

Second Home - Student Accommodation and Mess Finder

1. Background Analysis

When students move to new cities such as Lahore, Islamabad, or Karachi for higher education, one of their biggest challenges is finding suitable accommodation and reliable meal services. Currently, students rely on word of mouth, social media, or manual searches to find hostels or mess services, leading to confusion and delays. The fragmented nature of this process makes it hard for students to compare options in terms of price, quality, and proximity to their university.

Inspired by platforms like Airbnb for accommodations and Foodpanda for food delivery, Second Home aims to provide an all-in-one app where students can find nearby hostels and mess services based on their university's location. The goal is to simplify the process for students while also providing hostel owners and mess service providers with an easy way to connect with potential customers, eliminating the need for middlemen.

2. Gap Analysis

This project identifies several key gaps for both students and service providers:

- Students' Perspective:

- **Lack of Centralized Information:** Students coming to a new city are unaware of nearby hostel options, rental prices, and meal services (mess). Currently, they have to rely on scattered online listings, social media groups, or local contacts.

- **No Price Comparison:** Students are unable to easily compare hostel rents or mess prices, which vary widely depending on location, quality, and services offered.

- **Inconsistent Meal Options:** Finding reliable and consistent mess services can be difficult. Students often struggle to find a good monthly meal provider who delivers regularly and at a reasonable cost.

- Hostel and Mess Providers' Perspective:

- Limited Reach: Hostel owners and mess providers typically advertise through local channels, which limits their ability to reach a larger pool of students. They often rely on local ads, social media posts, or word-of-mouth, which might not be sufficient to maintain full occupancy.

- No Online Presence: Many hostels and mess services do not have an established online presence where they can showcase their facilities, rates, and availability, making it hard for them to attract new tenants or customers.

- Middleman Dependence: Hostel owners often rely on intermediaries (such as agents) to connect with students, which can lead to higher costs for both the student and the hostel owner, as middlemen charge commissions.

3. Problem Statement

To resolve the issues faced by both students and service providers, Second Home will serve as a centralized platform for finding nearby hostels and mess services. Key features include:

- Hostel Listings: Students will sign up, choose their city and university, and view a list of hostels sorted by distance, price, and amenities. They will also be able to see reviews from previous tenants, making it easier to find a place that meets their needs.

- Mess Services: Students can browse various mess providers who offer meal delivery options based on the number of meals per day. The app will allow students to filter by price, delivery times, and types of cuisine.

- Price Comparison: Both hostel and mess listings will have clear pricing details, allowing students to compare options easily. This will help them make informed decisions that suit their budget and preferences.

- Booking and Subscriptions: The app will enable students to book hostels or subscribe to a mess service directly through the platform, streamlining the process and saving time for both parties.

- Direct Communication and Booking: By providing direct communication between students and hostel/mess owners, the app eliminates the need for middlemen, reducing costs and improving efficiency.
- For Service Providers: Hostel owners and mess providers will have access to a dashboard where they can list their services, set prices, update availability, and manage bookings efficiently.

4. Methodology

- Backend: Laravel will handle the backend services, providing APIs for managing users, hostel and mess listings, bookings, and payments.
- Frontend: Angular will be used to create a dynamic and user-friendly interface for students and service providers. The interface will include search filters, reviews, maps, and booking options.
- Database: MySQL will be employed for storing user data, hostel and mess listings, reviews, and transaction records.
- Geo-Location Services: Google Maps API will be integrated to display the distance of hostels and mess providers from the student's university, helping students make better location-based decisions.
- Mobile Support: The app will be designed to work across mobile platforms (using Flutter or React Native), ensuring that students can access it from anywhere.

By eliminating middlemen and providing direct access to service providers, Second Home will make the process smoother, more affordable, and transparent for both students and service providers.