

# Cherry Blossom: Future of Home

Advancing the Future of Home and Home Design through an  
Interactive Pop-Up Learning Environment

# Cherry Blossom: Future of Home Pop-Up

## 01. Challenge

The single-family home is notoriously difficult to evolve: zoning and building code make it difficult to gain traction on new concepts, R&D costs provide a high barrier to entry, and the feeling of being in a home is achieved only after building the home itself (for now).

EPAM Continuum partnered with one of the world's largest home builders to create a lab for advancing this age-old typology. Cherry Blossom is a pop-up retail experience exploring future concepts for the connected and sustainable home, delivering new means for homeowners to explore features, arrange and visual spaces, and understand the implications of their design and equipment decisions.

By creating a flexible platform for testing domestic innovations, we were quickly able to advance and prioritize the Cherry Blossom vision.





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## 02. Research & Insights



### LACK OF FLEXIBILITY

We learned that the function required of your house shifts throughout the day, from season to season, and across a life. Homes in the United States are often inflexible and expensive to alter, so that when shifts occur we're more likely to move than to adapt the home itself. This means that many owners prioritize the size of their home over its quality or performance, relying upon square footage as the solve for all future needs they envision happening.

### MANAGEMENT MAYHEM

Owning a home can be a nightmare of stress, logistics, and coordination, from the moment of first searching for the property, to choosing upgrades and repairs for your budget and need, to determining when and how to maintain it. Owners are looking for better systems to understand which parts of their investment need attention first, and are looking for simpler ways to connect with the expertise needed to solve small issues before they become big problems.

### NARRATIVE NEED

At its best, your home is an extension of your life: it holds your memories, it reflects your values, and it shapes your dreams. Many people never find that home, or when they do, can't take it with them if they have to leave. In our research, many owners saw their house as an investment rather than a home, and as a result delay putting their own identity and experience first, thinking instead of the marketability for its inevitable sale.

### VISION GAP

When designing a home, owners need to make decisions on layout, finishes, and equipment that can have massive impact on their lives for years to come. Many owners didn't feel that traditional plans and renderings helped them know what the right decision was, or what the impact would be on their bank account. As a result, the design process is hugely stressful, and can lead to owners making decisions that result in huge costs or dissatisfaction after construction.

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## 03. Solution

EPAM Continuum created a flexible laboratory environment to test 15 separate concepts. Rather than creating a single home, the space was envisioned as a series of connected experiences, allowing the team to test both the home's features, brand expression, and retail/home sales process.

Designed as a pop-up space, the concepts were tested in locations in New England and Northern California. We took a five-senses approach, testing scent, sound, and taste as core elements of the home design experience not typically engaged. Technically, each of the experiences was brought to life using a wide array of proximity sensors, camera vision, virtual reality, and kinetic mechanical systems.





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## 04. Results

By testing the work in two separate markets, EPAM Continuum was able to help the Cherry Blossom team identify which features and messaging should be funded for advancement across a varied consumer base. As a result, several elements were prioritized for advancement in market (still ongoing).

In addition, more than a dozen members of the Cherry Blossom team were embedded at the EPAM Continuum studio for 15 months, allowing for hands-on participation in our learning, envisioning, and prototyping. This highly collaborative exchange and innovation capability training resulted in a near-constant alignment with the needs of their business and culture, allowing the team to move more quickly and take bigger risks than in typical projects.

