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Home in the Outback: Predicting Housing Prices in Australia

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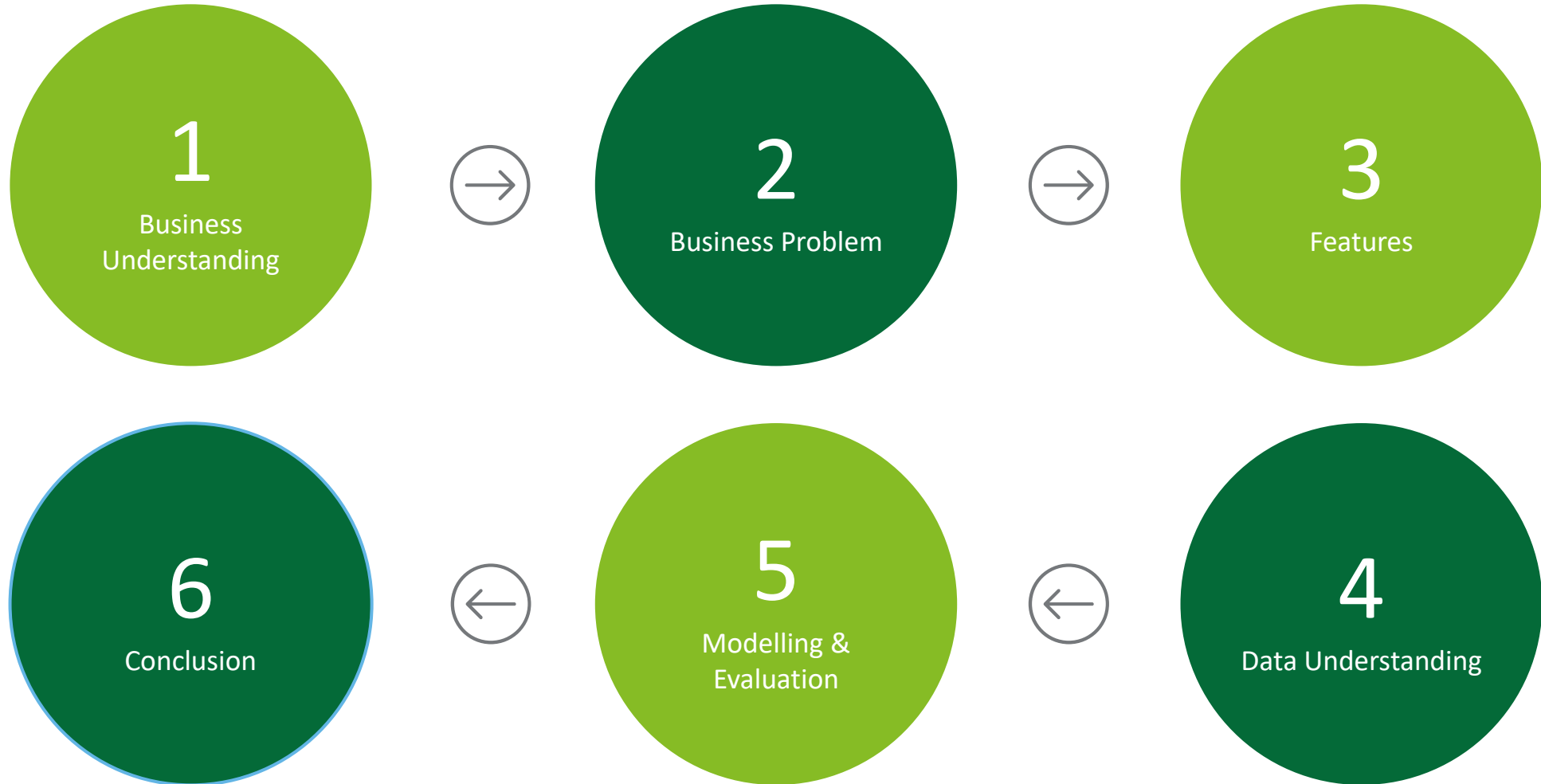
Business Understanding

Australia's housing crisis, largely hidden, is getting worse

Underquoting in Australian real estate industry is leaving buyers feeling betrayed

"It's misleading, it's a fraud on purchasers. And until significant penalties are handed out, regulations have been ineffective … if one does it, others have to follow."

- David Morrel, buyer's advocate

Where It Is Hardest to Afford a Home

Least affordable international housing markets ranked by house price to annual income ratio (2022)*

Market	Ratio
Hong Kong	23.2
Sydney	15.3
Vancouver	13.3
San Jose	12.6
Melbourne	12.1
Honolulu	12.0
San Francisco	11.8
Auckland	11.2
Los Angeles	10.7
Toronto	10.5

* median house/apartment price divided by median annual gross income
Source: Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey

statista

Business Problem

Problem

Potential buyers are having difficulties buying or renting Australian properties.

- Affordability issues

- Historical trend of rising prices

- Rampant underquoting

Objective

Develop a model for these potential homeowners that:

- Determines the true price of a property

- Aids in locating homes that fit the requirements of the seller

- Figures out which homes are sold at a discount

Features

1	**Building Size**	2	**Land Size**
3	**Bedrooms**	4	**Bathrooms**
5	**Parking Spaces**	6	**Property Type**

7   Product Depth
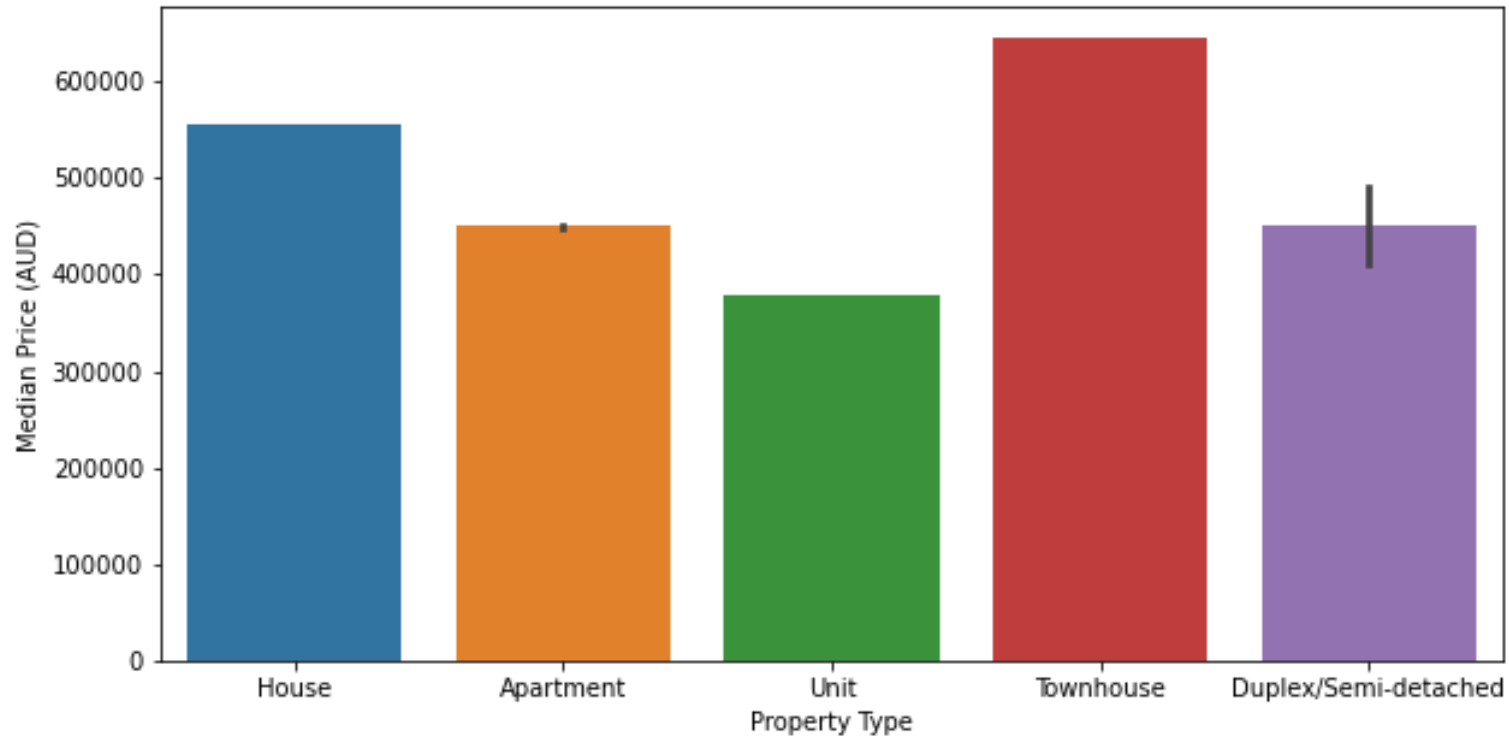
Data Understanding

Figure 1: Median housing prices by property type.
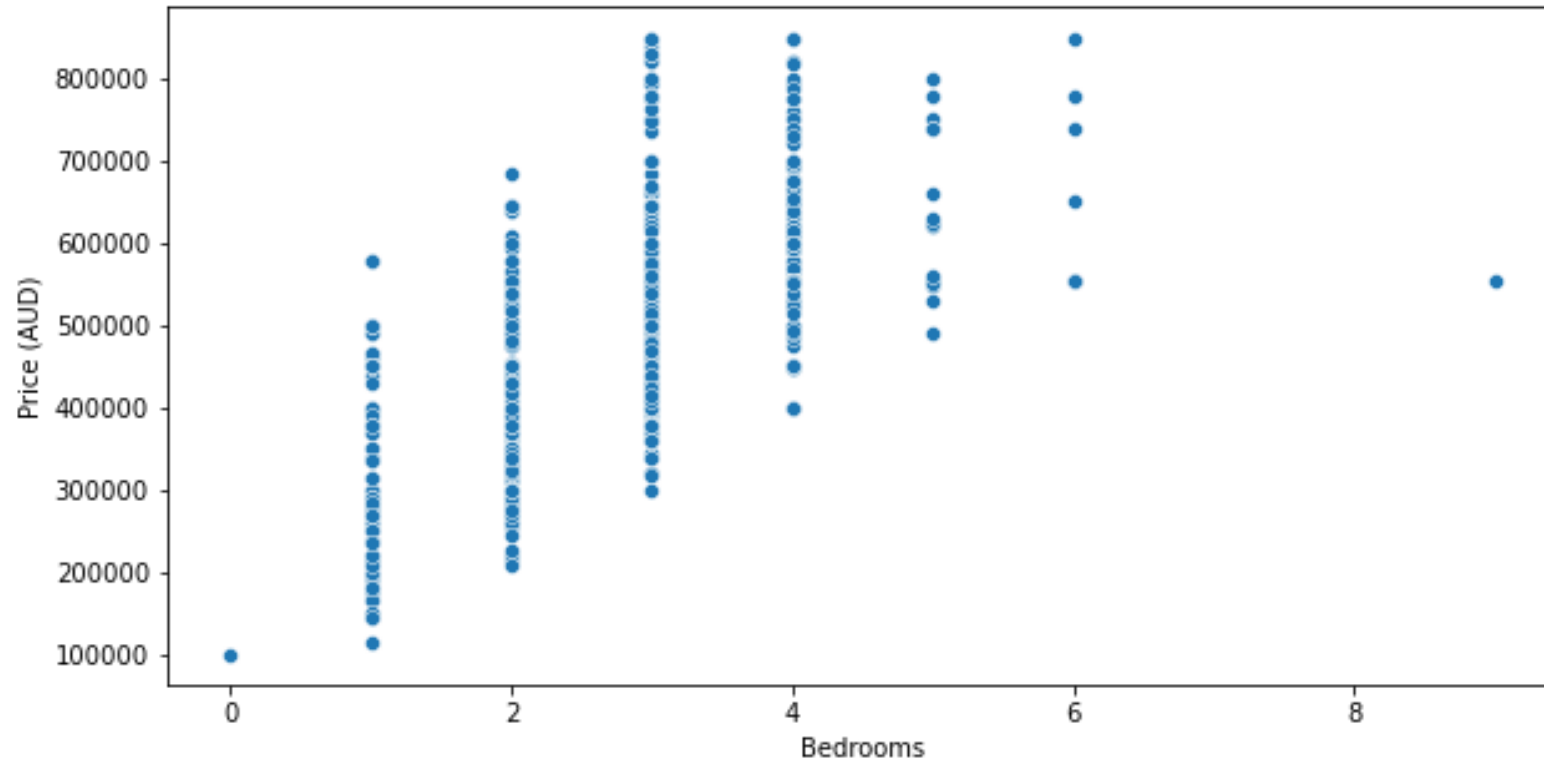
Data Understanding

Figure 2: Housing prices over number of bedrooms.

Data Understanding

	Median	IQR
Building Size (m^2)	147	103
Land Size (m^2)	294.5	650
Bedrooms	3	1
Bathrooms	2	1
Parking Spaces	2	1
Price (AUD)	485,000	177,500

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of features and target.

Modeling & Evaluation

Model	RSME (AUD)
Baseline	124,670.31
Decision Tree	94,997.47
Gradient Boosting	87,969.37
Gradient Boosting (subsampled)	85,967.02

Table 2: Comparison of model test performance.

Conclusion

On average, the best model predicts the true value of Australian housing within 85,967.02 AUD. This is an approximately 31% improvement in performance compared to the baseline.

Limitations

- Listing data is subject to underquoting.
- Small public dataset (1000 listings)
- Inability to implement geographic information.

Future Improvements

- Use sold housing data for true property value.
- Implement neural networks on a larger dataset.
- Investigate the effects listing agencies have on pricing.