

BookThread - Product Requirements Document

Product Overview

Product Name: BookThread

Tagline: "Every book is a conversation waiting to happen"

Description: BookThread is a social platform designed specifically for book lovers to share their reading journey through micro-content. Users can post quotes, reading progress updates, mini-reviews (280 characters), participate in reading challenges, and form book clubs—all in a Twitter-like feed interface optimized for literary discussion.

Problem Statement

Current social platforms for readers (Goodreads, StoryGraph) focus heavily on ratings and long-form reviews, making quick engagement difficult. Twitter allows quick posts but lacks book-specific features like progress tracking, quote sharing with proper attribution, and structured reading challenges. BookThread bridges this gap by combining the brevity and engagement of Twitter with features tailored specifically for readers.

Target Audience

Primary Users

- **Casual Readers (Ages 18-35):** Read 10-20 books/year, active on social media, enjoy sharing recommendations
- **Book Influencers:** BookTubers, Bookstagrammers, BookTokers looking for text-based engagement
- **Reading Challenge Enthusiasts:** Motivated by goals, streaks, and community accountability

Secondary Users

- **Book Club Members:** Groups looking for a digital space to discuss
 - **Authors & Publishers:** Seeking authentic reader engagement and feedback
 - **Librarians & Educators:** Sharing recommendations with students/patrons
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Core Features (MVP)

1. Posts ("Threads")

Description: Twitter-style posts limited to 280 characters

Types of Threads:

- **Quote Thread:** Share a quote from a book (auto-formatted with book attribution)
- **Progress Thread:** "Just finished Chapter 5 of [Book]" with % completion
- **Review Thread:** Mini-review or reaction (280 chars max)
- **Thought Thread:** General book-related musings

Requirements:

- Rich text editor with 280 character limit counter
- Book tagging system (links to book pages)
- Support for images (book covers, reading setup photos)
- Spoiler tag functionality (click to reveal)
- Thread replies and nested conversations

2. User Profiles

Components:

- Profile photo and bio (150 chars)
- Currently reading section (up to 3 books)
- Reading stats: books finished this year, total books, reading streak
- Favorite genres (select up to 5)
- Followers/Following count
- Personal bookshelf (grid view of book covers)

3. Book Pages

Each book has a dedicated page showing:

- Cover image and metadata (title, author, publication year)
- Aggregate rating (5-star system)
- All threads mentioning this book (quotes, reviews, progress updates)
- "Want to Read" / "Currently Reading" / "Finished" buttons
- Link to purchase/borrow (affiliate links)

4. Feed Algorithm

Home Feed shows:

- Threads from people you follow
- Popular threads from books you've marked as interested
- Threads from your reading challenge participants
- Occasional trending books/threads

Sorting options:

- Latest (chronological)
- Popular (engagement-based)
- From followed users only

5. Reading Challenges

Built-in challenges:

- Annual reading goal (e.g., "Read 24 books in 2026")
- Genre diversity challenge
- Page count milestones
- Reading streak (consecutive days with reading activity)

Features:

- Public or private challenges
- Challenge progress widget on profile
- Leaderboard for competitive challenges
- Custom challenges (create your own rules)

6. Book Clubs

Functionality:

- Create public or private clubs (max 50 members for MVP)
- Set current book with reading schedule
- Club-only feed for discussions
- Reading pace tracker (are members keeping up?)
- Poll feature for voting on next book
- Chapter discussion threads

7. Search & Discovery

Search capabilities:

- Search books by title, author, ISBN
- Search users by username
- Search threads by content or hashtags
- Filter by genre, publication year, rating

Discovery features:

- Trending books (most mentioned this week)
- Trending quotes (most liked/shared)
- Suggested users based on reading overlap
- "Books your friends are reading"

8. Notifications

Notification types:

- New follower
 - Someone liked/replied to your thread
 - Book club activity (new posts, reading reminders)
 - Reading challenge milestones reached
 - Friend finished a book you're reading
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User Stories

Core Flows

As a new user, I want to:

- Sign up quickly and discover users with similar reading tastes
- See an onboarding flow that asks for favorite genres and books
- Get book and user recommendations immediately

As a reader, I want to:

- Share a powerful quote from my current book with proper attribution
- Mark my reading progress and see how far I've come
- Write quick reactions without the pressure of a full review
- See what my friends are currently reading
- Get inspired by what's trending in my favorite genres

As a book club member, I want to:

- Create a private space for my club to discuss
- Set reading schedules and see who's keeping up
- Vote on our next book democratically
- Archive past discussions for reference

As a challenge participant, I want to:

- Set an annual reading goal and track progress
 - Compete with friends on reading streaks
 - Discover challenges that push me to read diversely
 - Celebrate milestones publicly
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Design Guidelines

Visual Identity

- **Color Palette:** Warm, bookish tones (cream backgrounds, deep browns, burgundy accents)
- **Typography:** Serif fonts for quotes, sans-serif for UI elements
- **Iconography:** Book-themed icons (bookmark for save, open book for reading, etc.)

UX Principles

- **Minimal friction:** Post creation should take < 10 seconds
 - **Mobile-first:** 70% of users will access via mobile
 - **Instant feedback:** Optimistic UI updates for likes, follows
 - **Accessibility:** WCAG 2.1 AA compliance minimum
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Success Metrics

Engagement Metrics (Primary)

- **Daily Active Users (DAU):** Target 40% of MAU
- **Posts per user per week:** Target average of 3+
- **Reading challenge completion rate:** Target 30%

Growth Metrics

- **User sign-ups:** Track weekly growth rate
- **Retention:** 30-day retention target of 40%
- **Viral coefficient:** Track invites sent and accepted

Content Metrics

- **Books added to platform:** Target 50,000+ in first year
 - **Threads created per day:** Track growth trajectory
 - **Book club activity:** Active clubs with weekly posts
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Future Enhancements (Post-MVP)

Phase 2 Features

- Reading analytics dashboard (reading speed, genre breakdown, time spent)
- Barcode scanning to add books quickly
- Author verification and author AMAs
- Reading buddy matching algorithm
- Export reading data (CSV, PDF report)
- Browser extension for capturing quotes while reading ebooks

Phase 3 Features

- Podcast integration (link episodes discussing books)
- Virtual book club video calls (integrated)
- Personalized reading recommendations using ML
- Reading together feature (synchronized reading sessions)
- Merchandise (reading trackers, bookmarks with your stats)

Monetization (Future)

- **Free tier:** Core features, ad-supported
 - **Premium tier (\$4.99/month):**
 - Ad-free experience
 - Advanced analytics
 - Unlimited book clubs
 - Early access to features
 - Custom profile themes
 - **Affiliate revenue:** Book purchase links
 - **Author/Publisher tools:** Promoted posts, analytics dashboard
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Risks & Mitigations

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Low initial user base leads to empty feeds	High	Seed platform with book influencer beta testers, create algorithmic "discover" feed
Copyright issues with quote sharing	Medium	Implement fair use guidelines, character limits, require attribution
Competition from established platforms	High	Focus on unique features (challenges, micro-content), strong community building
Spam/low-quality content	Medium	Implement reporting system, community moderation, new user rate limits
Database of books incomplete	Medium	Use multiple APIs, allow user submissions with verification

Open Questions

1. Should we allow users to add books not in our database? (Yes - with moderation)
2. How do we handle multiple editions of the same book? (Link editions, show most popular)
3. Should quotes have a maximum length beyond the 280 thread limit? (Yes - 500 chars for quotes specifically)
4. Do we need content moderation for threads? (Yes - automated + community reporting)
5. Should book clubs have size limits? (Yes - 50 for MVP, scale later)

Appendix

Competitive Analysis

- **Goodreads:** Strength in catalog and reviews, weakness in social engagement
- **StoryGraph:** Strength in recommendations, weakness in community features
- **Twitter:** Strength in engagement, weakness in book-specific features
- **Literal:** Emerging competitor, similar concept but less challenge/gamification

Technical Stack Recommendation

- **Frontend:** React + TypeScript + Tailwind + Vite
- **Backend:** ASP.NET Core 8 Web API + Entity Framework Core
- **Database:** SQL Server (Azure SQL) or PostgreSQL
- **Deployment:** Azure App Service (backend) + Azure Static Web Apps or Vercel (frontend)
- **Real-time:** SignalR
- **Image hosting:** Azure Blob Storage or Cloudinary
- **Caching:** Redis (Azure Cache for Redis)
- **API Documentation:** Swagger/OpenAPI (built into ASP.NET)

Additional ASP.NET-Specific Tools

- **Logging:** Serilog or built-in ILogger
- **Background Jobs:** Hangfire or Quartz.NET (for notifications, data aggregation)
- **Validation:** FluentValidation
- **Mapping:** AutoMapper
- **Testing:** xUnit + Moq + FluentAssertions