

Dissect & Flowchart

LUCA VENTURA | DVP 2
E: LAVENTURA@FULLSAIL.EDU

About The Project

THE PURPOSE BEHIND THIS PROJECT

WHY I AM DISSECTING APPS

In this project I will be dissecting three similar applications in order to better understand how and when databases are utilized within the applications. The three apps share the same topic matter but differ in features and design. These dissections will be in the form of a flowchart detailing the pages and buttons used to navigate the applications, in addition, the flowcharts will feature the possible database tables and queries used to display, retrieve and store information in the apps.

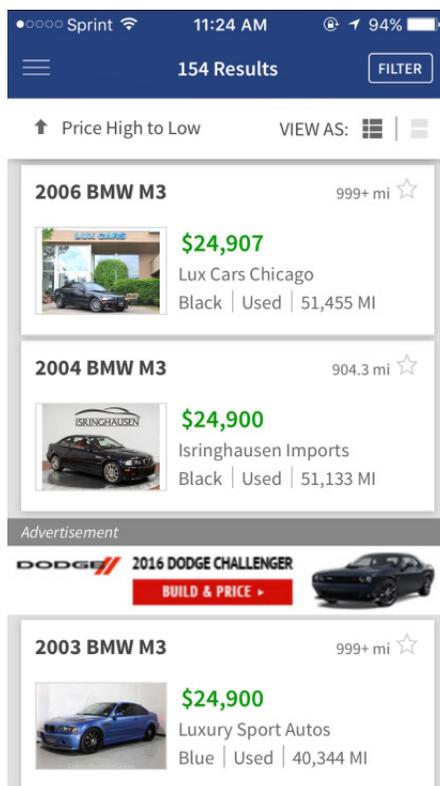
Following the dissection of these three competing apps, I will create the flowchart for a custom application that improves upon the previously detailed applications.

Dissection Topic

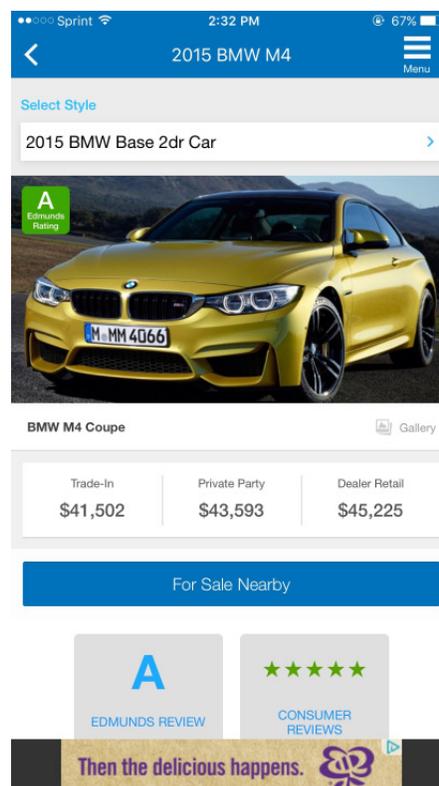
WHAT APPLICATIONS WILL I BE DISSECTING?

CAR BUYING APPLICATIONS

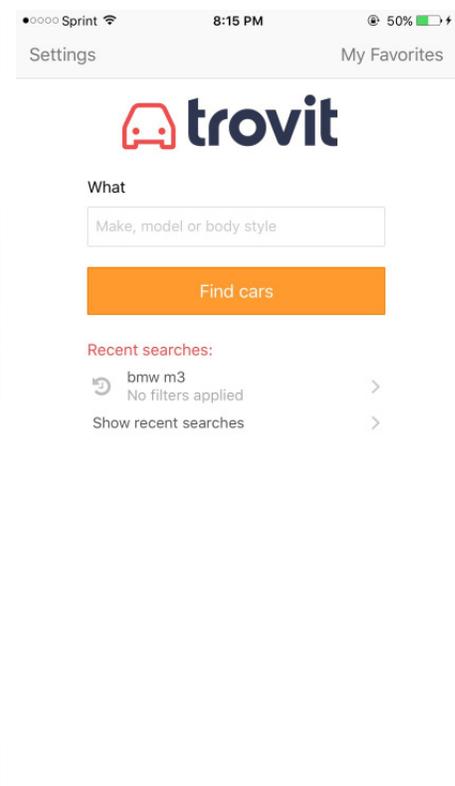
The research topic that I chose for this project is car buying apps and the three applications I dissected all have their own individual features that make them unique and range from some of the most popular apps to some lesser known offerings. Being a car enthusiast, I tend to look at what's on the market for multiple different car makes and brands and have used various different applications and outlets to find these cars. Each of the applications I dissected are useful in their own ways, but when it comes to being a car enthusiast searching for cars I often look at things that normal car buyers do not and therefore there is not a single application I can point to and use every time. In my application, I aim to cater to more to the enthusiast market while also making it broad enough for average car buyers to feel at home.



AUTOTRADER



EDMUNDS



TROVIT

App Dissection

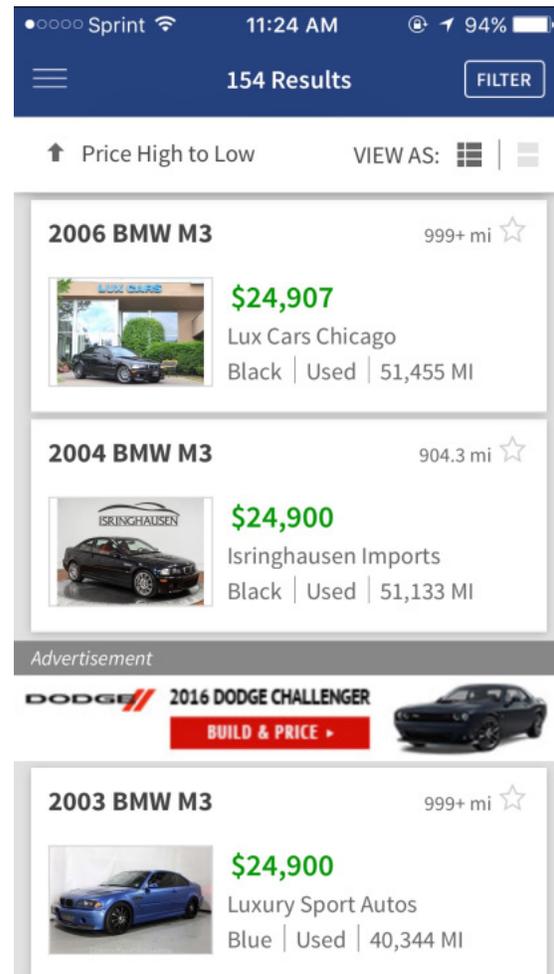
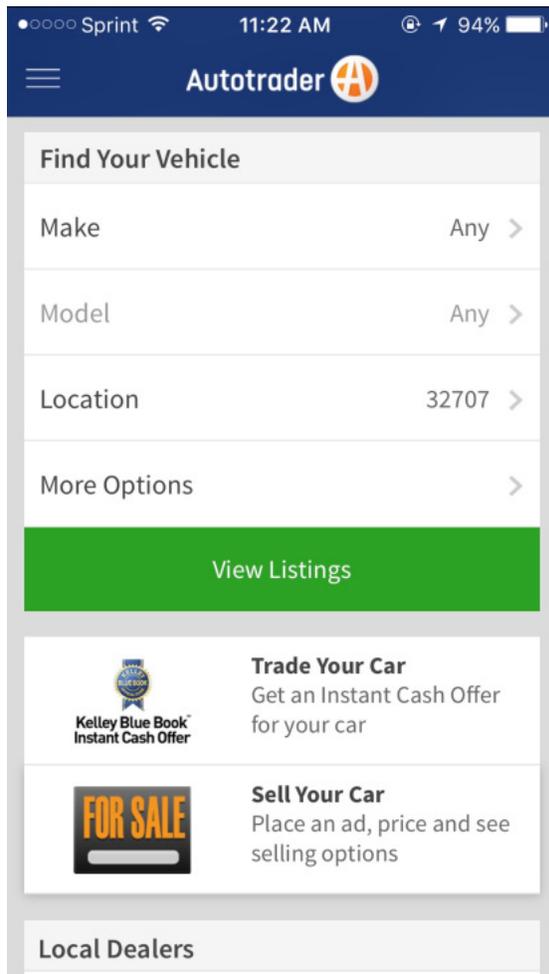
AutoTrader

AUTOTRADER

DISSECTION 1

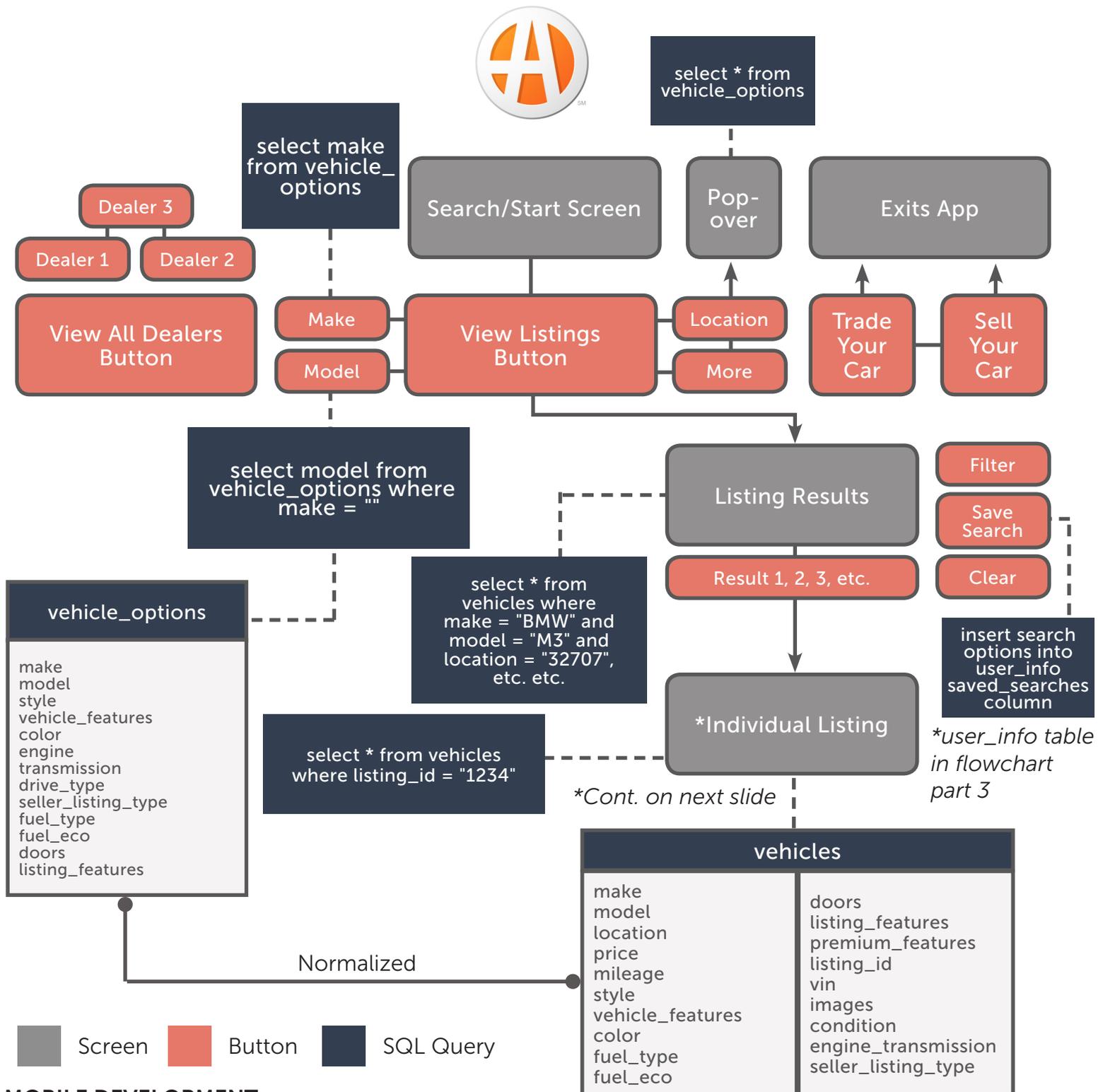
ABOUT THIS APP

AutoTrader is one of the most popular apps used for car searches and thus it is the first application I will be dissecting and flowcharting. The app caters to those searching for any kind of car, be it from a private party or dealer. Some features of the app include being able to save searches, save listings and narrow your search through a broad range of options and filters.



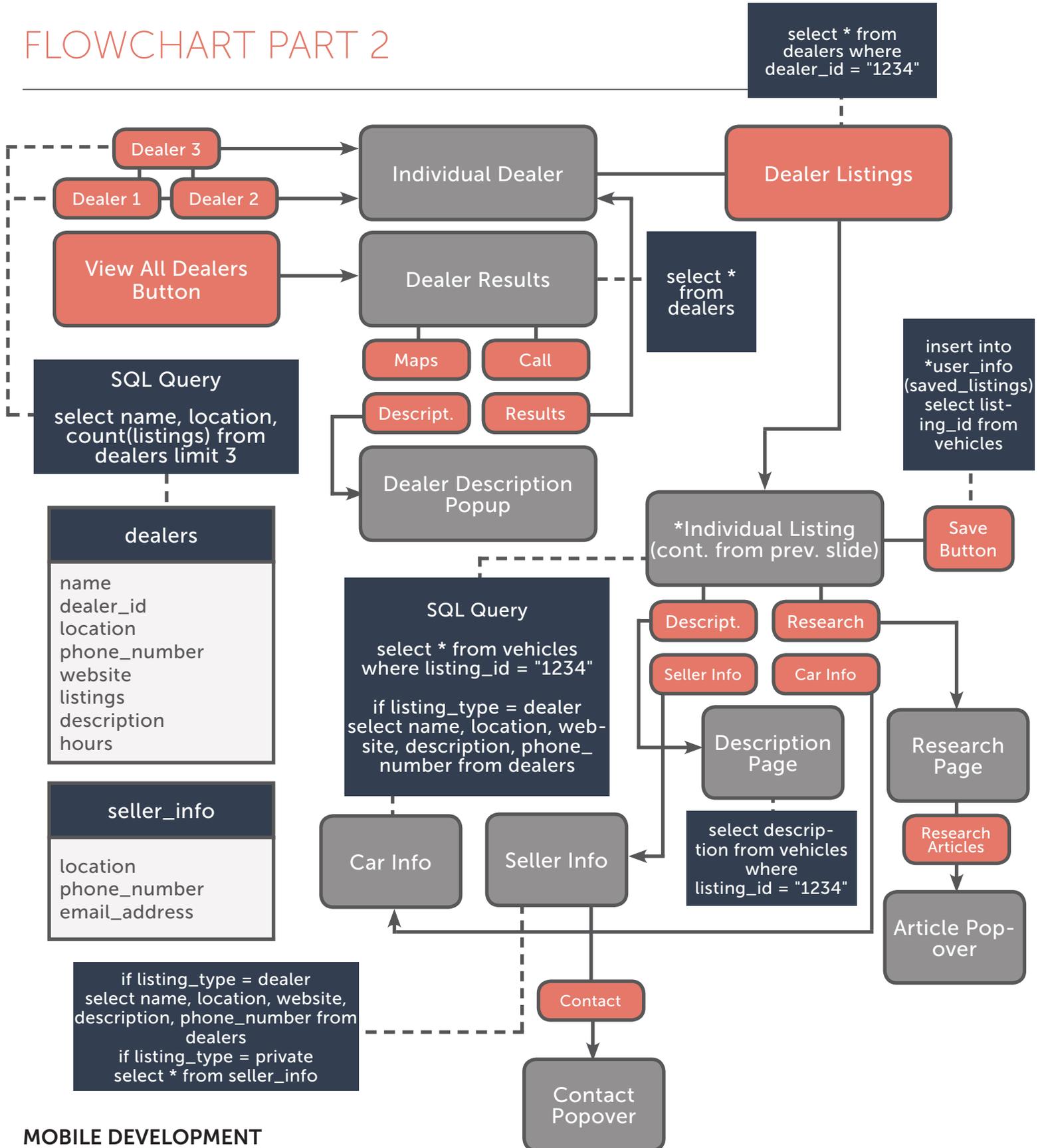
AUTOTRADER

FLOWCHART PART 1



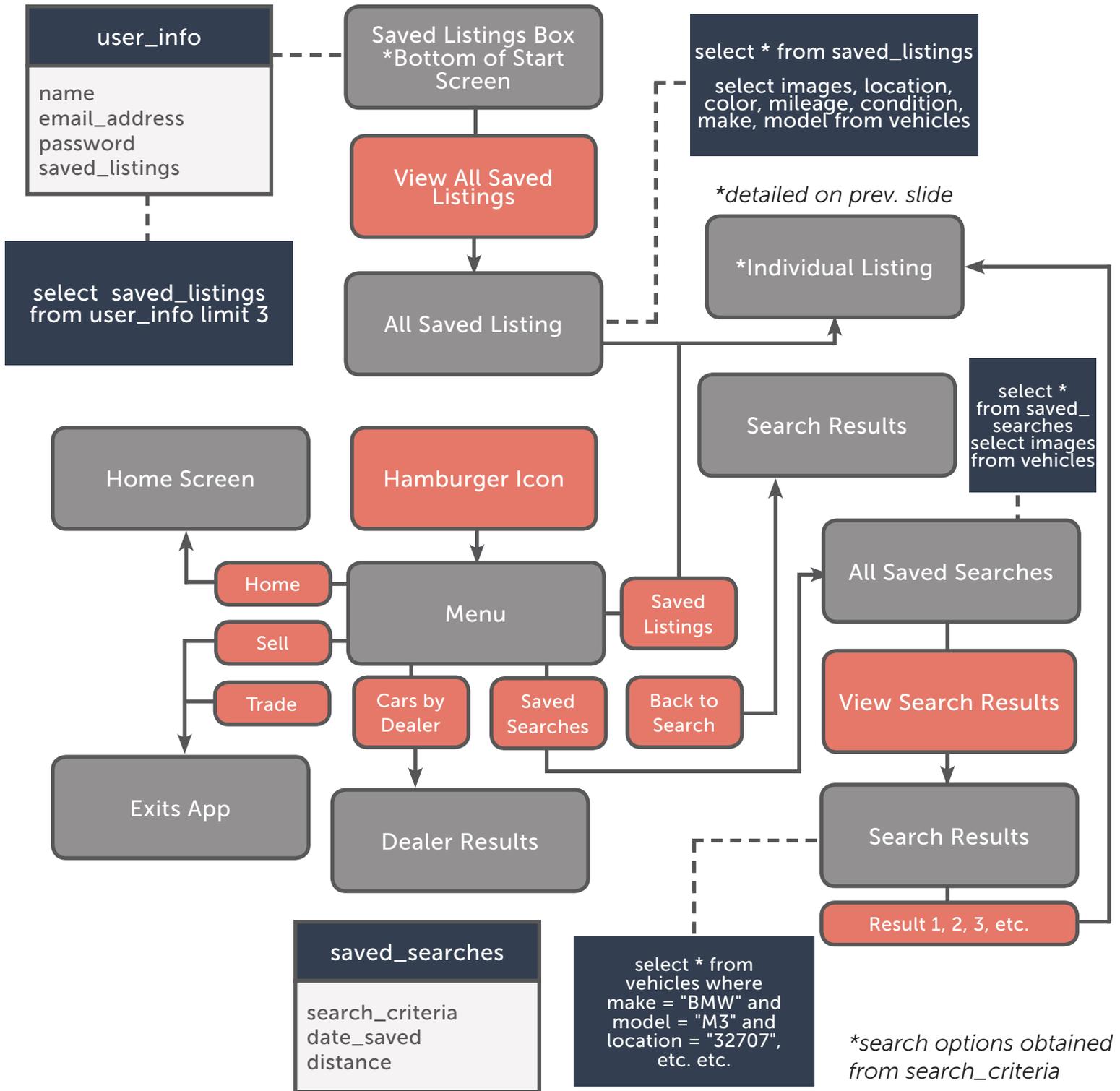
AUTOTRADER

FLOWCHART PART 2



AUTOTRADER

FLOWCHART PART 3

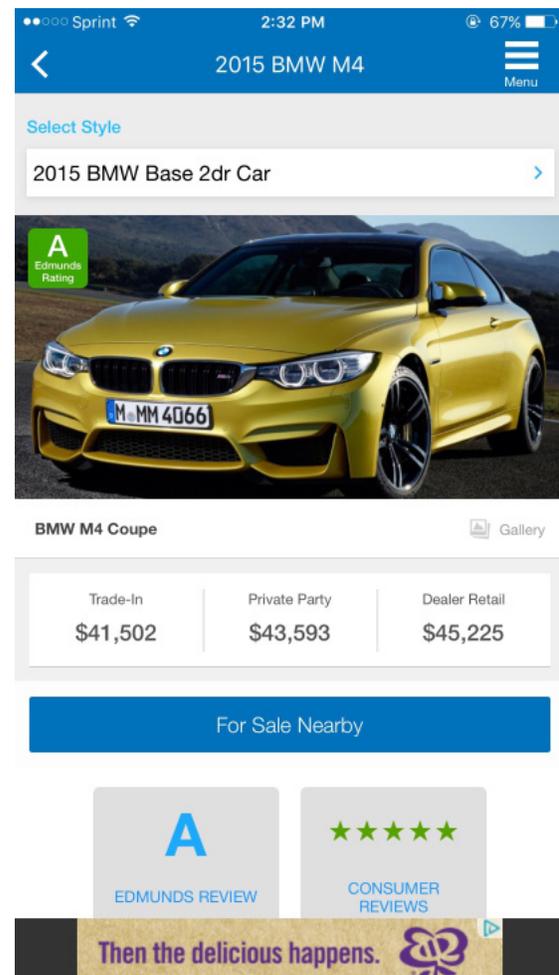
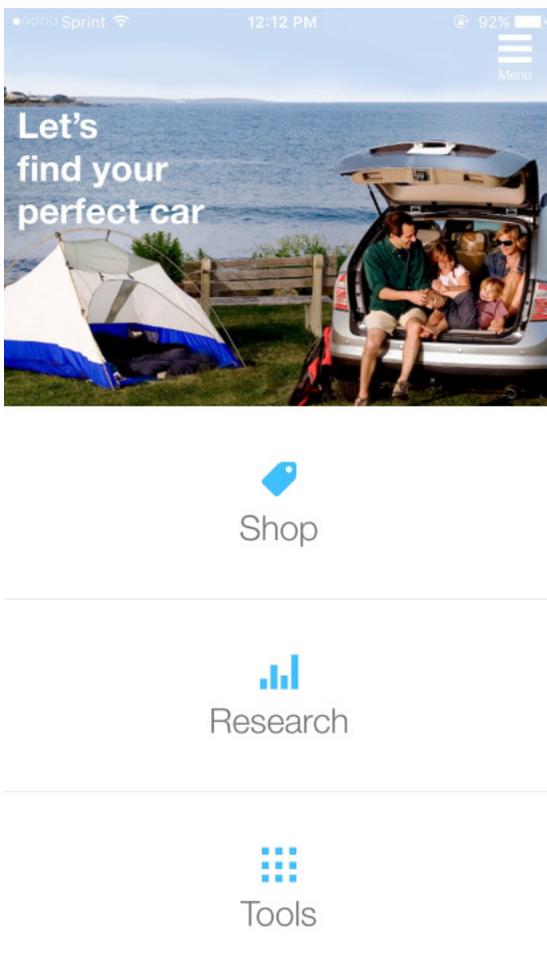


Edmunds

EDMUNDS

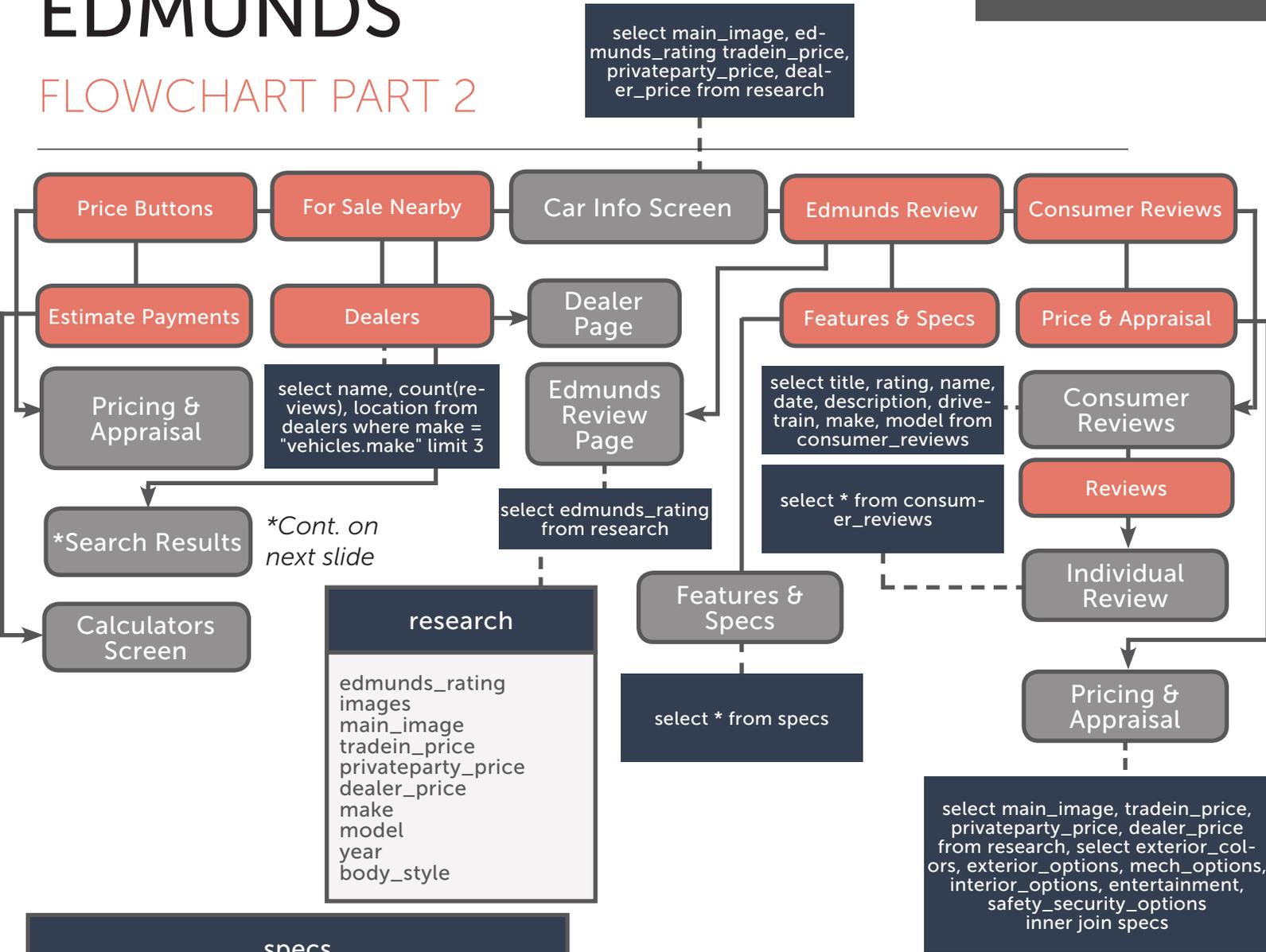
ABOUT THIS APP

Edmunds is a familiar name in the automotive industry and their app offers some useful features in-addition to allowing users to search for a car. The app caters more to those who are unsure of what car they want, as evident with the in-depth research portion of the app. Unlike AutoTrader, this app only searches for dealer cars and not private party vehicles which may be a downside to some users.



EDMUNDS

FLOWCHART PART 2



research
edmunds_rating images main_image tradein_price privateparty_price dealer_price make model year body_style

specs	
make model year body_style exterior_colors interior_colors interiortrim_colors tires_wheels roof_glass measurements exterior_options suspension fuel mech_options packages feature	engine_performance drivetrain safety_security safety_security_options power_features convenience telematics rear_seats memorized_settings instrumentation entertainment comfort interior_options front_seats warranty standard_equipment

consumer_reviews	
title name rating date description make model drivetrain	performance_rating comfort_rating fun_rating interior_rating exterior_rating buildquality_rating reliability_rating

EDMUNDS

FLOWCHART PART 3



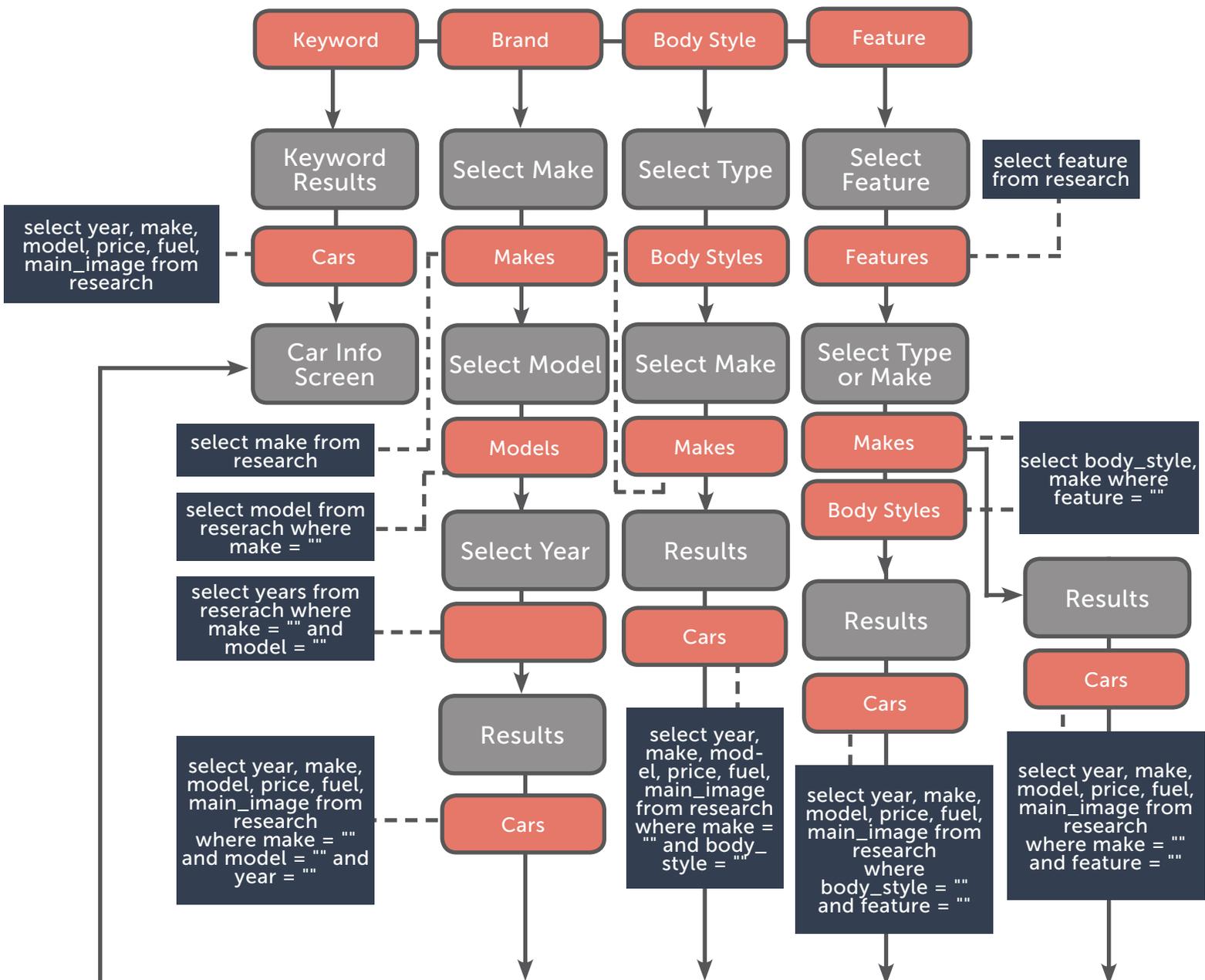
*Browse By continued on next screen

EDMUNDS

FLOWCHART PART 4

Browse By
(cont. from prev. slide,
from Menu Icon)

Clicking the "Browse By" buttons displays the following buttons.



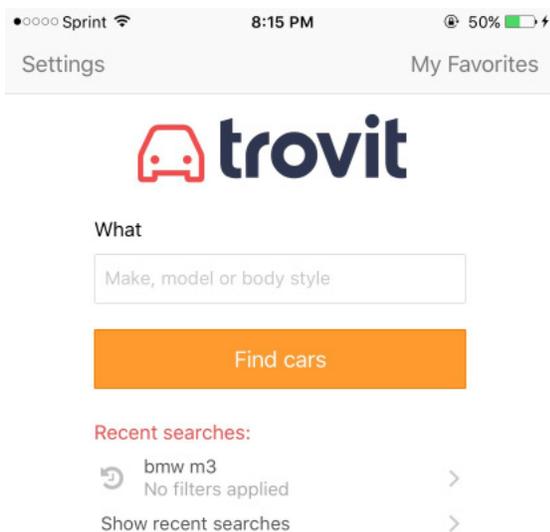
Trovit

TROVIT

ABOUT THIS APP

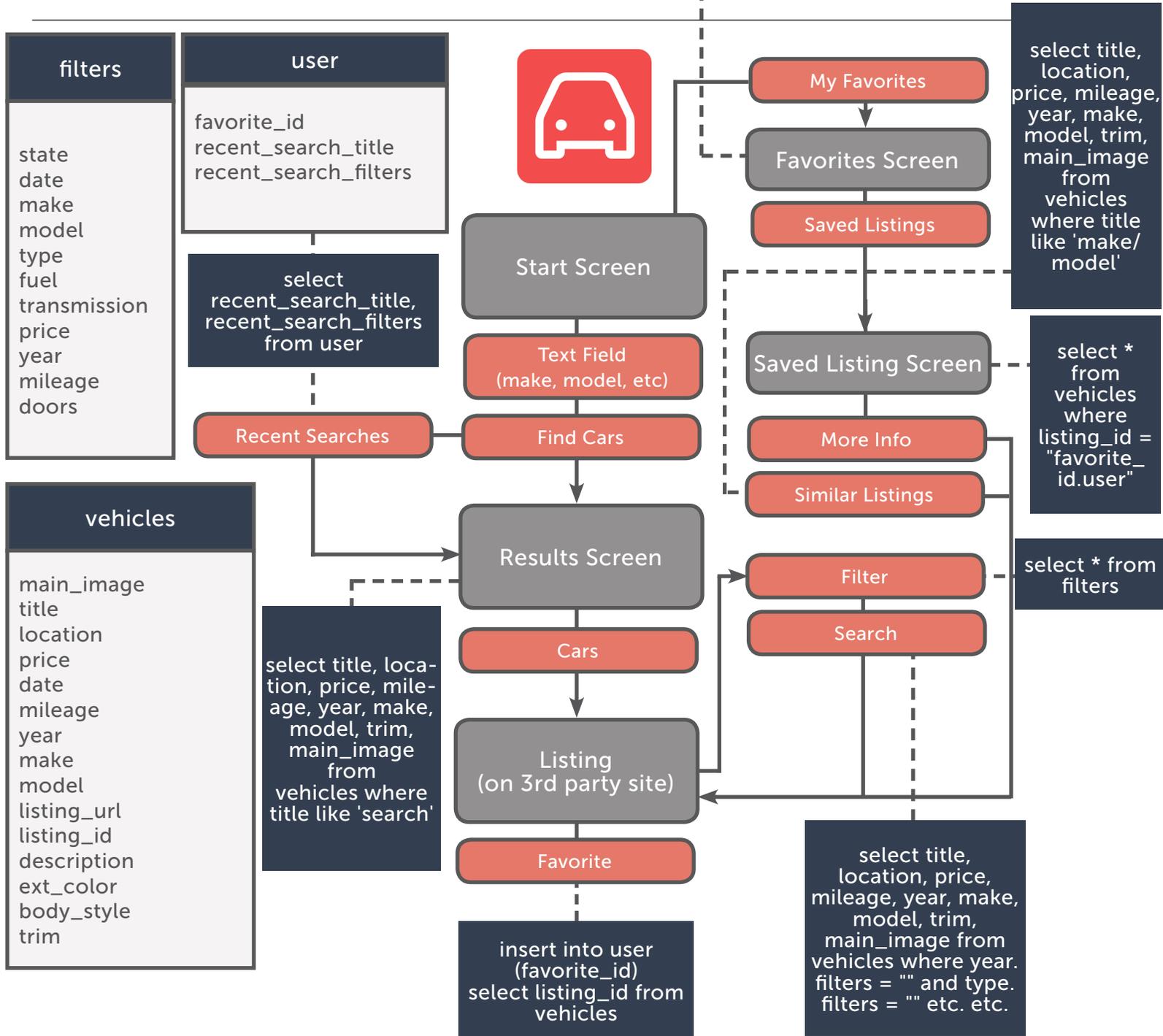
DISSECTION 3

The last app I chose to dissect isn't a very well known app but it's streamlined interface and ability to search multiple sites such as eBay and many others for cars is very useful. With a single search you will see results from multiple websites all without leaving the app, allowing you to find cars you might have otherwise missed if you just used the likes of AutoTrader or Edmunds.



TROVIT

FLOWCHART



Screen Button SQL Query

Enthusiast Autos

ENTHUSIAST AUTOS

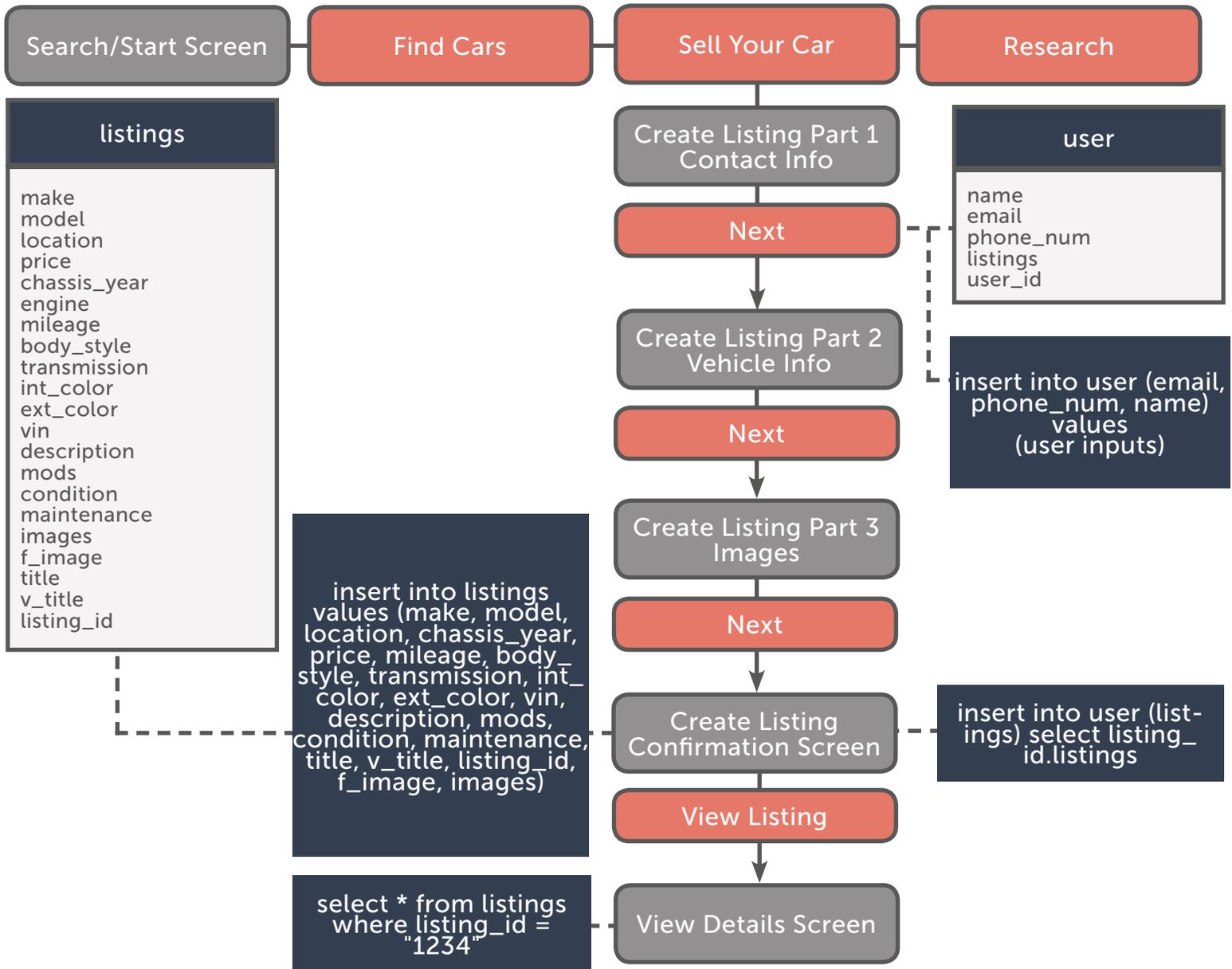
WHAT MAKES MY APP BETTER

In my application I tried to bring in the best features of each of the three dissected apps; the search abilities of AutoTrader, the research portion of Edmunds and the simplicity of Trovit. None of the apps I dissected allowed you to actually list your car for sale in the application, which is the first improvement I integrated into my application.

I built upon the research portion of the Edmunds application but added more detail and aspects that will appeal to enthusiasts as well as average car buyers, including the common wear items and things to look out for when buying the vehicle the user has selected. In terms of actually searching for a car, I opted to go for a search similar to that of AutoTrader's with a large amount of search options to choose from, or the option to just search a particular make and model. The added search options that can be found include the vehicle's title status (clean, rebuilt, etc.), modifications (stock, lightly modded, heavily modded), and maintenance filters (when were the brakes replaced, oil change intervals, etc.). Additionally, the databases found in my application have been normalized to reduce redundancies for fields like make, model and chassis/years that are used multiple times throughout the app.

ENTHUSIAST AUTOS

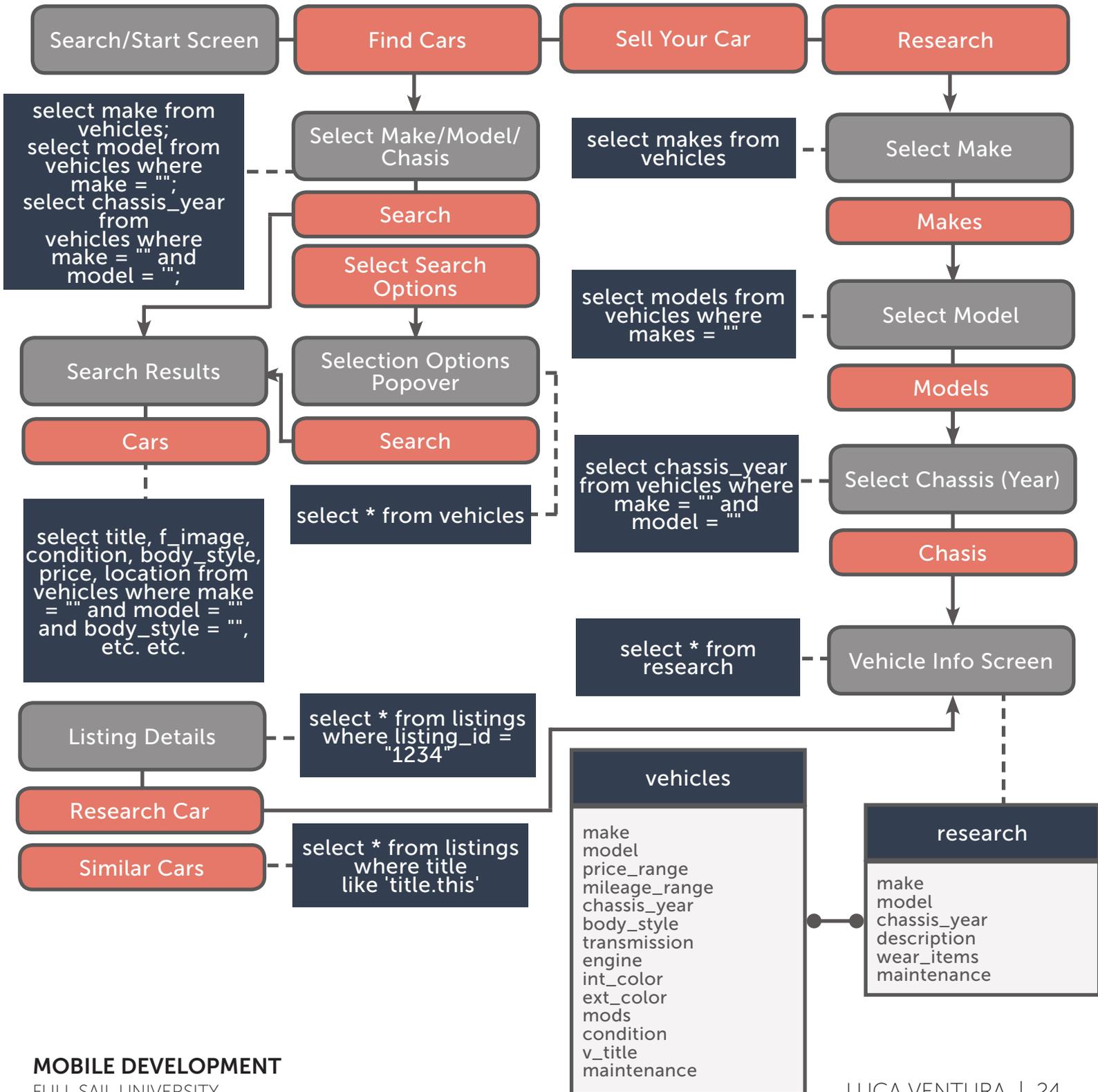
FLOWCHART PART 1



Screen Button SQL Query

ENTHUSIAST AUTOS

FLOWCHART PART 2



What I
Learned

HOW THIS PROJECT CHANGED MY THINKING

Flowcharting and dissecting applications that I didn't create really forced me to think logically about the back-end of applications I use on a regular basis. Suddenly a button click is not simply a button click, you have to think what information is being pulled or inserted into the database when you click that button, and not only that, but the actual structure of the database itself. This project has definitely put me into a more methodical mindset when looking at applications now. You don't put much thought into what goes into the applications that we use all the time until you actually sit down and dissect it. Suddenly that "simple" application has become far more advanced than you originally thought. Overall, this project has helped me to better understand what goes on behind the scenes and to look at applications from a developer stand point instead of a consumer.

REFERENCES

AutoTrader. (2016). AutoTrader Inc. (Version 2.7.4) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://itunes.apple.com>

Edmunds. (2016). Edmunds Inc. (Version 9.7.0) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://itunes.apple.com>

Trovit. (2016). Trovit. (Version 10.4.0) [Mobile application software]. Retrieved from <http://itunes.apple.com>

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