt;br&gt;  o Tools available for marketing&lt;br&gt;  o Be a part of public awareness campaigns that encourage homebuyers to rely on the expertise and integrity of real estate agents.&lt;br&gt;  o A library of research and information relating to the real estate industry is available&lt;br&gt;  o Member value plus program.**&lt;br&gt;<strong>Realtor.com also provides means for moving professionals to join a network.</strong></td>
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Summary

Each one of the websites has strengths and weaknesses. All three of websites are similar in terms of providing an estimate of home values. They are also similar in that they each make an attempt to bring an interactive component. They all three make attempts to cater to the user types as listed in the analysis. All three competitors seem to attempt to provide support to the real estate agents. Since the purpose of the competitive analysis was determined how the Zillow website compared to its competitors, I will point what the competitors have and don’t have compared to Zillow.

Zillow seems to be stronger when it comes to providing an interactive component. Both Trulia and Realtor.com do offer venues for interactivity. However, when searching through their site, it seems that the opportunities have not been used as much as Zillow. Trulia seems to have an advantage in that they offer a more comprehensive profile of an area than Zillow does. Zillow will provide the statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau and the ratings of schools, but Trulia will note the crime reports and landmarks as well as reviews from area residents. Trulia also seems to have more extensive home improvement section than Zillow does. For renters, Trulia seems to offer a more human component by discussion roommate relationships.

Realtor.com offers features for people who seek homes geared for senior citizens, property outside the United States as well as commercial property. Realtor.com is the only one of the three that offers search by MLS website. Realtor.com seems to also be more an advocate of real estate agents than Zillow and Trulia because their National Realtors Association. It also seems that by offering the MLS search feature, Realtor.com is working with real estate agents. That is because Real estate agents are feeding their listing through to MLS. Realtor.com also offers a comprehensive plan for moving. They even offer a calculator for the likely salary for a given area.
Sentiment Analysis

for Zillow Website
Overview

Using sentiment analysis to gauge public opinion about a business and service has become much sought after means collecting data, especially since Web 2.0 has evolved. Online venues where the information could potentially be mined include texts, tweets, blogs, social media and news articles. There are many programs online that offer sentiment analysis. Some are for a fee and some are free. I used the program called Social Mention to run a sentiment analysis on Zillow. Below are the results that were gleaned from there automated mining of data from the internet:

Social Mention is the creation of Jon Cianciullo, a senior technology engineer based in Canada. The website explains that it conducts social media search and analysis that...
aggregates content from around the web into a single stream of information. The one thing that intrigued me about this website is that it notes the likely frequency that a brand is discussed on social media sites and the number of unique authors referencing a brand.

However, data is incomplete. As you can see from the charts in the above data presentation, Social Mention only imparts a dimension of the sentiment about Zillow on the internet. The results demonstrate more positive than negative sentiment, but the neutral sentiment was far more pervasive. The program uses only select number of social media sites for data collection. When I do my Google search on Zillow, I find that there is a lot missed from the Social Mention program. As such I decided to conduct my sentiment analysis.

Methodology

To gauge the pulse of the opinion and feeling about the Zillow website, qualitative data was collected from the internet and analyzed using the Bales Interaction Process Analysis (IPA) method. This method enabled me to identify and categorize moods and opinions of an ongoing group interaction. Figure 3 below provides details on the logic behind how the sentiment was categorized.

Below is a spreadsheet I used to track analyses of the sentiment of various blogs and forums that I selected. When I did an aggregate analysis, I was mindful of the fact the blogs and forums are not all alike in eliciting opinions and thoughts. There are blogs that are going to sound more negative about the Zillow website than others. I only used blogs and articles that were from the 2012 since websites are constantly evolving year to year. I also chose not to use items that were posted by Zillow since it could be biased. For news items that were more neutral in tone, I altered the IPA method slightly to glean the sentiment about Zillow.

Comments responding to a particular posting about Zillow were tallied and then categorized based on whether they were:
1) Positive in the Expressive-Integrative Social-Emotional Area
2) Attempted answers in the Instrumental-Adaptive Task Area
3) Questions in the Attempted Answers in the Instrumental-Adaptive Task Area
4) Negative in the Expressive-Integrative Social-Emotional Area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blog or Forum posting</th>
<th>Link to Blog or Forum Posting</th>
<th>Overall Sentiment of Post</th>
<th>Number of Comments</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Real Estate Vot is Sick and Tired of Trulia and Zillow, and he's not gonna take it anymore</td>
<td><a href="http://www.real-estate-vot-pulled-listings-biggest-real-estate-sites-internet-zillow">http://www.real-estate-vot-pulled-listings-biggest-real-estate-sites-internet-zillow</a></td>
<td>Negative about Zillow</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updated: How Accurate is Zillow?</td>
<td>[<a href="http://blog.chr">http://blog.chr</a> on.com/primeproperty/2012/0 2/how-accurate is-zillow](<a href="http://blog.chr">http://blog.chr</a> on.com/primeproperty/2012/02/how-accurate-is-zillow)</td>
<td>Negative about Zillow</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 Spreadsheet managing sentiment data
After I categorized the data by sentiment based on the IPA method, I then separated statements in accordance to 6 perspectives: homebuyers, home sellers, home owners, renters, professionals and anyone. I chose the category “anyone” to represent statements that either did not fit into any of the 5 user types of Zillow or they could have easily fit into one of these categories. I color coded the statements into 4 predominate sentiments identified by the IPA method.
The following are a list of online publications where I extracted the comments for the sentiment analysis:

This real estate vet is sick and tired of Trulia and Zillow, and he's not gonna take it anymore

Realtors Push Back Against Zillow and MLS Listing Syndicators

The backlash against Zillow & Co

Redfin study knocks Zillow, Trulia listings accuracy

What's Wrong with Zillow [Wise Up]

Short sellers call Zillow a lemon

UPDATED: How accurate is Zillow?

Trulia vs. Zillow: The Battle for Online Real Estate

Zillow now lists homes in foreclosure
Overall Sentiment of Zillow

There were 231 comments extracted from 4 blog posts demonstrating strong sentiment and 48 comments extracted from 5 blogs that reported news in a neutral tone. The sentiment analysis findings demonstrate that there is more negative than positive sentiment about Zillow. A significant number of people noted the inaccuracy of the data on the Zillow website. However, there were some who saw the value of Zillow in terms of it being one of many sources of data. I separated the data into two graphs. One shows the sentiment towards blog postings that express negativity about Zillow. The other shows the sentiment towards a news item telling news in a neutral tone.

The postings that demonstrated negative sentiment sometimes called for a boycott of Zillow. There were responses that demonstrated solidarity with the person who expressed contempt for Zillow. Then there some that criticized the person who posted the blog.

Below is the graph that demonstrated that reported new developments about Zillow in a neutral manner. The news could have elicited negative or positive sentiment. Below is the demonstrated sentiment that looks very similar to the graph representing responses to the blogs that are clearly biased.
For this analysis by user type I counted the major sentiments as defined by the IPA method for each user type. Below as you can see that homebuyers tended to have less solidarity with people who posted a negative rant against Zillow. There were also some that attempted to answer. If you look at the bars representing home sellers and homeowners, you could see that these people demonstrated more solidarity with the ones who were complaining about Zillow. Professionals were also showing agreement with the blog posters. Below are notable comments by type.

**Homebuyer**
Real estate agents are at the end of their existence. They are like travel agents in the mid-1990s. Advances in technology have rendered them obsolete. That is the true reason they are threatened by real estate websites. Their "profession" (if you can call it that) is headed the way of the dinosaur.12
The minimal amount of work that they perform does not justify 3%-6% of the sale price of a home. Let's take a look at what they do:

* "Show" the house...walk around the house for a short time with a buyer.
* Write an "offer" letter...really it is a form letter that some attorney created many years ago for the realty company. They fill in a few blank lines and a section to ask the seller for concessions.
* Call a home inspector to set up an appointment for home inspection.
* Call a title search company to investigate the property ownership / lean status...
Possibly connect the buyer with a mortgage banker if the buyer is totally clueless and has not already shopped around / gotten pre-approved for the loan.
A 10 year old could perform these menial tasks...Maybe even a trained monkey...

I have used all these sites and never really had a big problem. Some might not be accurate but that’s for you to find out. You can’t be upset for getting information off the internet. You need to contact the realtor yourself to find out all the information on the property you wish to see. I would have to say Realtor.com has been very useful.

**Home Seller**

They had mine listed wrong on the sq footage, estimated value also. The listing expired with Alfa which did not aggressively attempt to sell my house and I now have it listed FSBO with all the correct information. I agree Roxanne, they have my old home listed as 67,000... no way it is worth that much when every other house around me is in the 40’s. Also have to consider the number of foreclosures in this area which is driving house prices down. As a FSBO I have it listed for it's payoff value. 40,000. It needs work and I want out from under it.

Zillow's biggest problem is estimating home value. I would remove that from the site because the numbers are often way off the mark. In my case it was 30% too low and I ignored anyone that referenced Zillow's estimate coming from the buyer's agent. I sold for 30% higher than Zillow's estimate. In any event, Zillow's estimates are polarizing. That is something that I would avoid in a business such as real estate because buyers and sellers remember for a long time.

**Homeowner**

No matter how many times I have tried to edit and tell Zillow, they keep saying my house is 2 blocks away at a different address. Terrible Zillow site, which once was pretty good.

Absolutely! Zillow should be held accountable for messing up the Houston housing market. Mortgage companies use Zillow to get a ball park price prior to giving loans or refinancing. Zillow can not even get our city name fixed or our school district. Many people use Zillow and there is no recourse if they get your house listed incorrectly. I have been trying to get Zillow to fix my listing for 2 years. They have time to get advertisers but they don't have time for listing accuracy. Someone should do something about them. They are screwing up the entire housing market and I wonder to what gain.

Zillow is wrong on many counts on our house. Wrong number of bedrooms, wrong square footage, and the price is 33% below what we paid for the house--noting that property values have held steady in our Small City.

**Professional**

All those sites, just make it easier for the con arts to do their cons. Almost every week, I get a call from someone saying that they are interested in one of my listings, but the price they saw advertised was much less than the actual. All of the information was garnered from Trulia or Zillow but with a lower price and the typically a name and contact to someone out of the country. Just yesterday I was at one of my listing and a gal pulled up and said she was hired to clean the house for the new owner and she was just there to size up the
The house is brand new and not under contract. When asked who hired her she said a nice lady who is from out of state and moving in in a week! Not the case. The nice lady was mailing her a check for $1,000.00 and she was supposed to keep half to clean and give $500.00 to her movers who would meet her out front. The cleaning lady had my listing in her hand that the "nice lady from out of state" sent her. Scam!

I have been very entertained in viewing this video and perspective and in looking through the comments from Glenn Kelman and Spencer Rascoff. I am one of the few people who has considerable experience with Zillow, Redfin, Trulia and has an in depth knowledge of the brokerage industry as well. In 2011, I actually was in top 100 agents of more than 16,000 in the NWMLS. I spent over $10K advertising on their site. After almost 2 years, I received only 1 valid lead which did result in a sale. I invested 10K and made about 10K after overhead and taxes. Net I actually lost money considering the time I put into the listing and the opportunity cost of putting those monies into other advertising efforts. Zillow I believe has no real sustainable business model, at least in regards to collecting advertising fees from agents. Additionally, the information (auto valuations) they give to the public is too inaccurate in most cases to be of value. Newer neighborhoods with similar spec levels are easy to value. Older neighborhoods with various specs, sizes, construction materials are almost impossible to value and Zillow even states that on their site in fine print.

Renter
Zillow does a great job keeping the realtors honest. It's amazing to see how they all whine about their commissions and how unfair the Zestimates are to their sales. You can see that here in most of the comments. I have heard realtor complain about only being able to sell a $200k house versus a $400k. The fact of the matter is they colluded with the banks, appraisers, and other realtors to keep their high priced commissions so that they could feed off everybody. I am just glad that I didn't buy a house during the bubble. I just rented until the prices came down to where they are reasonable. I remember when I had just moved to Vegas and a realtor was telling me prices were going up when they were falling. Unfortunately for them I had some connections that told me otherwise. At that time it was the start of the foreclosures. So they were right in it from the very beginning and knew what was going to happen. I have no sympathy for the majority of the realtors out there. They were an equal part of the problem to begin with.

Anyone
Zillow, Trulia and other similar sites are "ENTERTAINMENT" sites. Most professionals and intelligent consumers understand that it is not possible to determine a value of something in every corner of the United States using the same formula. It's like estimating how much every person in the country weighs by using an algarythm. If the media would stop quoting these sites as being reputable information sites, they would become what they have always been meant to be, FUN. It's no different than going on line and checking your horoscope or believing everything you read on Wikipedia. Just because it's "on the internet" doesn't mean it's true or accurate. You might as well ask the Magic 8 Ball what your home is worth. Chill Out and have a little fun.
Interview Analysis

Viewpoints of Zillow Users
Overview

Attending several open houses gave me the advantage of talking with people face-to-face. I have been able to reach people who are potential home buyers that I would have otherwise had a difficult time contacting by cold calling. While they are in the house-buying mode, I was able to meet and establish a rapport with them. My recruitment for interview respondents was based on a convenience sample. From my conversations at the open houses, I learned that many people who were scouting for a home to purchase were able to provide a duel perspective about the Zillow website. A lot of people who were attempting to purchase a home have also been using the Zillow website as house sellers. In that regard, I think I was able to acquire a holistic view of the usage of Zillow. Due to time constraints, I interviewed 6 people who were prospective home buyers. The respondents that I interviewed used the Zillow website to varying degrees. Some were more frequent users than others.

The interview I would be conducting would be face-to-face structured. I thought it would be apt to conduct interviews that delve in for deeper information to discern how the Zillow website could figure into the house buying process.

The interview started with an explanation of the study objectives. As the researcher, I described how the objectives of the study would identify the typical reasons for using the Zillow website as well as descriptions of user experiences. I also assured them of confidentiality and gave them a form to sign stating they understood. This form is in Appendix A.

My aim was to conduct interviews that would keep the questions brief with follow up probes. I wanted to ensure that I was not asking double-barreled, double-negative or vague questions. I also wanted to avoid biases about Zillow by avoiding leading or loading questions. I wanted to inquire about desired outcomes as opposed to asking what kind of solutions users would like to see if they cite frustrations with the Zillow website.

Below are interview questions that I used to discern what the tasks people engaged in as they used Zillow. The outcome analysis could lend to survey that the Zillow may want to conduct. The interview findings seem to echo what I concluded from the sentiment analysis, in that Zillow is seems to be more advantageous to the homebuyer than that the house seller.

Analysis
1. **What kind of activities do you do when you go through house buying process?** *Probe*  
*Where exactly does Zillow figure into your process of seeking home for purchase?*

The respondents used Zillow in various phrases of the search process. None of the respondents used Zillow as their primary guide for house hunting. Many resorted to Zillow as kind of after the fact. They used Zillow to check out the property they found out about through other means.

One respondent talked about how she used Zillow by using her iPhone while she was at the location.

> If I’m moving to a new area, I need a good real estate agent who knows the local market and who comes to understand what I’m looking for. The publicly available MLS listings provide me with a feel for the typical prices and allow me to build a candidate list of houses to visit. I will look through Zillow after I have looked at the homes. I usually do not use Zillow before looking at the houses. Sometimes I scan the Zillow website from iPhone while I am at the house I’m look at.

Other respondents described how they use Zillow if they see something they like on another website:

> I find out from my friends who they know in the real estate world. Right now I’m working with my real estate agent by looking at the listings on his website. If I see something I really like, I also look at Zillow because it’s free.

> I tend to go to open houses. I use both Zillow and Craigslist in looking for homes. If I see something on Craigslist I like, I look for it on Zillow.

There are some do see Zillow’s estimates as being helpful, which is different than the online discussions about Zillow’s inaccurate estimates:

> I call people whom I know in the area, to get a referral to an agent who is good. I make a list of my requirements and start viewing. I could consider fixer-uppers if the price is right, but the house would need to have potential for improvement and be structurally sound. Zillow provides me a sanity check on market price realism.

> I like to look at houses each weekend. There are always open houses on Sundays, and these open houses give me ideas. I have not bought a house since Zillow started, but I use Zillow to keep up with the rentals rates, as I lease several apartments in the area.

One respondent described herself as a browser, which I would classify as a tertiary user:
With so many tools available today, I only look at houses whose profiles have several available photos. I have lived in the area all of my life. I would use an agent I know through friends. Because of my kids I want an agent that is available to show houses during of school hours. I would never buy a house during the middle of a school year unless a company is moving me. I might browse through Zillow, but I really don’t see using online tools to make my decisions. My kids might come up with interesting finds, though.

2. **What kind of information do you usually look for when you browse through the Zillow website?**  
**Probe What kind of information do you successfully get from the Zillow website?**

The two features that I would hear often from the respondents was the price of the home and photos. It seems that these features are paramount to search for home because a lot people want to see what they features look like without having to physically be there. Also the price can be the decisive factor for most people.

One respondent noted the need to look at the home estimates of surrounding homes in the neighborhood he is considering:

> The zestimates of surrounding houses are interesting, but I don't pay too much attention to that. Time of last major upgrades helps inform me of where to look for problems. I want to see the comparables Zillow shows. Sometimes you see other homes that were sold that are similar to the house I'm considering.

Another respondent noted the need to find out the history of a home in terms of price and market value:

> I get price history data. I find out how much a house sold and which years. I find out the tax appraised value. I know you get this information from public records, but it is all there on Zillow.

Most of the respondents reiterated the need for photos and the price:

> I look through homes that have available photos. I want as many details as possible. I don't use it as my only guide. I like being able to compare the home I'm looking at with other homes that are like it and have been sold. I like zestimates because it give me an idea of where the price should be. It doesn't just give you one price- they offer you a range. Zillow also tells you how reliable their home prices are with the areas you are looking at.

> I use Zillow to see typical home prices. I also like to look at photos. Pictures are important. I look at price, location, how many bedrooms and bathrooms. I compare the price that the seller is offering the house for then I compare it to Zillow. I sometimes
think Zillow is off track and then other times I see Zillow is being on close in range on the home prices.

I use Zillow for lease rates and for photos of houses that people want to sell. I like to look at the pictures. That is most important and the price. I plug in the price and the location that I want to be in.

3. What do you consider the most useful features of Zillow website to be?

It seems that many of the useful features were based on what the respondent’s priorities are. For example, if the respondent was interested in accessing the Zillow from the iPhone, then she would have emphasized the visuals and well is downloads:

Zillow’s aerial views help alert me to local blemishes in the community that would be hidden by trees. I like the visuals. I like the map and the way it is color coded. It comes up really well on my iPhone.

Another respondent did mention the ability to navigate as an important feature:

Zillow’s search bar is easy to use. Other useful features graph charts that show the value history of home over the years. It’s also useful to get the tax value and how much it sold for in the past.

Respondents did note how helpful it was to have the opportunity to look at the neighborhood, not just the home:

Features of nearby houses that are not for sale help me make decisions on the neighborhoods that are desirable. That I would find if they sell fast in the neighborhood. I get an idea of what other people think of the neighborhood.

I would say the most useful features are photos, comparing with other homes, finding out the tax appraised value.

Again- in spite of the negativity about the Zillow’s property estimates, there are people that do find them useful:

Zillow has the rental zestimates that I sometimes like. Just like the market estimates, they aren't perfect.

They give you a market price. There are list prices, but then they give you a price what they think its worth. It's usually less than what the list price is. There are other considerations such as nuances of a particular neighborhood. Zillow doesn't go too much into the details of a neighborhood. So there is the good and bad.
4. Do you use the Zillow website differently as a house buyer than you would as someone selling a house? Probe If yes, how so? If no, do you see the information for selling a house is just as a useful as it is for purchasing a home?

There some respondents that could see more value of using Zillow as a homebuyer, but not as a home seller. They could see how the home estimates would be a kind of reality check for homebuyer, but could be inhibiting for the home seller:

Zillow estimates underestimate the value of a house, as most houses are based on appraisals for tax purposes, which are protested to bring down the value of the house. As a buyer, I am disappointed at the market prices, because they are higher than Zillow’s estimate, and a seller would sell himself short by using Zillow instead of an agent to help set the right price. I can see how Zillow could be frustrating for both the buyer and seller.

The seller’s agent will be involved in setting the price. I think Zillow provides more useful data to the buyer. But as a seller- it’s frustrating. I’m torn with Zillow.

There were respondents that did see the value of Zillow as house seller or as a property manager:

I use the Zillow site for information that a seller would get from her agent. Zillow is more useful for buyers than for sellers. If I were a seller I might use Zillow as a way to figure the price of my home. I would see what other homes in the neighborhood sold for.

Zillow is equally useful to me as a buyer of property and of a selling person who sets rental rates. For these reasons, I feel that Zillow helps both buyer and seller similarly.

I never used Zillow as someone was selling house. I would think that as a seller I might want to use some of the features that would help to advertise their home. I would make sure the photos are posted. As buyer, I use Zillow to find out about the nearest schools and if they have good ratings.

5. Do you seek out other websites for real estate information? Probe If so, how is the information that you seek different from the Zillow website? If not, do think Zillow website satisfies all of your needs?

Most of the respondents use other websites in addition to Zillow. A lot of the respondents seemed to trust the websites that their agents directed them to:
I use MLS, which has data on houses that are currently for sale. MLS has more details and pictures than Zillow does.

It would be helpful to look at sites like Re/Max and Coldwell Banker. I do trust these sites because the real estate agent has a direct hand with them.

Most agents use the MLS. I use it to find those houses that don’t match all needs that I give to my agent, but houses that have unique features, which place them higher on my list.

Some respondents noted that the Zillow had a more comprehensive listing than the website of their real estate agent.

I look at sites from individual real estate companies such as Coldwell Banker. However, they will not have the complete listings that Zillow does. Just the homes for sale.

I use Craigslist. I use my real estate agents website. But I mostly use Zillow because of the price comparisons. I don’t get those from my real estate agent.

Only one respondent chose to rely mostly on Zillow for the search:

Zillow is adequate to meet my needs getting information for a lot of available properties.

Summary

The interview findings seem to echo the sentiment analysis that demonstrates that Zillow seems to be more amiable to the homebuyer as opposed to the home seller. Much of that centered on the price estimate of the homes.

The interview findings add another interesting observation. None of the respondents I had seemed to be using Zillow as a Web 2.0 website. I did not hear any of the respondents talk about how they engaged in discussions or reached out to any professionals on the Zillow website. It seems they are using Zillow much in the same way that they would use their real estate agent’s website. This could be an indication that Zillow could improve their accessibility and marketability of the Web 2.0 features.
Five Personas to Think About

Potential User Types with Accompanying Scenarios
Sharon Goodman
Homebuyer

“The area I’m living in right now doesn’t seem to have that sense of community. I want buy a home in an area where my daughter could be exposed to good quality schools”

Sharon Goodman works as a counselor for people who are undergoing treatment for cancer. Shortly after her divorce two years ago, Sharon moved into an apartment complex that has recently had some burglaries. She does not think the environment she lives in is all that secure for her and her daughter. She does not think the schools in the area she lives are good quality since they all have had low ratings. Sharon is feeling relatively financial comfortable since she just got a raise at her job. She consistently gets good work performance reviews.

The Goodman family currently needs information about neighborhoods in the suburbs that she is considering. She wants to know the school ratings as well as the crime statistics. She also wants to how often people move in and out of a neighborhood. She wants an affordable house with a backyard.

Sharon is utilizing Zillow as many of their many resources for pricing information. She enjoys the easy price comparisons. She tends to use Zillow on her iPhone after she has looked at a home.

Contact Information
• Email: sgoodman@yahoo.com
  Phone: 832.851.8592

Background
• Hometown: Houston, TX
• Age Group: 32-40
• Children: Proud parent of one daughter named Patricia
• Pets: A cat named Tommy
• Marital Status: Divorced

Occupation
• Counselor at MD Anderson Cancer Institute

Her Interests
• Favorite hobbies: Getting together with women friends in her book club
• Activities: Is heavily involved in church

Education
• B.A. in Psychology
• M.A. in Counseling

Computer and Web Skills
• Is a PC user
• Has a desktop shares with daughter and her own laptop
• User of social media
• Comfortable making online purchases

Situational Context
• Currently lives in a 2 bedroom / 2 bath apartment in Westchase district.
• Is interested in living in a neighborhood where there is more of sense of community.
• Wants to take advantage of the low housing prices and mortgage rates.

Relationship to Company
• Client type: A primary user, but still uses other sources for extra information since her real estate agent encourages her to do so.
• Features used: Zestimates, price comparisons, neighborhood information.
Sharon Goodman
Homebuyer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Scenarios</th>
<th>Envisioned Features</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Determining market value of home   | Sharon has been looking for a home for her and her daughter to live. She wants to make sure that the home she purchases is not only within her budget, but also has been appraised accurately. She wants to make sure that does not get herself into a situation where she owes more than a home is worth. She constantly wonders if the housing market has already hit its bottom in the greater Houston area. | • Accurate home values would be listed along with an in-depth explanation as why a home with similar features is priced differently  
• A report providing indicators on determining if the housing market has hit its bottom, such as whether all foreclosed homes in the area have been processed. |
| Getting to know the residential area of interest | Sharon wants to know all that there is to know, about areas where she is thinking about moving to, because she doesn’t want to take any chances, given that she has a daughter to protect. She would like to have information including crime reports, registered sex offenders, school reports and landmarks. She would also like to learn about the community feel, since that is what she feels is missing for her family. | • A comprehensive report of an area that provide information about crime statistics, school ratings and landmarks. The report would be automatically generated from the website by checking off a series of boxes would like to see in the report.  
• Ratings and written reviews by people who are intimate with the areas that she is targeting for a home purchase. |
John and Jill Murray are professionals living in Washington DC. John just received a job offer to work as a software engineering in the oil industry in Houston, TX. Jill is disappointed about having to leave her job, but she sees that John’s job offer has a much higher salary from which the family could benefit. Jill is currently looking for a job in Houston, TX. From what John and Jill have seen on Zillow, they believe could purchase a bigger home for their money in Houston than what they currently have.

The Murray family currently needs information to figure out the market value of their home. They have enjoyed living in their home for five years and have good experiences with the area schools. They foresee that the next person who buys their home will enjoy the relatively quiet neighborhood that is child-friendly.

John and Jill are utilizing Zillow as many of their many resources for pricing information. They want easy to understand information about price comparisons. Additionally, they want effective staging techniques.

Contact Information
- Email: murray_family@comcast.net
- Phone: 703-347-9436
John and Jill Murray
House Sellers

Alexandria Home Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Scenarios</th>
<th>Envisioned Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Determining Market Value of Home</strong></td>
<td>John and Jill want to sell their home as quickly as possible, but they want to make sure that they do not lose the amount of money they put into it in terms of mortgage payments and renovations. They don’t want to be in a situation where they price the home too high, which would mean longer time to sell a home. They don’t want to price it too low, which would mean they would lose money.</td>
<td>• Provide accurate home estimates  • Provide sold properties that have similar feature to the home one is wanting to sell  • Provide contact information to real estate agents who have had good reviews.  • Provide a venue for people to recommend real estate agents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas for Effective Staging Techniques</strong></td>
<td>John and Jill would like to effectively stage their home so it looks appealing to prospective homebuyers. They still have a lot of their things in the house, which does not impart enough neutrality for various people to consider it. They also have furniture that is outdated. Lastly, their house smells like their dogs.</td>
<td>• Provide videos and photos of what home could look like for open houses  • Provide tips on how stage a home while staying in budget  • Provide references for people who could them with the moving of furniture and making the house spotless for guests.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jack and Linda Burmeister
Homeowners

“After 11 years of living in our house, we figured it was time for an update. We see it as improving the quality of our life while putting in sweat equity for when we are ready to sell”

Jack and Linda Burmeister are professionals living in in the Northwest side of Raleigh, NC. Jack and Linda are happy with the neighborhood they live in because there is so much that is accessible. There is a hospital nearby, but not too close. The area’s schools have had consistently high ratings. The mall is accessible, without being too close to traffic. The neighborhood has a strong community spirit.

Now Jack and Linda are thinking about the current comfort of home. They have also taken a strong interest in DIY projects as well as with working with contractors to improve their home. Additionally, they see a advantage of increasing the value of their should they want to downsize. They have a tendency to plan ahead.

Although Jack and Linda have watching the value of home drop on Zillow with much concern, they try see the current housing market as a temporary situation. They try to figure out which projects they could tackle themselves. Sometimes they might look through for names of contractors on Zillow.

Contact Information

- Email: Burmeister@verizon.net
- Phone: 919.787.6198

Background
- Hometown: Raleigh, NC
- Age Group: 44-50
- Children: Two sons in high school, Adam and Zach
- Pets: Two dogs named Sam and Cosmo

Occupation
- Jack: A Criminal Attorney
- Linda: Teaching Autistic children

Their Interests
- Favorite hobbies: Home improvement projects
- Activities: Jack just joined a gym and Linda is involved in her book club

Education
- Jack: J.D. in Criminal Law
- Linda: M.A. in Psychology

Computer and Web Skills
- Both are PC users
- Jack carries a laptop to and from work
- Linda uses an iPad in addition to her PC
- Linda uses social media, but Jack would prefer not to because of privacy reasons
- Both make online purchases

Situational Context
- Currently own a 4 bedroom / 2.5 bath home in an middle class suburb.
- Would like to increase the equity of their aging home, which was built in the 1970s.
- In addition to the outdated features in the kitchen and bathrooms, they also are seeing that updates are necessary for the sake of safety.

Relationship to Company
- Client type: As tertiary users, Jack and Linda will sometimes look at Zillow to see how much their home is worth. However, they try not to take too much stock in it.
- Features used: Home improvement ideas. Price comparisons with other homes in neighborhood. Information about open houses so they get ideas for improving their home.
Jack and Linda Burmeister
Homeowners

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| Determining what could be done to increase the value of a home        | Jack and Linda want to make some home improvements, but they don’t want to make any changes that would not bring in ROI. At the same time, they would like to enjoy their home more with improved amenities. They want something they could enjoy and is going to be appealing to prospective homebuyers in the later years. | • Provide articles explaining what features would be most appealing to prospective homebuyers.  
• Provide DIY videos of people who have made changes to their home and what kind of ROI they should expect.                                                                                                                                 |
| Finding reliable people to work on renovating their home              | Jack and Linda know they cannot make all the home improvement themselves. There are some tasks they do not have the skills for. They also don’t have the time to learn such skills. But they do want to hire someone who is skilled, has credibility for providing honest work and is reliable. They also want someone who is not going to overcharge them. | • Provide a venue for contractors could advertise their services.  
• Provide articles on how to choose an effective contractor who will work on their home while staying within their budget.  
• Provide a venue for registered users to recommend a contractor.                                                                                                                                                  |
Denise Pasaro
Renter

“After getting my degree in computer science, I moved back in with my parents long enough to find a job to support myself. I really need to be on my own. But I’m not sure if I should buy or rent.”

Denise Pasaro is just starting out in life with a degree in computer science. She just got job working as a software programmer. Although graduated with a 4.0 grade point average, she found extremely difficult to get her foot in the door. While living with parents she did a considerable amount of networking as well as an unpaid internship. After 5 months, she finally secured an entry level position.

Now Denise is ready to venture out on her own. She is thinking of renting out or buying a condominium in Philadelphia. Since she is starting out in her career, she wants to find a place that they can afford. She is also concerned about finding an area that is safe to live in.

Denise will eventually want to own her own home, but she is not sure what she wants in a home. She is not even so sure she wants to live in Philadelphia five years from now. She dreams of living abroad while she is still young.

Contact Information
• Email: dpasaro@hotmail.com
• Phone: 856.567.9087

Background
• Hometown: Mt. Laurel, NJ
• Age Group: 22-30
• Siblings: Two younger brothers named Dennis and David
• Pets: One cat named Katy, one dog name Charlie

Occupation
• Recently secured a position as a software programming

Their Interests
• Favorite hobbies: Hiking, Canoeing
• Activities: Gets together with her single women friends on the weekends

Education
• B.A. Computer Science with a minor in French

Computer and Web Skills
• A Mac user
• Uses laptop
• Significant user of social media, can’t imagine life without it
• Comfortable making online purchases

Situational Context
• Currently lives at home with parents.
• Recently found job with a company that offers competitive pay for an entry level position as well good benefits
• She wants to rent or buying a condominium near downtown city life of Philadelphia.

Relationship to Company
• Client type: As tertiary users, Denise is looking for an affordable place that she could afford. She wants amenities such as a place near a bus line and places to meet with her friends.
• Features used: Rent Zestimates along with neighborhood features.
## Goals

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| Figuring out if she wants to buy or rent | Denise is trying to figure out if she should take advantage of the fact that it is currently a buyer’s market, because the mortgage rates and housing prices are so low. Right now she is leaning towards renting her first place, but is wondering if it would be to her financial advantage to purchase a place. | • Provide an interactive feature that lists the pros and cons of buying vs. renting a home.  
• Provide a calculator tool that lets one figure their salary and living expenses with the buying or renting a home. The calculator tool would show costs and benefits in both long and short terms. |
| Finding condominium that is highly rated and has amenities | Denise is a single woman who wants to live in Philadelphia, but she wants to make sure it is secure in terms of safety. She wants a view of Philadelphia’s skyline. She also wants to make sure the place is pet friendly. She is also looking a gym onsite. | • Provide a venue for people to review condominiums and apartments.  
• Provide an exhaustive list of amenities for one to check off in terms of what exactly they want for a living environment. |
Robert Malkovich
Real Estate Agent

Background
- Hometown: Denver, Colorado
- Age Group: 50-60
- Family: Wife named Patty and two adult children named Samantha and Stephen

Occupation
- Real Estate Agent
- Reputable and partnered with a agency

His Interests
- Favorite hobbies: Attending wine tasting events, reading nonfiction books
- Activities: Robert likes to spend his time watching the DIY channel. He likes to take cruise trips to relax.

Education
- B.A. in History
- Real Estate license.

Computer and Web Skills
- A PC user
- Savvy at using Office applications
- He keeps track of his clients on laptop
- Is not an ardent user of social media
- Occasionally makes online purchases

Situational Context
- Robert has been working as a real estate agent for the last 25 years
- His clients love the amount of individual attention he gives them. They see him as someone who cares.
- He notices the information he feeds to the Multiple Listing Service ends up on Zillow.

Relationship to Company
- Client type: As an anti-user of Zillow he tries to convince his clients to use Realtor.com.
- Features used: He advertises his services on Realtor.com

"I am sick and tired of sites like Zillow and Trulia taking the information I feed the MLS while trying to sell me advertising space on their website. Shouldn’t they be paying me?"

Robert Malkovich has worked hard to develop a relationship as caring and dedicated real estate agent. He understands how purchasing a home can be one of the biggest decisions of your life. He is patient with his clients as takes them around town to show them homes. Due to the reputation for professional integrity, relocation specialists will often call on him to help their clients with their home purchases in a city they are not familiar with.

Robert has been noticing that home sellers and homebuyers are sometimes citing Zillow home estimates with him. He encourages his clients to not look to Zillow for determining the price of a home because of frequent inaccuracies. He explains that Zillow doesn’t take into account all the details that determine the value of a home.

Robert has resorted to Realtor.com because he sees that they give him the space to do his work without trying to make his services obsolete. He also sees that Realtor.com does not cause confusion with inaccurate information.

Contact Information
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Robert Malkovich  
Real Estate Agent  

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| Getting support that compliments his services              | Robert is noticing that a lot of his clients are often citing price figures that are not even close to the asking prices of homes he is trying to sell. When he finds out they are receiving their price quotes from Zillow, he explains that the home prices tend to be inaccurate. He would like to work with a website that is actually open and forthcoming in how they price homes. He wants his clients to be in more control in determining the price of their homes. | • Features that enable a website to reach out to the real estate agents and works with them in determining the market value of a home to be listed through some developed features.  
• Features that request invites feedback from real estate agents how to best present the information about homes.  
• Adequately presenting the real estate that is really representing the property. |
| Continue to have his services valued by the homebuyers and home sellers | Robert would like to stay in the real estate industry and not be treated as obsolete figure head. He wonders how much syndicated real estate listing websites are being used and how many are thinking that real estate agents are no longer necessary. But he does see the real estate agents are needed to broker deals between people who are making a very emotionally vested decision about buying and selling property. | • Features that offer training and development for real estate agents  
• Features that offer websites and widgets for real estate agents to advertise themselves.  
• Offering real estate agents sense community amongst each other through discussion boards.  
• Provide a means advocacy on behalf of real estate agents. |
Works Cited


