

Discuss the features of the mobile app. After you have chosen a mobile app to analyze, briefly identify the app and explain its purpose.

I have been using the Zillow app a lot recently. Not because my wife and I are looking to buy a home, but because we can't afford one now and it is hopeful thinking. The Zillow app is a nationwide real estate and rental search that allows the user to filter the search based on their needs.

Then address each of the following:

1. Describe the app's screens and features.
2. List the major UI components on each screen.
3. Identify where data is included in the app.

Screen 1 – Search

1. The search screen is the first thing the user sees upon launching the app. It displays a map view of the real estate or rentals available. The user can scroll up and it shows a list view of the available properties.
2. and 3. The UI for the map has either red bubbles that designate real estate for sale, or purple bubbles that indicate available rentals. A blue button that allows the user to save the current search filters so the user can come back and check on the various areas they might be interested in. A search bar is located at the top of the screen, with a filter button located to the right of it. Three buttons at the bottom-left of the map allow the user to change the map type, outline the area they would like to search, and go to their current location on the map. The list view shows each option that is on the map, but with more details such as pictures, price, and address. The user may also favorite properties with the heart button on each listing. This data will show up on the Saved Homes screen.

Screen 2 – Updates

1. The Updates screen shows the user updates to their saved searches. New listings, price changes on favorite items and other options in the vicinity. The Updates tab on the navigation bar at the bottom shows a notification bubble indicating the number of updates to searches there have been.
2. and 3. Each of the user's saved searches are displayed if those queries have had any changes in them recently. The user will scroll horizontally to view each of the properties with the changes. Then there is a recommendations section that shows different properties in areas that have been searched in the past, but the search may not have been saved.

Screen 3 – Saved Homes

1. The Saved Homes screen shows a list of each of the real estate or rentals in a list. A very similar list to the one on the Search screen. It also allows the user to see what rentals they have contacted through the app. They can also manage tours they have scheduled in the app.
2. and 3. From top to bottom: a map button to show all the saved homes on a map; a sharing button that gives the user options to automatically share saved homes with a search partner; Manage Tours button; Contacted Rentals button; sort, filter, and compare buttons that do exactly what it sounds like they do; and then the list of the user's saved homes.

Screens 4 and 5 – Home Loans and Your Zillow

1. I admittedly haven't looked at these sections much. It looks like they allow the user to get ready to buy a home. This includes a calculator to see how much they can afford, the option to be preapproved for a home loan, and options to connect to various types of agents. Once the user has a home, they can use the Your Zillow section that allows the user to track how their home changes each year.

Discuss the possible data sources of the mobile app. Determine what data each component of the app either displays or accepts as input. Then, think about where the data might come from. Note that sometimes it may come from external sources, and sometimes from users.

The search bar at the top of the search screen is going to take each of the terms of the search and query the database with them and the search area. The database would be stored on the Zillow servers. Saved Homes could possibly be stored on device, but I would assume they are stored in the user's account and pulled down from the server while the app is loading. The real estate and rental data could be input by users or pulled from other sites like apartments.com or State MLS (Multiple Listing Service).

Explain how the data that users interact with helps them meet their goals. Begin by identifying what kinds of data users are interacting with in the app. Then, discuss how that data helps users meet a need. Think about how that data is being displayed and why that would be beneficial for a user.

While Zillow offers several services within their app, they are primarily going to be interacting with home listings in the app. The main goal of someone using Zillow is to either view listings to find a new place to live or look at the data they have on homes. The data being displayed is useful to the user because without it, there wouldn't be a way for the user to find their "perfect" home.