



2013 Annual Awards Entry Form
(Complete one for each entry.)

Entry Name HomeCompare: Mobile App

Fill out the entry name <i>exactly</i> as you want it listed in the awards program.

HFA _____

Submission Contact Mary Kate Harrington, Communications/Public Information Specialist

Phone 401-450-1356

Email mharrington@rhodeislandhousing.org

Program Contact Mary Kate Harrington, Communications/Public Information Specialist

Phone 401-450-1356

Email mharrington@rhodeislandhousing.org

Entry form with description, check(s), and visual aids (optional) must be received by NCSHA by **Monday, July 1, 2013**.

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page.

HFA _____

Entry Name _____

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Report <input type="checkbox"/> Promotional Materials and Newsletters <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Creative Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Empowering New Buyers <input type="checkbox"/> Home Improvement and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/> State Advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
<input type="checkbox"/> Multifamily Management <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation and Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging New Production	<input type="checkbox"/> Combating Homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> Housing for Persons with Special Needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Achievement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

HomeCompare: Mobile App Communications: Creative Media

Rhode Island Housing strives to ensure that all people who live or work in Rhode Island can afford a healthy, attractive home that meets their needs. HomeCompare was created to be another tool to help potential Rhode Island homeowners achieve this goal.

Homebuying in the 21st Century

A large part of achieving our mission of helping homebuyers become successful homeowners is making sure that homebuyers understand all the potential costs that are involved with homeownership. Further, buyers need to choose a home that they can afford in the long term. As more buyers use mobile apps to assist them in the home-search process, Rhode Island Housing discovered that there was a noticeable void in the home app market. While there are countless mortgage calculators, property finders and related resources – there are very few apps that help potential buyers realize the true financial investment they are making in a home.

With many homebuyers using Internet services, smartphones and an array of other digital devices for the homebuying process, we designed a mobile app, HomeCompare, to assist future Rhode Island homeowners in making safe, informed decisions for their futures. The overall purpose of the HomeCompare app is to provide users one digital location where they can store all the information about their home search and get a better understanding of the true cost of each prospective home. Unlike other mobile apps that provide only a map and a list price, HomeCompare is designed to offer guidance that helps homebuyers make rational, informed purchasing decisions. The app allows users to list all monthly costs, like taxes, insurance, needed repairs and any additional costs beyond the usual. The app then calculates the total first-year cost.

Development of a Mobile App

For the better part of the last 18 months, Rhode Island Housing and its consultant worked to create and promote this tool to help prospective homebuyers make Rhode Island their home. The app lends itself to a younger, first-time homebuyer market of consumers who are more engaged with mobile technology, apps and social media. Nevertheless, the app is available to anyone in the home search process who owns an iPhone. Based on focus group research and one-on-one interviews with real estate agents and lenders, Rhode Island Housing found that the overwhelming majority of these professionals rely on mobile technology in their daily lives.

Innovative Features

The app includes the following features:

- Capture Home Information: This feature allows users to record a property's address, list price, upload photos and video and make general notes about the property.
- Rate/Rank Homes: Users also have the ability to rate their recorded homes based on their own criteria. Obviously, as homebuyers begin to visit more and more houses, some potential

frontrunners are bound to emerge. HomeCompare allows a user to rate each potential property and rank them on a five-star scale.

- Calculate Total First-Year Cost: HomeCompare is unique in the market because it allows those looking to buy to calculate how much the first year of living in a prospective home will cost. At Rhode Island Housing, we want customers to buy smart. When looking at the projected first-year costs of a home, buyers need to take a lot into consideration. HomeCompare encourages users to input all the conceivable costs for a home and has spaces to add additional expenses, and in return, it provides an estimate of what the first year of living in a home will cost. This function helps users have a better idea of which home best fits their budget.
- Go Social/Share Information: Purchasing a home is not decided strictly by cold hard facts and check lists. After all, buying a home should be fun, and it is important that customers experience joy and excitement in the homebuying process. Therefore, HomeCompare allows users to share the information with their social networks. HomeCompare presents two social media options for users to share their homebuying journey with others:
 - The app is designed to easily integrate with Facebook, so users can upload a new album to Facebook to share their potential homes and describe features in the form of a wall post. This feature will upload non-specific information to a user's wall, but keep more personal information (property address, list price, etc.) private. User's Facebook friends can then comment on the property and engage in social conversation.
 - Additionally, users can draft an email directly through the iPhone's mail application and send a more personal message to friends and family. Users can upload similar property information directly into an email, adding in their own personal message or any other relevant information.

Rolling Out a Mobile App

One of the largest trade shows we take part in is the annual Rhode Island Builder's Association Home Show that takes place in April. The Home Show features 250 vendors and draws thousands of attendees interested in homebuying. Recognizing the extensive platform this event provides for us in reaching a homebuyer market, we utilized the Home Show for the official roll out of HomeCompare. The cornerstone of our booth was the HomeCompare banner and a Powerpoint (*attached*) presentation set on a running loop along with prominently featured mobile app brochures.

Outreach and Promotion

To promote the new HomeCompare mobile app, we utilized a multi-pronged approach:

- HomeCompareri.com: We created a website just for HomeCompare (HomeCompareri.com). It provides an overview of the mobile app; a link to download the app; and contact information for users who may have technical questions. The website links to Rhode Island Housing's website, providing a key access point to our loans and homebuying resources.
- Presentations to various audiences: We utilized existing communications networks among our partners, such as realtors, community development corporations and housing advocates, to assist

with promotion of the app. Recognizing that our relationships with realtor partners would be a useful communications vehicle to homebuyers, we worked closely with the realtor community in creating and launching the app. Realtors have also helped in promoting the app to their contacts and clients. We have provided presentations to local realtor boards and partners on key features of the app, describing how it ties to our efforts to promote homeownership for Rhode Islanders.

- Social Media: Since a key aspect of the use of HomeCompare is the ability to “go social,” we made certain to permeate the social media world with our app promotion as well. Targeted posts on Facebook and Twitter include information about the app as well as images and the links for more information at HomeCompareri.com. All of our electronic communications include quick links to the HomeCompare website as well as to the Apple App Store.
- Effective and Consistent Branding: All promotional materials, including the brochure, website and presentations, have been designed utilizing the same design elements, colors and fonts of Rhode Island Housing branding. We want users to connect the mobile app with Rhode Island Housing so when they are ready to make that home purchase, they also choose our loan products.
- Creation of collateral materials: Creation of an informational brochure and pull-up banner for distribution and display at homebuyer fairs, realtor events and open houses. We also created a cell phone lounge branded with the HomeCompare logo as a giveaway for business partners.
- Existing Collateral Promotion: Incorporated HomeCompare into existing collateral pieces, on the Rhode Island Housing website and through other mediums. Once launched, general employee word-of-mouth has also supported the app.

Making Homebuying Fun

In this market, it is important that we reconnect with customers and once again show them how fun it is to buy a home. Yes, we want our customers to make informed buying decisions, but those decisions matter little if our customers are not passionate and excited about the overall journey. It is our hope that HomeCompare brings a healthy mix of this formula to the Rhode Island real estate market.

The app has become one more way we can help buyers navigate their path to homeownership and provide a useful and meaningful tool to aid them in making what can be one of the most important decisions they may ever make. For prospective homebuyers, the Rhode Island Housing HomeCompare mobile app is becoming another tool in their toolbox to make the homebuying path a fun and organized experience. Our goal is that the app becomes the ‘go-to’ resource for homebuyers and provides yet another means for buyers to connect with Rhode Island Housing and our loans and services.

Available free of charge at the Apple App store, HomeCompare is available to users in Rhode Island and parts of nearby Connecticut and Massachusetts. The app officially launched on June 14, 2012, and has been downloaded 1,122 times to date. Our HomeCompareri.com website continues to see numerous visitors each week.

R.I. Housing launches mobile app

April 10, 2013

Rhode Island Housing has launched HomeCompare, a free mobile app that helps Rhode Islanders organize their home search and make smart purchasing decisions.

According to a release, the iPhone app works as a “homebuyer’s digital notebook,” and provides a central location to store all home search information.

The app’s announcement was made on the first day of the 2013 Rhode Island Builder’s Association home show at the R.I. Convention Center.

“Rhode Island Housing strives to ensure that all people who live or work in Rhode Island can afford a healthy, attractive home that meets their needs,” said a company release. “HomeCompare was created to be another tool to help potential Rhode Island homeowners achieve this goal.”

By creating an “individual home buying journal” with HomeCompare, homebuyers can: capture home information during visits, calculate the total first year cost for each house, rate each of the saved houses and share property information via social networking sites, among other things.

“Homebuyers are increasingly using social media to assist in all their decisions,” Richard Godfrey, executive director of Rhode Island Housing, said in a statement.

“HomeCompare streamlines that process and helps homebuyers make safe, informed purchasing decisions, and have more fun doing so.”

Rhode Island Housing highlighted the benefit of the app’s ability to calculate the total first year cost of each property, saying that, unlike other apps, it “provides an accurate representation of the home’s true cost at the end of one year.”

“Buying smart is one of the fundamental objectives we stress to potential Rhode Island homebuyers,” said Godfrey. “A critical element of helping homebuyers find their dream home is ensuring that not only are they able to buy – but also afford and keep – the home that is right for them.”

The HomeCompare app is only available for use in Rhode Island and surrounding border communities.

Rhode Island Housing did not mention if it intends to release the app for the Google Play store for Android smartphones.



Home Compare

Rhode Island Housing
Mobile App

Available at the
App Store or at
www.homecompareri.com

HomeCompare
from RhodeIslandHousing

Rhode Island Housing

HomeCompare

from RhodelslandHousing



ADD A NEW HOUSE



UPLOAD A PHOTO



MAP YOUR HOUSE



LOCATE YOUR HOUSE



VIEW YOUR SAVED HOUSES



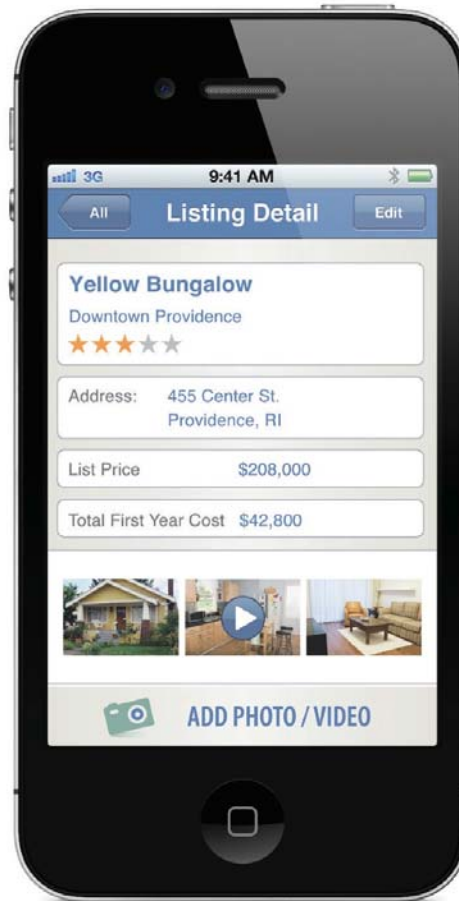
SHARE

Rhode Island Housing

HomeCompare

from RhodeIslandHousing

CAPTURE HOME INFORMATION

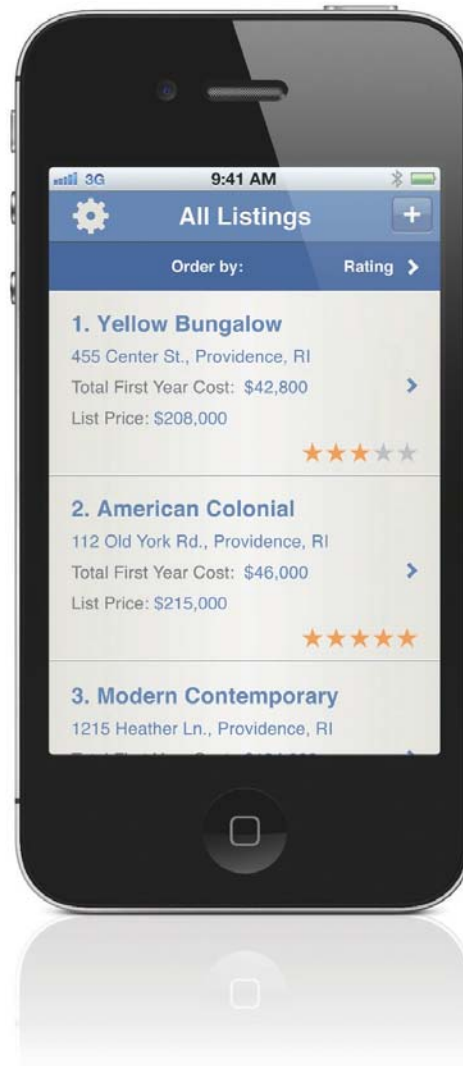


Rhode Island Housing

HomeCompare

from RhodeIslandHousing

RATE YOUR SAVED HOMES

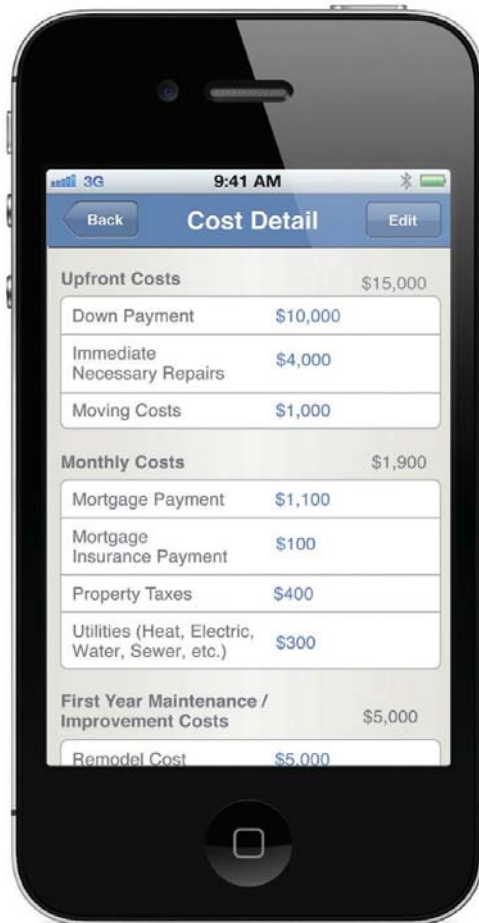


Rhode Island Housing

HomeCompare

from RhodeIslandHousing

CALCULATE TOTAL FIRST YEAR COST



The image shows a smartphone displaying the HomeCompare app's 'Cost Detail' screen. The screen is divided into three main sections: Upfront Costs, Monthly Costs, and First Year Maintenance / Improvement Costs. Each section has a total cost value on the right side. The Upfront Costs section includes Down Payment (\$10,000), Immediate Necessary Repairs (\$4,000), and Moving Costs (\$1,000). The Monthly Costs section includes Mortgage Payment (\$1,100), Mortgage Insurance Payment (\$100), Property Taxes (\$400), and Utilities (Heat, Electric, Water, Sewer, etc.) (\$300). The First Year Maintenance / Improvement Costs section includes Remodel Cost (\$5,000). The app interface includes a 'Back' button and an 'Edit' button at the top of the screen. The status bar at the top shows '3G', '9:41 AM', and a battery icon.

Category	Item	Amount
Upfront Costs	Down Payment	\$10,000
	Immediate Necessary Repairs	\$4,000
	Moving Costs	\$1,000
Upfront Costs Total		\$15,000
Monthly Costs	Mortgage Payment	\$1,100
	Mortgage Insurance Payment	\$100
	Property Taxes	\$400
	Utilities (Heat, Electric, Water, Sewer, etc.)	\$300
Monthly Costs Total		\$1,900
First Year Maintenance / Improvement Costs	Remodel Cost	\$5,000
First Year Maintenance / Improvement Costs Total		\$5,000

HomeCompare

from RhodelslandHousing

GO SOCIAL



Rhode Island Housing






FEATURES

 CAPTURE INFORMATION ABOUT THE HOMES YOU VISIT

 CALCULATE THE TOTAL FIRST YEAR COST FOR EACH HOUSE
based on initial costs, monthly costs, maintenance/improvement costs

 RATE THE HOMES YOU VISIT

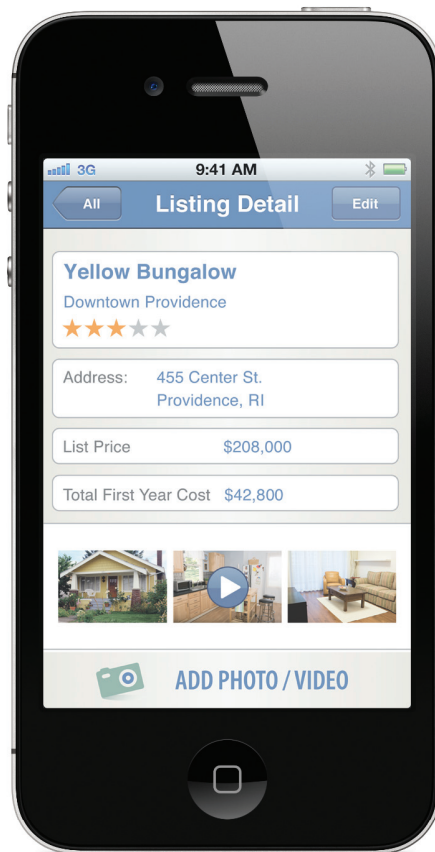
 SHARE INFORMATION WITH SOCIAL NETWORKS
upload listings to Facebook
email content to friends and family



 ADD A NEW HOUSE  LOCATE YOUR HOUSE

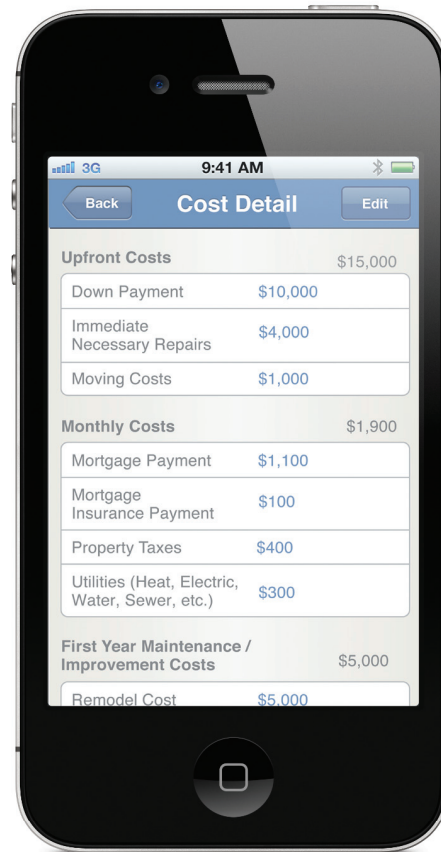
 UPLOAD A PHOTO  VIEW YOUR SAVED HOUSES

 MAP YOUR HOUSE  SHARE



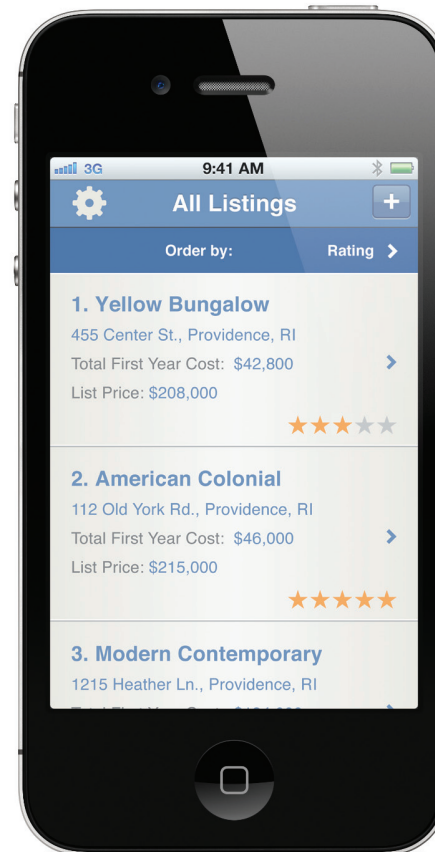
CAPTURE HOME INFORMATION

Use HomeCompare as a digital notebook to record your entire home search. Record important information including property address, list price, photos and video and make personal notes.



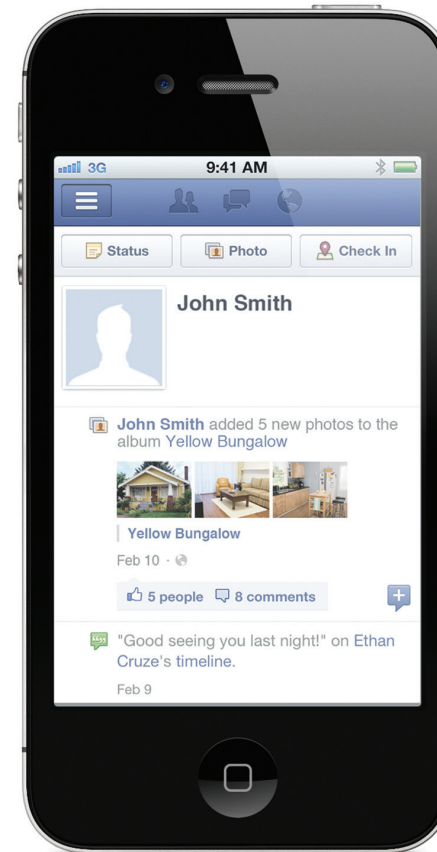
CALCULATE TOTAL FIRST YEAR COST

Calculate each property's Total First Year Cost and decide which home is the best buy for your household budget.



RATE YOUR SAVED HOMES

Weigh all the factors for each home and rank your properties accordingly.



GO SOCIAL

Share your journey with those who matter most. Upload listings to Facebook and email content to close friends and family.

presented by
RhodeIslandHousing
working together to bring you home

developed by
(add)ventures



The Rhode Island Housing HomeCompare iPhone app provides a valuable resource for those looking to buy their first home. Available free of charge to Rhode Islanders through the App Store, HomeCompare streamlines the home search process by allowing users to capture a variety of information about the homes they visit.

The app serves as a personal home-buying journal, allowing users to comprehensively view and store all the properties in their home search, while also evaluating those properties against the same criteria. What separates HomeCompare from other apps in the home search market is its ability to calculate the Total First Year Cost of each property—providing potential homebuyers with an accurate representation of a home's true cost at the end of one year.

Use HomeCompare to:

1. Capture Information About the Homes You Visit

- Address
- Pictures/videos
- List price
- Pros and cons
- User rating
- General notes

2. Calculate Total First Year Cost

- Upfront costs
- Monthly costs
- First year maintenance/improvement costs

3. Rate the Homes You Visit

4. Share Information With Personal Networks

- Upload to Facebook
- Email content to friends/family

Available on the
App Store

DOWNLOAD FOR FREE

RhodeIslandHousing
HomeCompare



HomeCompareRI.com

HomeCompareRI.com



top



side



HomeCompare
from RhodelslandHousing

Option 1

Rhode Island Housing Mobile App



DOWNLOAD FOR FREE

- Capture home information
- Calculate total first year cost
- Share on social networks
- Rate saved homes



HomeCompareRI.com



RhodeIslandHousing
working together to bring you home



Option 2

Rhode Island Housing Mobile App



DOWNLOAD FOR FREE



Make informed homebuying decisions at your fingertips!



HomeCompareRI.com



Rhode Island Housing Mobile App



DOWNLOAD FOR FREE



Make informed homebuying decisions at your fingertips!



HomeCompareRI.com



Option 3

Available on the App Store

DOWNLOAD FOR FREE

RhodeIslandHousing
Mobile App

Make informed homebuying decisions...
at your fingertips!



HomeCompareRI.com



Available on the App Store

DOWNLOAD FOR FREE

RhodeIslandHousing
Mobile App

Make informed homebuying decisions...
at your fingertips!



HomeCompareRI.com

