



Prepared for NEEA:  
Corinne McCarthy, Sr. Manager, Market  
Research & Evaluation

Prepared by ArrowG Consulting:  
Amy Greene, Qualitative Research  
Consultant  
10626 Lakecove Way  
Knoxville, TN 37922  
(432) 580-9733



# *Exploring the Consumer Path-To- Purchase for New Construction Homes*

Qualitative Research Report  
Report #E17-351  
April 10, 2017

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# ***Background, Objectives + Research Design***

# Background + Objectives

## BACKGROUND

The Next Step Home (NSH) initiative designs & implements market interventions that will remove barriers that impede builders from using integrated design to build more efficient homes. One barrier that has been identified by the initiative team is lack of purchaser awareness. This project is focused on understanding the new home purchaser in a way that can inform interventions aimed at removing awareness barrier.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall objective is to gain foundational consumer understanding in the new home construction category. *Specifically, this project will focus on the following:*

- Generate insights regarding the purchase process for new home construction, including (but not limited to):
  - Path to Purchase
  - Key Influencers of Purchase
  - Hierarchy of Needs
- Gain an in-depth understanding of how to position non-energy benefits of new home construction with the increased EE configurations that are most likely to compel purchase.

# Research Design + Respondents

In order to meet NEEA's research objectives, Arrow G Consulting conducted focus groups and individual interviews across four markets.

Participants were recruited according to the following specifications:

- Must have purchased a new construction home in the past 12 months {ideally those who used a builder}
- None to work in related energy or research/marketing fields
- Income commiserate with the market
- Mix of female/male head of household
- All share equally or are primary decision maker for home buying

There were four markets included in this study:

- Boise, Idaho {2 consumers}\*
- Billings, Montana {2 consumers}\*
- Spokane, Washington {9 consumers}
- Portland, Oregon {7 consumers}



\* Recruitment specifications included in the screener found in the appendix of the report

\* Although we recruited six to seat four, only two respondents participated, as the weather was unusually bad

# *Executive Summary*

# Overall Snapshot of Key Findings

1

Buyers are drawn to new construction because they get what they want at a price they can afford. The underlying motivation that makes this benefit appealing is **{control}**.

2

Consumers journey through three key steps in the Path to Purchase for a home that is new construction: **Explore, Engage, and Execute**.

3

Builders rarely talk energy efficient (EE) features and/or options unless prompted by the buyer, leaving consumers unaware of their choices. In fact, some respondents were dissuaded from upgrading to EE features by builders.

4

As buyers weigh a number of priorities through the process, energy efficiency is often deprioritized in favor of aesthetic upgrades.

5

The primary consumer-centric benefit of energy efficiency is long term savings on utility bills. A secondary benefit is the good feeling they get from knowing they are being eco-friendly citizens.

# Key Highlights



Buyers are drawn to new construction because they get what they want at a price they can afford. The underlying motivation that makes this benefit appealing is **{control}**.

- Consumers often consider new home construction after they have searched the real estate market and cannot find what they want in their set budget.
- With both standard builders and custom builders, consumers experience a sense of control over their home—something they could not get from buying a pre-owned home.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider linking EE features to an even greater sense of control for the consumer {as a benefit}.
- Consider ways to make EE choices more overtly in the control of the consumer.



# Key Highlights

2

Consumers journey through three key steps in the Path to Purchase for a home that is new construction: **Explore, Engage, and Execute.**

- Consumers move through various stages when thinking about the purchase of a new home.
  1. **Explore:** The consumer is interested in owning a new home, but is simply passively browsing. This stage is fun and exciting!
  2. **Engage:** The consumer has become serious about owning a new home and is actively seeking out information. This stage is exciting but also scary and daunting.
  3. **Execute:** The consumer has made a decision to move forward with their new home purchase. This stage can feel overwhelming.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Tailor EE communication with consumers to the activity and emotion at the various phases to increase their awareness and knowledge of options.
- Conduct research with builders to understand where they see the most opportunity to discuss EE with consumers.

# Key Highlights

3

Builders rarely talk energy efficient (EE) features and/or options unless prompted by the buyer, leaving consumers unaware of their choices. In fact, some respondents were dissuaded from upgrading to EE features by builders.

- Very few buyers say the builders even discussed EE options, other than appliance packages.
- Some consumers assume building codes infer EE and do not think they even have to make choices to improve EE--so they do not even ask.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct research with builders to understand their perspective and process so that their findings can be married with consumer findings.
- Create easy message tracks for builders to leverage EE in their conversations with consumers.
- Seek ways to partner with builders to increase awareness and decision-making for EE features {e.g., include EE features in design meetings}.

# Key Highlights

4

As buyers weigh a number of priorities through the process, energy efficiency is often deprioritized in favor of aesthetic upgrades.

- Buyers tend to prioritize the upgrading of aesthetic parts of the home over structural or “behind the walls” features—particularly when they are having to make monetary trade-offs (e.g., granite countertops over additional insulation).
- For some EE options, like windows, builders do not take the time to explain the differences to buyers—and buyers tend to blindly defer to builders for these types of features.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider an intervention that leverages the design meetings to highlight choices in EE features, just like you would any other design elements.
- Create quick, easy sheets to help educate consumers on the benefits of things like better insulation, choices in windows, etc.

# Key Highlights

5

The primary consumer-centric benefit of energy efficiency is long term savings on utility bills. A secondary benefit is the good feeling they get from knowing they are being eco-friendly citizens.

- Consumers would like to upgrade their homes to EE options because they believe it will save them money over time.
- Some consumers are able to articulate higher-order benefits such as “helping the earth” but that is seen as a secondary benefit.



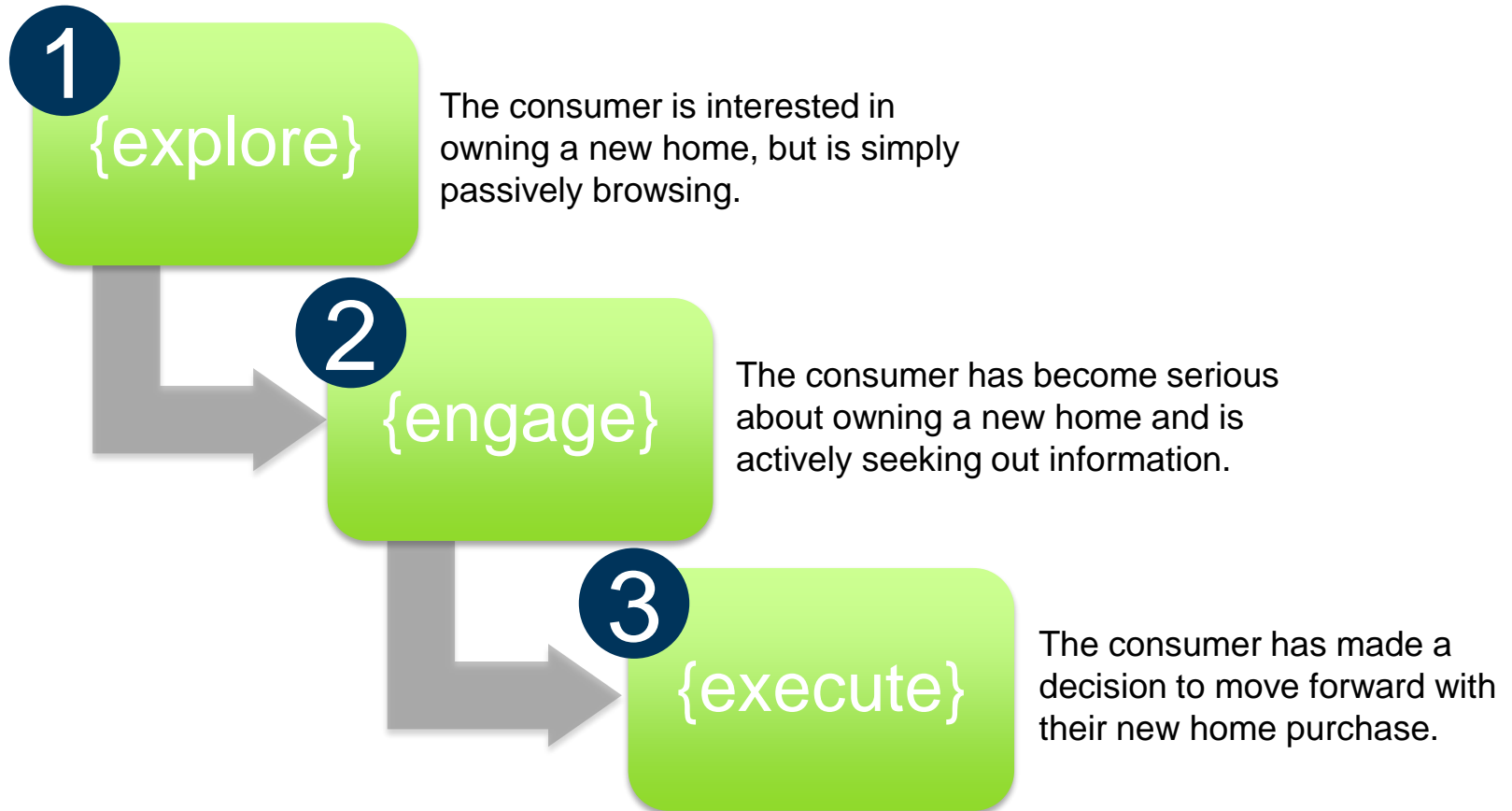
## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Find easy ways to share actual savings with consumers so they have “proof points” needed to help in decision making.
- Explore ways to move beyond the savings benefit and into the more emotional benefits with consumers for messaging.



***NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION:  
PATH TO PURCHASE***

# The three steps in the new home construction path to purchase



# *Phase 1: {explore}*



**In this first phase, consumers are informally  
”seeing what is out there”**

# What does home mean?

1

{explore}

The word home has a wide spectrum of meaning and associations, both positive and negative.





# Consumers in the explore phase are looking to see what's available in the marketplace

1

{explore}

- Consumers are browsing online real estate sites, like Zillow, Trulia, Realtor
- They typically ask friends and family for advice and recommendations about new home ownership
- Consumers may even "drive around" in areas they would ideally like to live



*I wasn't ready to look for anything specific...just looking at different options, different price ranges of neighborhoods, different features I liked in houses...getting a feel for what was out there.*



# This phase is fun and exciting



- This stage is exciting and enjoyable for consumers as they are dreaming of what the future could hold.
- Consumers get to play with all the different possibilities of a new home.
- They often envision having a home like they grew up in...it is very *nostalgic* for them.

# The most common triggers for the new home search are significant changes in their lifestyle

Consumers tend to start looking for a new home when there is some kind of **"life event"**, such as an engagement, a new baby or children leaving for adulthood.



*"We had another baby and just ran out of room in our current home. With five of us, we definitely needed more space."*





## *Phase 2: {engage}*

**In this second phase, consumers decide to start getting serious about the purchase of a new home.**

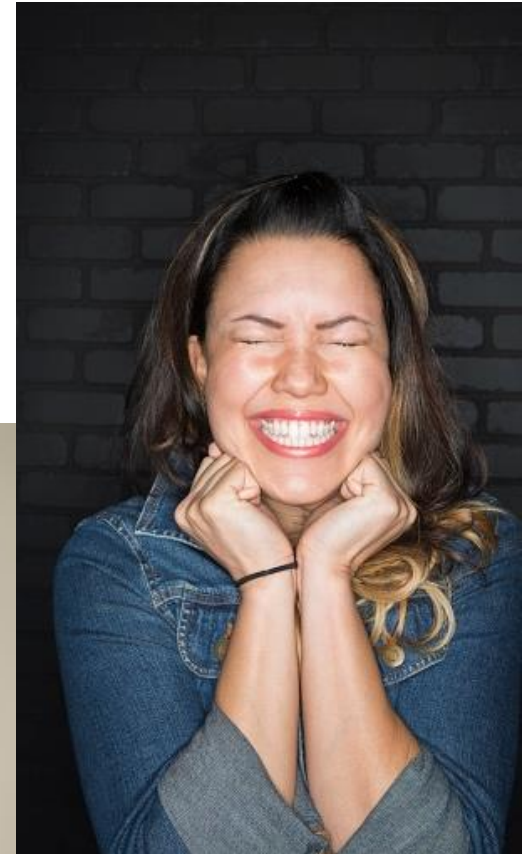


# Consumers have mixed emotions during this phase

This phase is where consumers start to become emotionally invested with mixed feelings:

- Buyers are excited because they have made the decision to purchase a new home
- They are nervous and scared to find out what they can actually afford and how that might impact their 'dreams'
- For some, the process feels daunting at this stage

*I'm excited but I am also scared...and maybe a little overwhelmed when I think about what needs to happen.*



# *When buying gets serious, consumers seek financing*



- When consumers really start to consider a new home, they begin looking at their finances to understand their price range for a new home.
- Some will use online tools (mortgage calculators) that help them to determine the range they are comfortable paying.
- Some go ahead with preapproval through banks to pinpoint their price range.



# Hiring a realtor is a possibility for some consumers, especially those overwhelmed by the process

- For those wanting a realtor, this phase is typically when they hire a realtor to help them find their new home.
- Typically, consumers find a realtor through a friend, family member or through 'word of mouth'

*I just asked my best friend who she used when she bought her new house...I trust that she wouldn't point me in the wrong direction.*



# Location, location and lot size/type are the are key search drivers

They use a variety of criteria to help them narrow their search. However, most consumers prioritize three things:

- School district
- Distance to work
- Land/lot of a certain size/type





## *Phase 3: {execute}*



**Consumers in the last phase have made a decision to move forward with a new home purchase.**

# New home construction offers options that buyers can't find in existing stock



- There are a number of reasons consumers decide to buy or build NEW construction—but more often than not, it is because they cannot find what they want in a pre-owned home.
- For some, they do not even realize buying or building a new home is within their financial reach. They are surprised to learn that it is possible.

*I really had no plans to build a house, but when we started really looking for a home...everything was old or outdated and would require significant updating—which was not in the budget—or an older home that was already completely renovated—but again, not in the budget.*



# There are three main choices when looking at new construction

## ON THE MARKET



Homes are “move in ready” and already on the market. Consumers basically sign and close.

## STANDARD BUILDER



Homes are built within a particular neighborhood and pre-established floor plans with little flexibility.

## CUSTOM BUILDER



Homes are built from scratch on a lot the buyer chooses. All choices are customizable.

# When building a new home, consumers must choose between two kinds of builders, standard or custom.

Consumers differentiate between builders that are part of a community {standard} and builders that are completely independent {custom}.

## STANDARD BUILDER



- Seen as rigid
- Formal in communication, such as setting appointments
- Feels corporate, there is a hierarchy of organization structure
- Must choose from pre-determined floor plans with little flexibility

*It was fine...I had to make appointments to talk with the builder or walk-thru the house. Any changes took time to approve since they had an internal process to follow.*

## CUSTOM BUILDER



- Seen as personable, friendly, engaged
- Informal with most communication, such as providing personal cell phone numbers
- Feels open and accessible
- Many choices/options and openness to modifications of floor plans

*Basically I had him {the builder} on speed dial in my phone. He was available any time I had questions...it felt very personal.*



# The {execute} phase is the most overwhelming

Many consumers feel completely overwhelmed once they have decided to build a new home. There are so many options and details to think about that they become easily lost, confused and stressed out.

*It's a big decision to build...thinking about all the decisions you have to make from the floor plans to the different finishes in the floors, the cabinets, the doorknobs. It is a LOT—and I just got overwhelmed.*



# Consumers anticipate headaches when building a new home



- Many consumers have heard horror stories about building and are anticipating lots of problems.
- They also anticipate that the timeline will be long {at least six months}.

*Everyone told me to add at least a month, if not two, to the timeline the builder gave me. You just never know what is going to come up...especially the weather.*

# Builders try to minimize the overwhelming feeling

Some builders try to make the process less daunting by simplifying and limiting the choices buyers have to make.

- Few floor plan options
- Timelines of what will happen over time
- Schedule several walk-thrus during the process
- Host design meetings to choose finishes, flooring and other decorative elements



Consumers say communication is KEY during all stages of the process to keep them from feeling overwhelmed and lost.

*I would tell the builders that it's okay to over-communicate to their buyers. We want more information than we have and we have to walk a fine line between being annoying and being informed.*

# Consumers love the control of that new construction provides

- Building from scratch {either standard or custom} allows the consumer CONTROL in hand-selecting what features and elements they want in their home.
- New home construction also feels fresh, clean and shiny because no one has ever lived in the space.

*It was a long process, but I love picking out everything and really making the house MINE.*





***KEY FINDINGS: ENERGY EFFICIENCY***

# *There is very little dialogue about energy efficiency between builders and buyers*



Buyers rarely ask if their builder is eco-friendly, even for those who are passionate about preservation. {Many do not even consider that their builder wouldn't be eco-friendly}

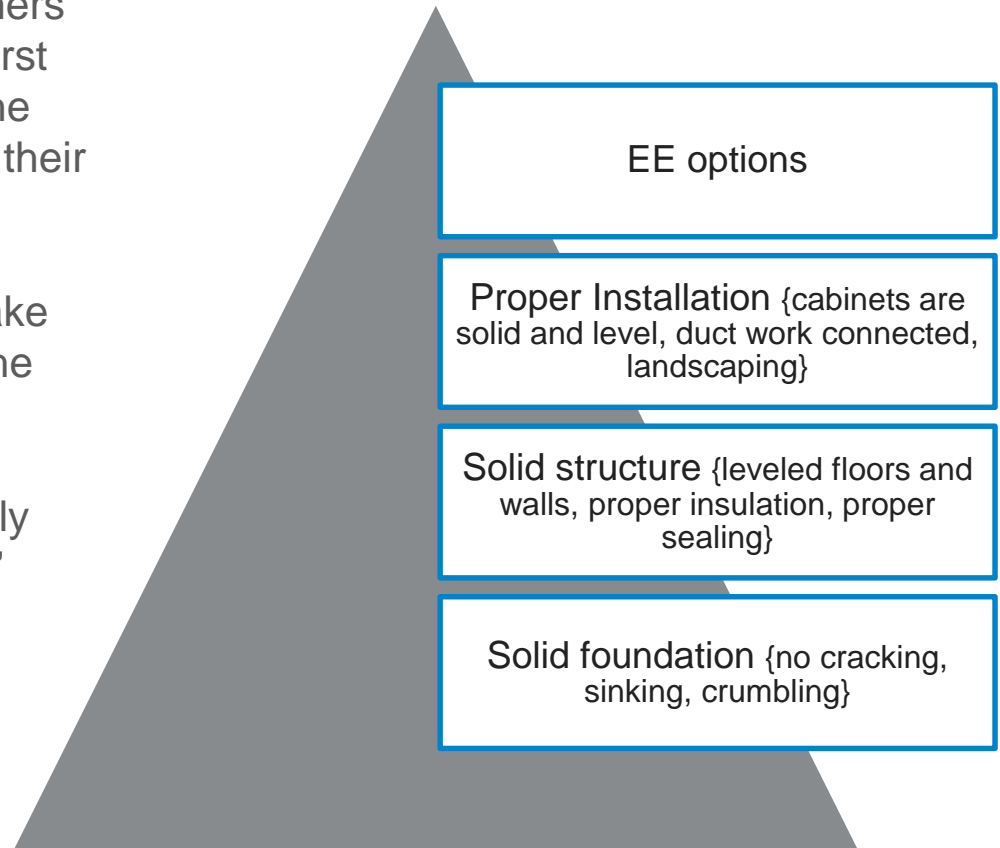
Very few consumers even ask about options in this space.

- They put a lot of trust into the builder to make EE selections.
- Some believe the government codes imply EE.

*Well, they have to build the house to code and the code is energy efficient so yes, the house is energy efficient.*

# *Energy Efficiency is more aspirational than other components of construction*

- When building a new home, consumers focus on the structure of the home first {things like the foundation} so that the home is sturdy, safe and will last for their family.
- The structure and installation also take priority after they are satisfied that the base of their home is solid.
- EE options are desirable, but typically feel more like the “icing on the cake” rather than something necessary.



\* Much like Maslow's hierarchy, the base of the pyramid are the 'must-haves' while the top of the pyramid represents the 'wish-fors'.

# *Saving money is the biggest motivation for including energy efficient options in a new home*



- Consumers want options available to them that are energy efficient, particularly in areas such as Portland and Spokane.
- They believe incorporating EE features into their homes will help them save money {in the long term} and makes them feel like they are "doing their part for the environment".

*I know that if my home is energy efficient, it will save me money...I see it in my bills.*

# Consumers are aware of some ways to make a home more energy efficient

When prompted, consumers often talk about the following as the best ways to improve a home's energy efficiency:

**Insulation**



**Windows**



**Water Heater**



**Doors**



However, most do not know much about these features, why they have them and how to evaluate quality {or the energy efficiency}.

*I don't really know what KIND of insulation it is but the builder said they put in more than they have to so that's good. I don't know how much more though or how much better it is..."*



# Windows are often mentioned first for energy efficiency upgrades

- Because consumers desire natural light, windows are often top of mind.
- They believe double pane are the best in windows.
- Some consumers are familiar with gas-filled and low-E windows.
- Most consumers are not familiar with what makes windows energy efficient.

*I know the windows are double-paned, but I'm not really sure what that does for me. I assume it means it holds air in and keeps air out better?*



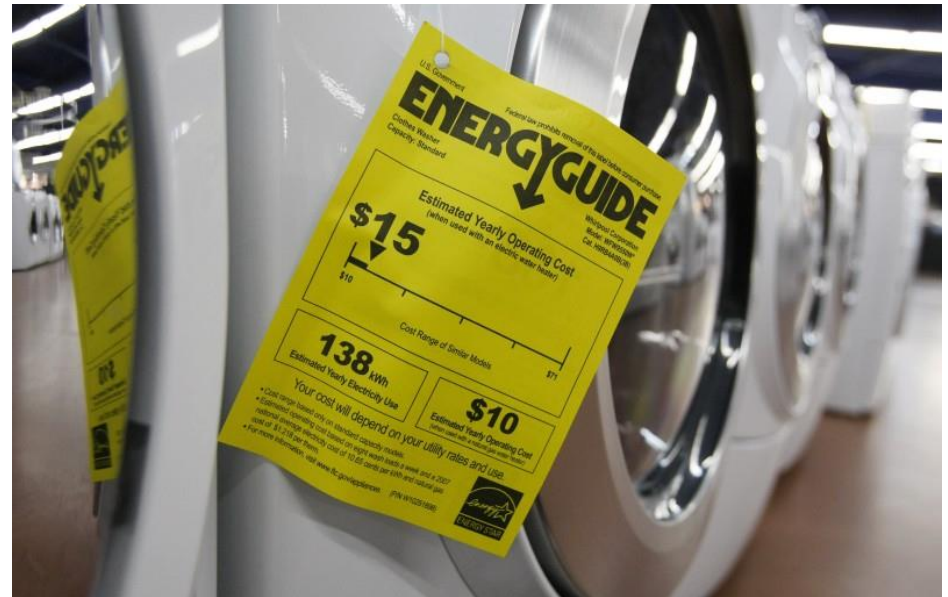


# Buyers are aware of energy efficiency in appliances, but don't look to their builder for guidance

- Most buyers are familiar with energy efficient appliances, such as washers, dryer and refrigerators. Consumers look for the “energy star/guide sticker” on appliances to confirm their EE purchase.
- Many consumers are not purchasing these appliances from their builder {either the builder does not offer them or they feel they can get a better selection/price if they buy it themselves}.
- They feel they know enough about these appliances to make a good choice on their own.



*The builder had some energy efficient appliances but I knew I could find some great deals and maybe some other options at Home Depot or Lowes.*



# Secondary energy efficiency considerations are more sophisticated

Beyond the typical EE features mentioned by consumers, many share EE options they know exist but tend to be out of their price range.

Consumers mention the following as desirable EE options:

- Solar panels
- Rain catchment
- Tankless water heater
- Low flow toilets
- Gas appliances
- Recycled siding
- Heat pump
- Fixtures that minimize water use

*I wish I had enough money to incorporate energy efficient features...we tried but basically our builder said everything was out of our budget.*





# Solar panels are desirable but buyers say they are cost prohibitive



- Buyers who mention solar panels are interested in the concept of paying less for power as well as putting power “back into the grid”.
- The price tag for solar panels is well above most consumers’ budgets.
- Builders typically do not offer panels as an option; even when the buyer asks, not all of the builders will do it.
- Seen as something a “custom builder” might do versus something a “standard builder” might offer.

*I'd love to do it but it would take 15 - 20 years to get your money back out of it.*

*I asked my builder but he said not right away...it was not even a discussion. Just wasn't something we could afford to do.*



# ***Market Nuances***

# *There are some small market nuances*

## **{washington}**

- Shoppers are more savvy because they are more familiar with government regulations related to building codes.
- Home owners often supplement a central heating system with a wood stove with a blower. They use them because they are seen as being great producers of heat, more efficient than using central heat and providing ambiance.
- Buyers here talk more about heat pumps than other markets. They are not exactly sure how they are more EE but they know they are. Some chose them specifically, others say it was standard with the builder.
- Buyers have some concern about having a fire break around their home to ward against forest fires.

## **{oregon}**

- The housing market in the Portland area has created extremely high costs of home ownership. Many people cannot afford to buy a property and remodel it, so new construction becomes a more fiscally responsible option.
- Oregonians are quite nostalgic when talking about wanting to build a home for their family—one like the home where they were raised.

## **{montana}**

- The space in Montana causes many to not even consider new home construction as an option—it is too expensive to have builders and their staff driving long distances to land outside the populated cities.

# THANK YOU!

Amy Greene  
Arrow G Consulting

*TOGETHER We Are Transforming the Northwest*



# *Appendix*



# Appendix

Prewrite Assignment



Discussion Guide



Recruitment screener



# NEW CONSTRUCTION RESEARCH

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HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT



# HELLO!

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Thanks so much for agreeing to participate in this research project. We are so appreciative of your time, and we can't wait to get to know you better!

Over the next week—before we meet—we would like you to complete this pre-work assignment. The goal is to capture your experience with the process of a new construction home purchase. This is a chance to have fun and be creative! Pictures, drawings, stories, words, songs – these are all helpful ways to express your feelings and experiences, so don't hold back!

You can fill in your information directly on this paper, or you can use the electronic file emailed to you. Either way, you need to remember to bring a hard copy of this packet with you to the focus group session.

Please remember, there are no right or wrong answers here – have fun but be real. Tell us the things that will allow us to get to know the real you and your true impressions and perspectives.

Thank You!  
Amy, Jennifer + the research team



# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

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(FIRST NAME)

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Help us get to know you and your life – your home, your family, your pets, job, my favorite things, places you love to go, etc.

Show us your life in words and pictures (please label the pictures so we know what we're looking at).

# MORE ABOUT YOU...

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- What is the BEST part of your day
- What do you LOVE?
- What is the most CHALLENGING part of your day?
- What are you most worried about? What keeps you up at night?
- What one thing in your home represents you? (photo please!)
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10 years?





## YOUR LIFESTYLE...

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How would you describe your lifestyle? Use words + pictures.

What kinds of products do you purchase to support that lifestyle?  
Show us an example.

# THE BEGINNING...

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Please tell us (again with words and pictures!) about the start of your home buying process.

- When did you start looking?
- Why did you start looking?
- How did you feel about beginning this process?
- What types of homes did you consider?

# RESOURCES...

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Using words + pictures, tell us about your resources during the process:

- Where did you get information?
- Who helped you during your search?

## TOP PRIORITIES FOR YOUR HOME

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- What were your “must haves” in a home when you started looking?
- How did that change (if it did) during the process?
- What compromises did you make, if any?

# YOUR NEW HOME

---

Tell us about the home you decided on (words + pictures again please!)

- How did you decide on this one?
- What made it the best choice for you?
- How do you feel about your decision?





# FINAL THOUGHTS...

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If you could choose one image that would best communicate to your best friend your experience with new home construction what would it be? Why that image – what do you think it represents?



# FINAL THOUGHTS...

---

Complete the sentences:

- The BEST part of the process was...
- The WORST part of the process was...
- Here's what I would do differently...

What SONG do you think best represents your experience of the process?



# THAT'S A WRAP!

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THANKS AGAIN FOR ALL YOUR WORK SO FAR! PLEASE BE SURE TO BRING THIS PACKET WITH YOU TO THE FOCUS GROUPS. LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING YOU IN PERSON SOON.

AMY, JENNIFER + THE RESEARCH TEAM



Discussion  
Guide for

**NEEA**

Next Step Homes

Prepared For: Corinne McCarthy

DATE: 17 January 2017

## OBJECTIVES

- Generate insights regarding the purchase process for manufactured homes, including (but not limited to):
  - Path to Purchase
  - Key Influencers of Purchase
  - Hierarchy of Needs
- Gain an in-depth understanding of how to position non-energy benefits of manufactured homes with the increased EE configurations that are most likely to compel purchase, including:
  - The value of these benefits relative to one another
  - The believability of these benefits
  - The best way to contextualize the benefits
  - The most easily understood consumer language to articulate the above

## VENUE

Focus Groups (seating no more than 4 per group)

- All interviews will happen in a focus group style setting.
- Prior to the group, the moderator will review objectives and guide with any team members who will be viewing either in the backroom or alternate location.
- All clients are encouraged to wear comfortable clothes and shoes. Jeans are perfectly acceptable. Please refrain from wearing anything with a NEEA or other logo that might bias the participants or raise questions.
- During the interviews you are a researcher and able to leave your regular job behind – embrace it!

## NEXT STEP FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

### INTRODUCTIONS

20 minutes

Moderator introduction – establish the following guidelines:

- *Overview/agenda for the session*
- *Guidelines—General highlights of expectations, no right/wrong answers, looking for opinion and experience, equal airtime among group*
- *Disclosures—Confidentiality, recording the session, note-taking, mirrors, etc.*

Respondent introductions: *Tell me a little about yourselves...*

- *HH info, employment, hobbies/interests*
- Great!. Let's take a look at that homework assignment I had you do...
  - On slide 4, I asked you about the one thing in your home that best represents you. Let's share that out with the group
    - What about that makes it the best representation of you?





- Why is that important to you?
  - What would life be like without that?
- Also on slide 4, I asked you what you LOVE...that's a pretty broad question but let's share what everyone answered...
  - What does that do for you? What does that give you?
- On the next slide (5), I asked you about your lifestyle.. Let's share those pictures that you used to bring that to life...
  - Why is that way of living important for you?
  - How close would you say you are to your ideal lifestyle at this point?
  - What needs to be different to make it ideal?
  - Moderator to probe according to how consumers answer...

## DEFINING HOME

10 minutes

Part of your lifestyle is obviously your home.. Let's do a quick exercise I like to call "mindmapping". It's simply a way to put all your thoughts about a particular topic in a visual "map" (Moderator to use chartpad).. I'll say a word and you just shout out what associations you have with that word...I'll capture them up here on this chartpad.

Let's try a quick example—when I say DISNEY WORLD...what are all the thoughts that come to mind? (Moderator to capture quickly on the chartpad).

Great!. You've got it. Let's do our own map now about HOME. (Moderator to put the word in the center of the chartpad). What are all the things you think of about HOME...

Moderator to probe according to answers, including:

- Say more about X...
- What makes X important for you as it relates to HOME?
- IF NOT SPONTANEOUSLY MENTIONED—What are some features of a great home? Why so?

## HOME SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

60 minutes

Let's switch gears now and really focus in on the home buying process. Keep your homework out since we will certainly use it for our discussion.

- So the beginning...tell me about that.
  - When did you start looking for a home?
  - What caused you to start looking?
  - What was important to you at that time?
  - How did you feel at the beginning of the process?
  - What types of homes did you consider at first?
  - When did new construction enter the picture?



- Where did you get information during this early stage?
  - How helpful was the information you got?
  - What additional information would have been more helpful to you?
- Was anyone else involved in helping you during these early stages? Probe to understand role of individual influencers.
  - What role did family members play?
  - What about friends? Colleagues?
- Now, at what point would you say you got 'serious' about buying a home? What was the tipping point?
  - After you got serious, how did your priorities change? What sorts of things became more/less important to you? How did you feel during this time?
  - What sorts of compromises did you have to make?
  - On slide 8, I asked about your top priorities for a home...tell me your thoughts here...
    - What changed over time? Why so?
    - What stayed the same? Why so?
    - Anything completely fall off the list? What happened?
- How did you decide on your current home? What was your second choice?
  - What about this home made it the best choice for you? Probe specifics.
  - How do you feel about your decision to purchase this home? What would you do differently if you could?
- *Additional questions to ask throughout the process:*
  - Did you visit new construction homes? If so, tell me what kinds of things you looked for to help you decide if they were right for you.
  - What role did the new construction builder/retailer play in your decision making? What would you have changed about that experience?
    - What types of questions did you ask them?
    - What seemed important to them?

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

20 minutes

- When you hear the words 'energy efficiency' related to a home, what comes to mind?
- If not mentioned, at what point, if ever, during your shopping experience did you hear about or investigate anything related to energy efficiency regarding your home? Probe for specifics.
- To what extent is having a home that is energy efficient important to you? Probe to understand.
- In what ways is this home energy efficient, if any?
  - Did you pay more for these efficiencies? If so, why? What do you get from that?
  - If not, were there options presented to you when you purchased this home? What were they? How were they presented? What kept you from investing in those?



## CLOSING

10 minutes

- Share with me the ONE PICTURE (slide 10 of homework) that best represents the home buying process for you.
- Looking back on this whole experience, what would you say was the biggest surprise you encountered along the way?
- What advice would you give to a friend or family member who is shopping for a new construction home?
- If you could talk directly to new construction builders and those who sell them, what would you say to them? What should they know about you as a buyer that they currently don't?

Thank and Close.



**Arrow G Consulting**  
**New Construction FGs**  
 Screener V3 [1.9.17]

INTERVIEWER #: \_\_\_\_\_ VRC#: \_\_\_\_\_ SAMPLE SOURCE: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>DATE PLACED ON HOLD:</b>	<b>APPROVED (PM INITIALS):</b>
<b>REASON FOR HOLD:</b>	

FOR LOGISTICS USE ONLY					
Sup QA	QA Screener	DB Screener	QS Screener	TS Screener	E-GCS Screener

NAME:		
COMPANY NAME:		
JOB TITLE:		
HOME ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIPCODE:
HOME#:	CELL#:	ALT#:
EMAIL ADDRESS:		
SESSION DATE:		SESSION TIME:

SESSION DETAILS	
<b>Location</b>	Multiple Markets (Billings, Boise, Spokane, Portland)
<b>Date</b>	Billings: 1/25 2pm-4pm, Boise: 1/25 2pm-4pm, Spokane: 2/1 2pm-4pm and 4:30-6:30pm, Portland: 2/8 2pm-4pm and 4:30-6:30pm
<b>Number of Recruits</b>	36 (6 groups of 6)
<b>Topic</b>	New Construction Homes
<b>Honorarium</b>	\$75 + \$25 for homework
<b>Quotas:</b>	Mixed demos

## INTRO

Hello my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling from VuPoint Research, an independent research company. We're conducting a compensated research study about **real estate**, and are looking for individuals to share their opinions. Please be assured that this is not a sales call, and you won't be contacted in the future as a result of this call.

I just have a few questions to see if you qualify.

**This call may be monitored or recorded for quality control purposes.**

## INITIAL SCREENING

- S1 Record gender by observation
- 1 Male
  - 2 Female
- S2 First, do you or anyone in your household work, or ever worked, in any of the following industries?
- 11 Advertising agency
  - 12 Market research firm
  - 13 Media/TV/Radio/Newspaper → **continue**
  - 14 Banking or Mortgage company
  - 15 Real estate industry: broker, agent, developer, investor, builder, appraiser
  - 16 Landlord/Property Manager
  - 88 None of the above → **continue**
- S3 Are you either the primary or joint decision maker in your household when it comes to making real estate decisions, including what primary residence you buy or rent?
- 1 Primary
  - 2 Joint
  - 3 I don't make real estate decisions → **Ask to speak with decision maker**



GENERAL QUESTIONS – **FOR DECISION MAKERS**

Q1 Are you currently employed...

- 11 Part time
- 12 Full time
- 13 Homemaker
- 14 Currently unemployed/looking for work... → **hold**
- 15 Full time student
- 99 Other
- 98 Refused

Q1a **IF Q1= 11 OR 12 ASK:** What is your occupation

RECORD \_\_\_\_\_

Q2 When the last time you participated in any market research?

- 11 0-3 months → **terminate**
- 12 6-12 months
- 13 Over 1 year ago
- 14 Never

Q2a **IF Q2=12 ASK:** What was the topic of the market research you participated in?

\_\_\_\_\_

**IF RELATED TO STUDY TOPIC THEN TERMINATE**

Q3 Which of the following best describes your current living situation? *Note: we are interested in your primary living place of residence only. This does not include any secondary vacation or investment properties.*

- 11 I own my own home, and I am paying a mortgage
- 12 I own my home outright and am not paying a mortgage
- 13 I rent my home → **terminate**
- 99 Other (specify)

Q4 How long have you lived in your current home?

- 11 Less than a year
- 12 Less than two years
- 13 2-5 years → **hold**
- 14 5+ years → **terminate**
- 97 Don't know/refused → **terminate**

Q5 Is your home...

- 11 New constructions (no previous occupants)
- 12 Less than five years old → **hold**
- 13 5-10 years old → **terminate**
- 14 More than ten years old → **terminate**

Q6 What was the price range of your home?

- 11 \$75,000 to \$100,000
  - 12 \$101,000 to \$150,000
  - 13 \$151,000 to \$200,000
  - 14 \$201,000 to 250,000
  - 15 \$251,000 to \$300,000
  - 16 \$301,000 to \$350,000
  - 17 \$351,000 to \$400,000
  - 18 \$401,000 to \$499,000
  - 19 \$500,000 to \$750,000
  - 20 \$751,000 to \$999,999
  - 21 \$1 million or above
  - 99 Other (specify)
  - 97 Don't know
  - 98 Refused ASK → **terminate**
- 
- Low
- High

**LOW RANGE = \$75K-\$400k**

**HIGH RANGE=\$401K+**

**Q7** How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Note: *please be assured we are looking for people who fall all along the spectrum of answers so please don't feel like you have to answer these questions in a politically correct manner – just answer them honestly.*

	Statements	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
A	"I believe the decisions I make have an impact on the environment"					
B	"Products that are required to save energy hurt the economy"					
C	"It is worth it to pay a little bit more for products that are good for the environment"					
D	"When I buy products I look for items that don't waste energy"					
E	"The government should not be in the business of specifying how energy efficient products are"					

**Q8** On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being highest, how well do the following statements describe you...?

A	"It is important for me to have my opinion heard"	
B	"I enjoy conversations with new people"	
C	"I am not some who has to be the center of attention"	
D	"People value what I have to say"	
E	"I am not confident in my ability to make good purchasing decisions"	

**Q9** Now this question is just for fun...If you could have lunch with any person alive or dead, who would it be, and why?

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**DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES**

Now, just a few more questions for classification purposes.

D1 What is your age?

**RECORD EXACT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MUST BE 21-58 YEARS**

D2 How would you describe your location?

- 1 Urban
- 2 Suburban

D3 What city and county do you currently reside?

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

D4 What is the highest level of education you have had the chance to complete?

- 11 High school/GED
- 12 Some college
- 13 Trade School/Associates degree
- 14 4-year college degree
- 14 Grad school
- 15 Post graduate/advanced degree
- 99 Other

**GET MIX**

D5 What is your combined household income?

- 11 Less than \$50,000
- 12 \$50,000 to \$75,000
- 13 \$75,000 - \$125,000
- 14 \$125,000 - \$175,000
- 15 More than \$175,000
- 98 Refused to answer

**GET MIX FOR CODE 12 AND ABOVE**

D6 Which of the following best describes your ethnic background?

- 11 White/Caucasian
- 12 Black or African American
- 13 Hispanic or Latino
- 14 Asian
- 99 Other



**HOLD**

Thank you again for taking the time to answer these questions. Unfortunately, one or more of your responses places you into a category where our quotas are filled, and I am unable to invite you to this study at this time. However, I would like to put you on **hold status**, which means that if the parameters for the study change, or if we have cancellations, we will call you to invite you.

HOLD. May I place you on hold status, and count on you to be available if we should have a spot open up?

- 1 Yes  
2 No **TERMINATE**

Great! There are many times where schedule adjustments are made last-minute, so I appreciate you remaining on standby. This can happen at any time, so if the opportunity to invite you arises, we will call you right away. Please be patient; if you call in to inquire about your status, our response will likely be “we’re not sure yet.” Rest assured, we will call to invite you as soon as we have this information.

**INVITATION****INVITE.**

Great! Based on your responses, I’d like to invite you to participate in this research study. Your participation will involve **[description/value prop]**. Be assured this is strictly for research purposes; at no time will anyone try to sell you anything, either during, or as a result of, this study.

**Locations**

Billings, Mo	Jan 25 <sup>th</sup> @ 2pm	The Northern 19 North Broadway Billings, Montana 59101
Boise, ID	Jan 25 <sup>th</sup> @ 2pm	Clearwater Research 1845 S Federal Way Boise, ID 83705
Spokane, Wa	Feb 1 <sup>st</sup> @2pm and 4:30pm	TBD
Portland, Or (Willamette Valley)	Feb 8 <sup>th</sup> 2pm and 4:30pm	Vupoint Downtown

**Homework**

There will be a quick and easy “pre-group” exercise to complete before your group. This exercise will be emailed to you, along with instructions, and will need to be completed and returned before your scheduled group takes place. For this portion of the research you will receive \$25 as a thank you.

The research session will take **2 hours**, and will be held at a focus group facility in **[general area; e.g., Southwest Portland]**. If you participate, you’ll receive a \$75 honorarium for participating in the focus group + \$25 for the pre-group exercise at the conclusion of your session.

I2 Can I officially lock you in for a session on **[insert day, date, time]**?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No **TERMINATE**

NDA As part of the research, all participants will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement stating you will NOT discuss the research outside of this group. Do you agree to sign a non-disclosure form?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No → **TERMINATE**

I3 There will also be a short, pre-group exercise to complete and return by email prior to your group. Do you agree to complete the exercise by email?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No → **TERMINATE**

Because you will be one of only a select few participating in this group, your attendance is critical to the success of the project. If for whatever reason you do need to cancel, we ask that you contact us right away so we have an opportunity to look for a replacement. Please grab a pen to write down our number. **[INTERVIEWER – PLEASE BE SURE THEY ARE WRITING THIS DOWN]**. Our toll-free project phone number is **1-888-882-3799**. Please reference project XXX when you call.

Your session will be held at **[facility name]**, located at **[address]**. As part of our confirmation process, you'll receive an email with more information about the facility location.

In the meantime, there are a few important things to keep in mind:

- Please arrive 15 minutes early so that you will have time to park, get checked in and have some refreshments. There are many sessions which cannot admit or compensate late arrivers, so if you're running late, **please call us!**
- Please do not bring friends, relatives or children with you to your session as we do not have accommodations for them.
- Many sessions involve viewing or listening to content. If you need glasses or hearing aids, please make sure you have them with you.

## DETAILS

**Successful research requires that some basic procedures be followed, so the following steps will be taken to ensure your participation:**

1. As a quality assurance measure, you may receive a verification call from a supervisor. This is an important part of our research process, so please so please do your best to answer when we call. If they are unable to connect with you for this verification, your participation may be canceled.
2. Once you've completed this verification process, a member of our logistics team will email you a confirmation letter, which includes a map and directions to the facility. It is important that you provide us with a valid email address for this process. Please note that all email addresses will

remain confidential, and we will contact you only for the purposes of this project. The email will come from **[insert address]**; please be sure to check your spam filter in case it is caught there.

3. Next, within two days of your session, we will contact you with a final confirmation. This is very important, and we often keep trying to contact people if our confirmation numbers are low. Again, please do your best to answer when we call.

I3 Is there any reason you can think of that you shouldn't participate in this study?

- 1 Yes **(record details and terminate)**
- 2 No

### CONTACT INFO

Great. Now I just need to verify your contact information.

RECORD PARTICIPANT CONTACT INFO