Syddansk Universitet

Coach Freelancing Platform

Faculty of Engineering

BSc in Software Engineering

Software Engineering Semester 2

Project period: 2024.02.01 – 2024.06.07.

Participants:

Kacper Grzyb (kagrz23@student.sdu.dk)

Francesco Schenone (frsch23@student.sdu.dk)

Levente Sohár (lesoh23@student.sdu.dk)

Ignat Bozhinov (igboz23@student.sdu.dk)

Sebestyén Deák (sedea23@student.sdu.dk)

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1 Introduction

1.1 What is the issue we are trying to solve?

More and more fitness influencer are trying to increase their income and reach by offering one-on-one coaching often accompanied by custom training- and diet plans. More generally, as consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, an ever increasing number of traditional fitness coaches started to offer their coaching online as well. We can say from first hand experience that the resulting coaching can become quite messy independent from the coach. The user experience of the current influencer coaching is really bad, members of our team had first hand experience of how terrible it can be; it is very fragmented: communication channels are switched constantly, training and diet plans are hosted on seemingly random platforms and since it is all internet based, establishing initial trust / contact can result challenging. Our guess is that the GDPR is hardly respected. That's why want to offer a unified solution for influencer and fitness coaching to remediate to all these problems.

1.2 Is LinkedGym suitable for the market

Based on our limited market analysis and other business analysis tools that we applied throughout the project we can confidently say that we do believe that LinkedGym could be a product in which consumers will have interest in, if launched. It won't grow by itself and will probably need to rely on influencer deals and need a decent marketing budget after launch which could be a limiting factor to its uptake.

1.3 Could we produce LinkedGym

In the scenario we would find ourselves in, if we were to concretely develop this product, most likely that the company developing it would be a startup with no- to very limited funding. With the abilities and knowledge we currently have, the successful development and deployment of LinkedGym would be very difficult, potentially possible if the motivation were high enough. It is to be noted that our abilities to develop LinkedGym, would probably be sufficient after the completion of the third semester (distributed interactive software systems) in our education.

1.4 WHat is the basis of the project

The only actual requirement for this project was that it had to have some kind of database as it was needed for the successful completion of all exercises given. Various ideas surfaced during the brainstorming phase, and LinkedGym was not even our first choice. Ultimately LinkedGym turned out to be a better fir for two reasons: "founder fit" as all of the group members are fitness enthusiasts which amounts to a decent understanding of the current state of the fitness industry and it provided a better playing ground for the various software engineering exercises.

1.5 Outline of the project

1.6 Business model of LinkedGym

The primary source of revenue of LinkedGym will come from transactional commissions, where the platform takes a percentage of every transaction made through our platform. Furthermore we plan to have additional revenue streams by letting sporting brands promote their products on our platform. The business model will be discussed in further detail in chapter 5.

1.7 Product outline

LynkedGym is an online coaching platform that offer a streamlined experienced for coaches and trainees alike. Unlike self branded solutions and platforms LinkedGym unifies everything involved for a quality fitness coaching experience, while still providing the possibility to advance ones personal brand. Our solution offers a simple and secure way to establish communication and subsequently to carry it on in a integrated platform. LinkedGym provides a straightforward way to create and assign custom plans, track progress and facilitate the whole coaching experience.

1.8 Competing products

Based on our limited market research we did not find a platform which would be a direct competitor to LinkedGym. There are similar apps that offer ways to track progress and provide custom workout plans, made among others by influencers but

none offer the possibility to have direct coaching. Alternatively, there are many self branded coaching websites which re-direct a potential customer to instagram direct messages or similar social messaging platforms.

As we did not find any directly competing product, it may mean one of three things: There is a market to be captured and our platform solves a real need, or there is no need for such a product, hence the lack of a similar product. Ultimately it could be that our "googling" skills need serious improvement, reason why we did not find anything similar.

1.9 Goals and risk of LinkedGym

We defined goals and risks of LinkedGym by answering a list of predetermined questions that helped us to elucidate them.

What is the best thing that could happen?

- Multiple fitness influencer with a moderate amount of traction switch to our platform

What do we need to do to succeed?

- We need to attract influencer as for them to start using our platform
- We need to provide a straightforward and simple user experience
- We need to streamline the whole coaching process

What is the worst to happen?

- We do not attract neither influencers nor coaches

- No one is interested in using our platform, there is no actual need for it

If we fail...

- We did not provide enough differentiation relatively to similar platforms
- We did non manage to attract users
- The profit margins of the platform turn out to be too low to be a viable product

What are possible pitfalls

- We overcomplicate the platform
- The scope is to big for us to complete it

2 Analysis

As a group our task was to create a software product to work on. Our aim was to find a common interest, so we would all have the same level of enthusiasm about the project. A few hours of brainstorming have led us to decide on a fitness application. The product is an online coaching application. The target audience can be divided into two categories: coaches and trainees. The application would function similar to LinkedIn where the coaches would have to create a portfolio in order to attract trainees or customers. They can list their degree, training routine, specialties and photos. The trainees would decide based on this portfolio page to contact the coaches. This product is different from other applications as it offers an opportunity to receive 1 on 1 training for a below market price. Moreover, the coaches would have time to focus on their clients closely as they would be able to take on only a few customers at the same time. We created this product to people who want to improve their health by exercising while staying in their budget. The target audience is wide as the coaches can have various background and take on trainees with different goals and needs. Starting from people who want to gain weight or lose weight all the way to people who want to improve their mobility classifies as our target audience because the coaches who sign up provide the application with variety. The opportunity of the product is the cost efficiency. Personal training has become an expensive service. The goal of this application is to have affordable coaches. While personal trainers only check in with you when you are training together, the coaches in our application can be available for your need at any time of the day and help you out with nutritional

questions as well.

2.1 User Journey Maps

In order to make sure that our application is easy to use we had to create user journey maps. When we created the app, we realized that our user can be divided into two groups, coaches and trainees. The two types of user are closely connected and when one of them does an action it will have an effect on the other user. The user journey maps are presented in the picture below.

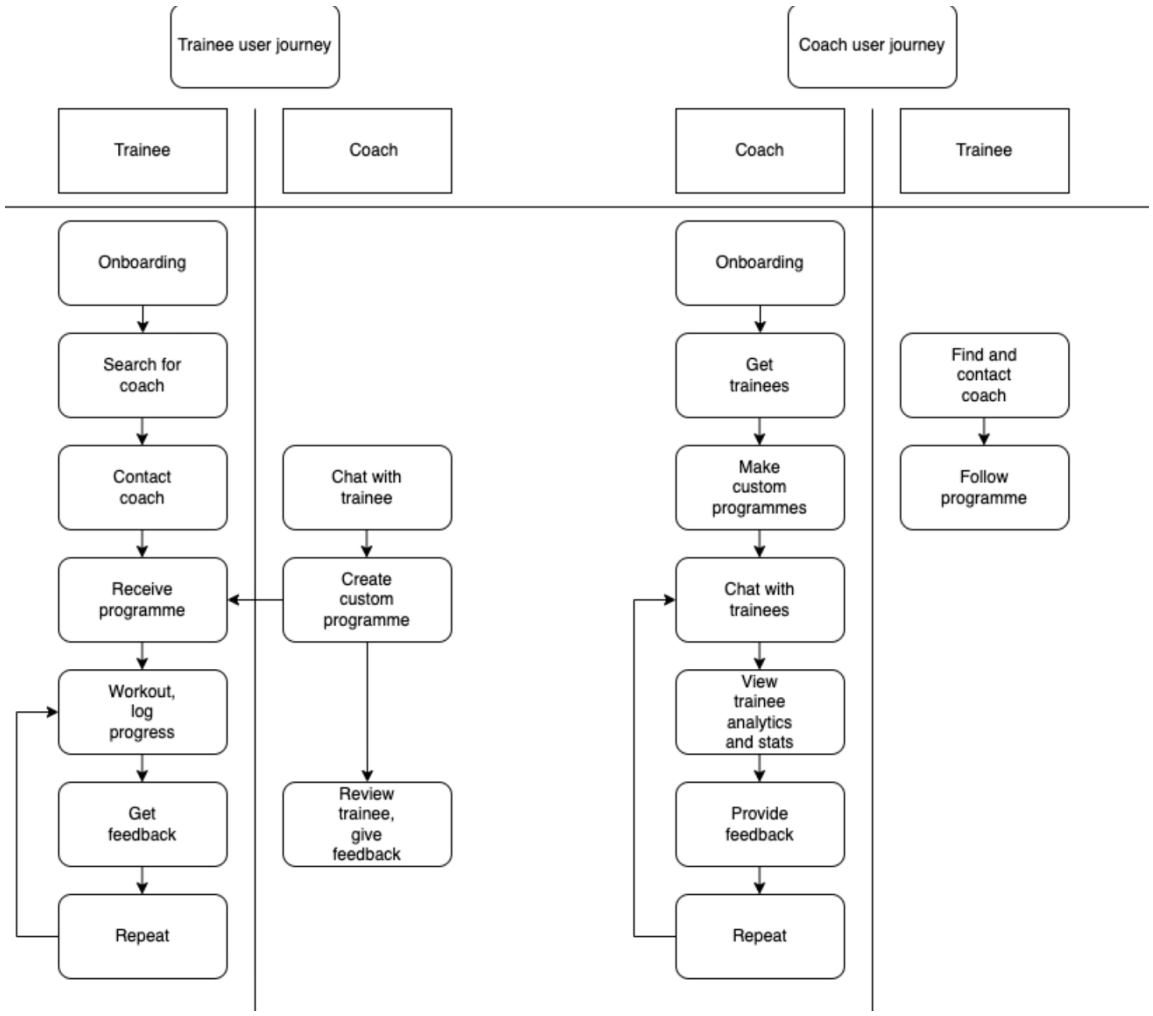

Figure 1: User Journey Maps

2.2 Personas

We had to create personas to make sure people with different goals and backgrounds could benefit from using our application. Diversity was our main goal while coming up with the personas. They were created using the software called Miro where each

persona has their own brief description, skills, main goals, personality, interest, gains and pains listed. We have created 5 personas in total.

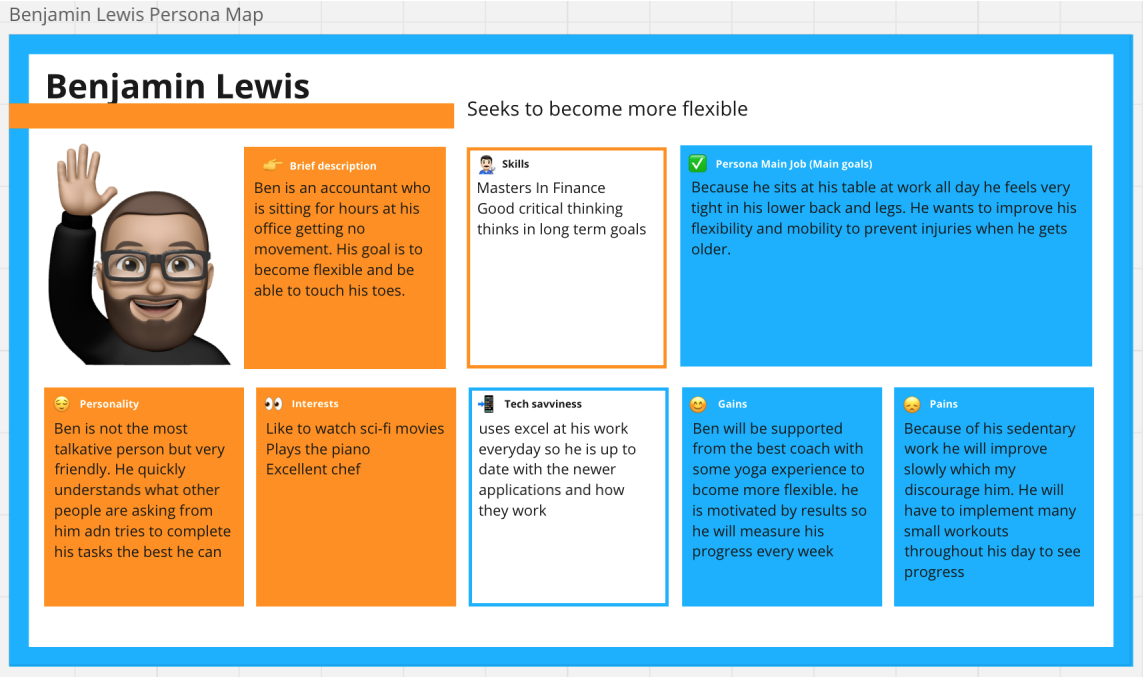

Figure 2: Benjamin Lewis

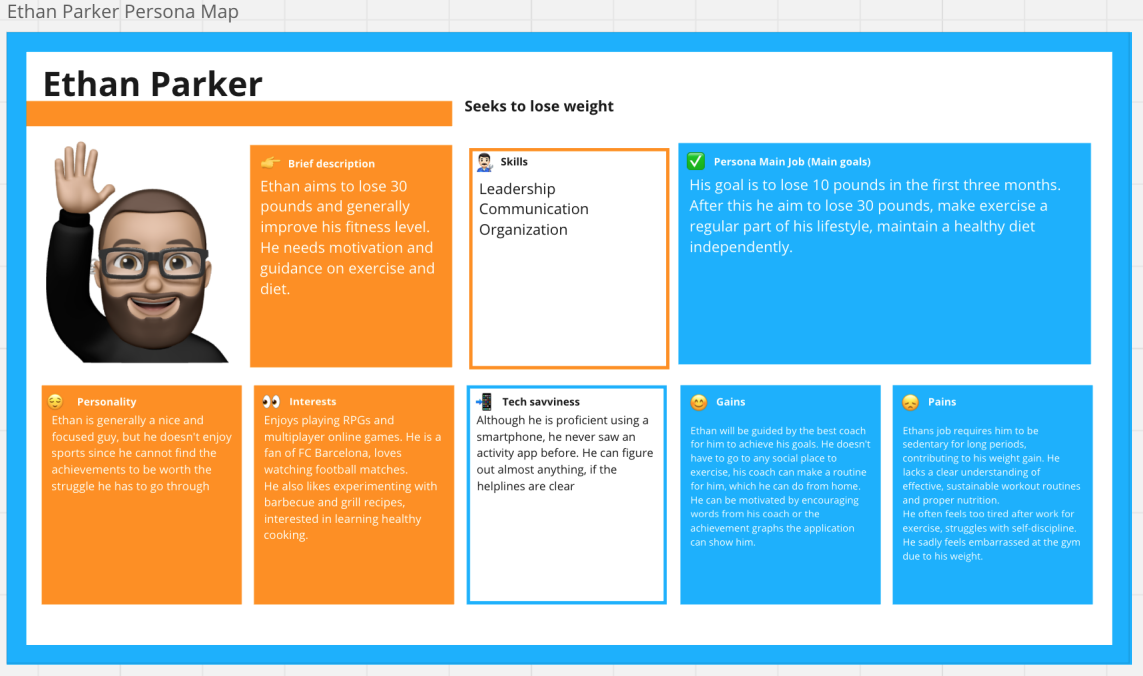

Figure 3: Ethan Parker

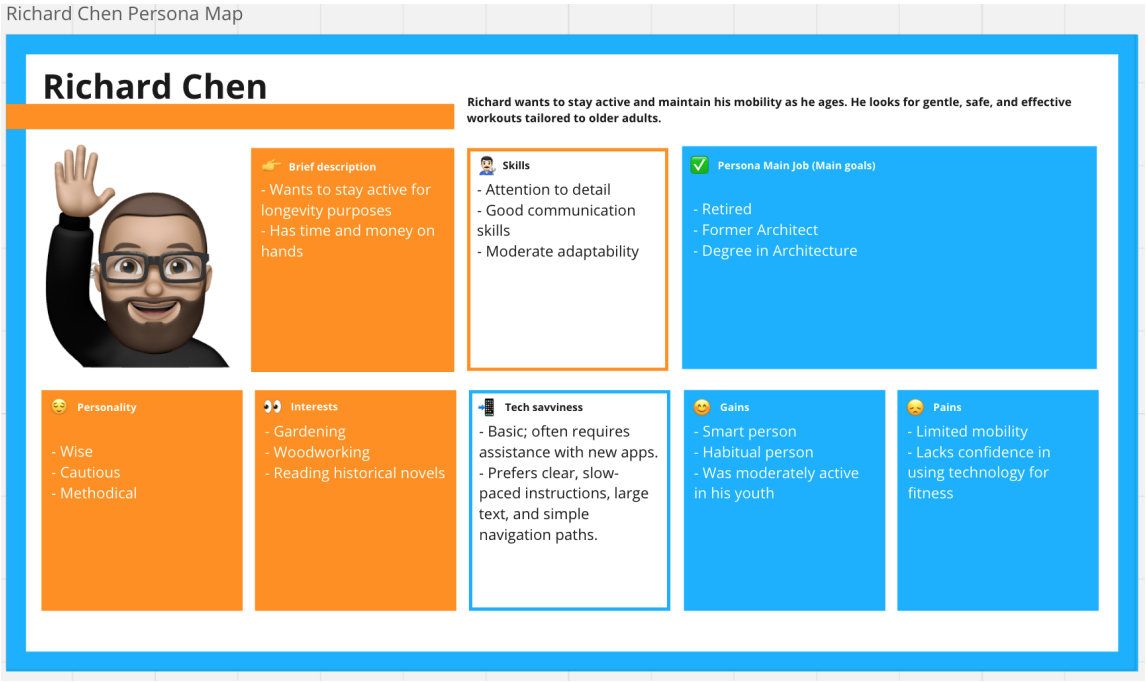

Figure 4: Richard Chen

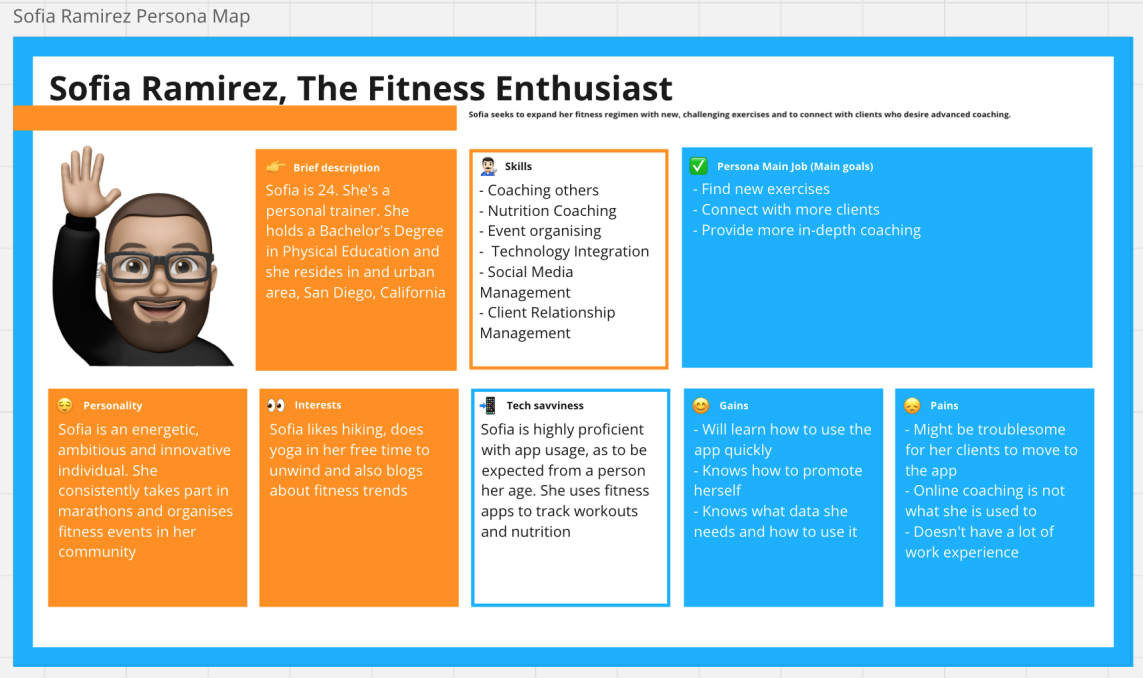

Figure 5: Sofia Ramirez

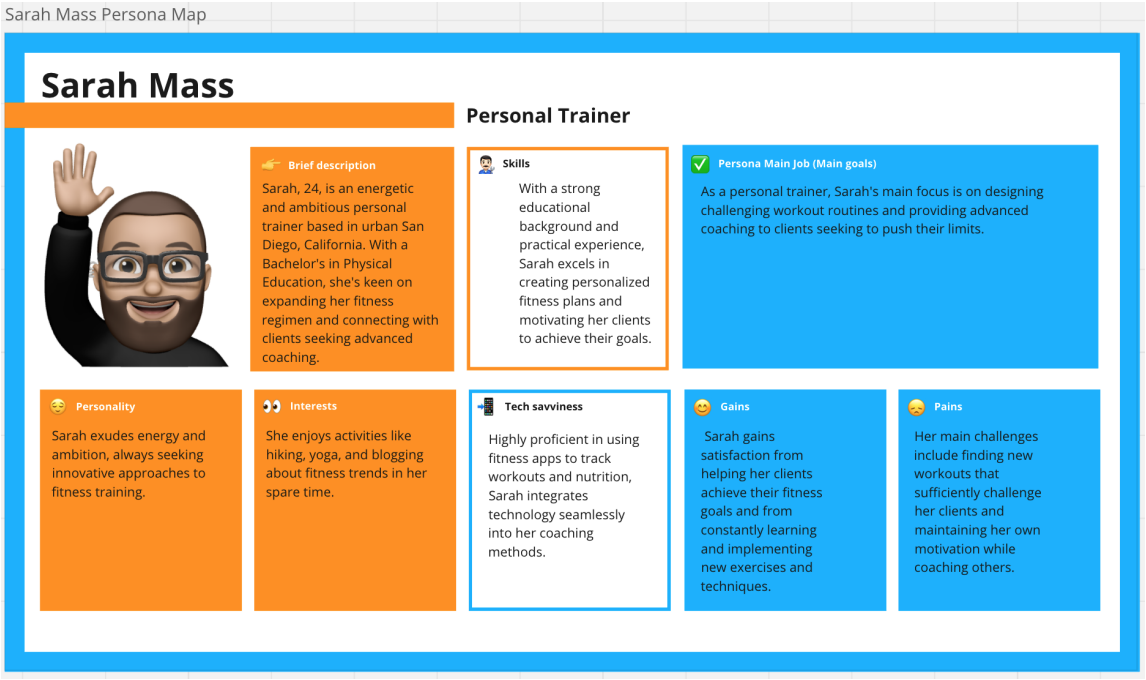

Figure 6: Sarah Mass

2.3 Functional and non-functional requirements

Functional requirements define the specific behaviours of a system. These requirements describe what the system should do in order to meet the user's needs. Our application includes user authentication. There is a separate one for coaches and trainees but the system behind it is the same. In the application we have to include a payment processor as the coaches will likely provide subscription-based coaching. Through this system we will enable users to place, track and cancel orders. When creating a profile, we need to store the personal information in a database which can be updated by the user in the setting part of the application. In the applica-

tion the trainees can search for preferred coaches therefore, the system allows users to search for coaches by various criteria, such as name, category and price range. Non-functional requirements specify the quality attributes of a system. These requirements describe how the system performs certain functions such as usability, performance, reliability and security. The system should be user-friendly, allowing new users to find what they require in the app without extensive explanation. The system should also be able to handle several simultaneous users without performance issues while being available most of the time, even during software updates. The application has to be well encrypted to protect user data.

3 Methodology

For the development of our Coach Freelancing Platform, we wanted to choose the software development process that would suit the needs and time constraints of this project. To achieve this, we dedicated an entire meeting to discuss each process we have learned about and list their pros and cons and arrived at the conclusion that we wanted to adopt an agile methodology, since they are the best suited for Software Development. Agile utilize iterative and incremental development. It promotes flexible responses to change and aims to deliver working software frequently, with a preference for shorter time cycles. In software development requirements can change rapidly. Agile is particularly effective, because the project's direction can be changed quickly, but it requires a high level of coordination and communication among team members. During our Software Engineering lectures we learned about many methodologies, here we will go through the most notable ones and argue why we chose to work with the agile framework: Scrum.

3.1 Waterfall Model:

This model is one of the earliest methodologies in engineering, it was and still is really popular outside of Software Engineering. It is based on linear sequential flow, meaning that any phase in the development process begins only after the previous one has been completed. The model is simple and easy to understand and use, which makes it suitable for projects with well-defined requirements that are unlikely to change, because after the report is done, and the project is planned out ahead,

we would have to work according to that plan, even if user-requirements have not been correctly anticipated or have changed. The changing requirements typical in Software Development made this methodology unsuitable for us.

3.2 Spiral Model:

The Spiral model combines iterative development with the systematic aspects of the Waterfall model. It allows for incremental refinements through each iteration or spiral. Each spiral starts with a set of goals and ends with the client reviewing the progress, which helps in early detection and reduction of risks. This model is particularly useful for large, complex, and high-risk projects. However, it can be more costly than other methods due to the ongoing evaluation and risk analysis and additionally, the model's complexity necessitates strict adherence to protocols and increased documentation.

3.3 V-Model:

The V-Model, or Validation and Verification model, provides a more structured approach which entails a lengthier planning period analogous to the waterfall method of software development. The planning of it must be very reliable as all the successive development phases almost exclusively rely on the previous planning phase. This model is often used in safety critical systems, because is useful for catching defects in early stages, which makes it cheaper and less time-consuming to fix them compared to later in the development process. Given the importance of the ahead of time planning the framework results to be quite inflexible and doesn't take into consideration the

possible changing of requirements during the development of the project.

3.4 Unified Process

This methodology is structured, iterative, and incremental and it emphasizes risk assessment, architecture, and continuous stakeholder involvement. It achieves these through distinct phases(Inception, Elaboration, Construction, Transition) and iterations which are, unlike Scrum, different length timeboxes, and not emphasized the same. Its values include adaptability, quality focus, and comprehensive documentation. While the Unified Process is suitable for complex, large-scale projects due to its detailed planning and risk mitigation, it can be expensive and complex, making it less agile and flexible compared to Scrum.

3.5 Agile

We already mentioned why we choose the agile methodology, now we had to choose a framework that utilizes it. We learned about many frameworks, a few of those were frameworks for large scale projects, which we aren't going to go in depth about here, since the magnitude of this project doesn't require it. We learned in depth about XP and Scrum. Since both of these are mostly similar, here we are going to mention a few key features and then argue why scrum is the more suitable for our project.

- Extreme Programming

  Extreme programming focuses on customer satisfaction and responding to changing customer requirements through practices like pair programming, test-driven development, and continuous integration. It also encourages frequent

releases in short development cycles to improve productivity and introduce checkpoints for new customer requirements and focuses on simplicity, communication, feedback, and courage among the development team.

- Scrum

  Scrum is built on the Agile Manifesto and the 12 Agile Principles. It uses fixed-length iterations called Sprints, lasting typically 2-4 weeks. The Scrum Team has defined roles: Product Owner, Scrum Master, Development Team. In and around the sprints there are structured events: Sprint Planning, Daily Scrum, Sprint Review, Sprint Retrospective. Scrum helps teams deliver value incrementally in a collaborative way. It has the artifacts Product Backlog, Sprint Backlog and Increment. It is important to maintain a prioritized Product Backlog to manage changing requirements and ensure that the team works on the most valuable tasks.

We chose scrum, because it is ideal for a small software startup as it fosters rapid development and adaptation to changing market demands. Scrum's lightweight framework is easy to understand and implement, allowing our team to stay focused, aligned, and responsive to our customers' feedback and business priorities. It promotes team collaboration and self-organization, and ensures regular delivery of valuable software increments, which values are important to almost all Software Developments.

3.6 Epics and User Stories

As part of Scrum we set up a Backlog in Atlassian's Jira webapplication. With the help of writing User Stories we pieced together Epics, which we are going to list below, and through those we identified issues and tasks, which all have been added to the backlog and can in the case of actuall production be put in different Sprints.

Epics:

- Transition / Stripe integration
  - Receive Payment
  - Pay for Coaching
  - Take a Cut From Payments
  - Change Payment Information
  - Change Billing Infromation
- Explore Page
  - Find Coach Through Explore Page
  - Filter Coaches
  - Get Found
  - Control How to Appear on The Explore Page
  - Get Notified if Coachin Spot is Freed
- Chat

  - Chatting with Coach
  - Send and Receive Attachments
  - Chatting with Trainee
  - Seeing Trainee Details in a Sidebar
  - Selecting Different Trainees to Chat to
- Calling / Video-Calling
  - Have Call between Coach and Trainee
  - Have Videocall between Coach and Trainee
- User Statistics
  - See Personal Statistics
  - See Statistics of Specific Trainee
  - See Average Statistics of All Trainees
  - Update / Log a Specific Metric
  - See Workout Specific Statistics
  - See Statistics for Selected Time Period
- Workout Builder
  - Create a New Workout
  - Seva a Workout Template
  - Use a Workout Template

- Pescribe a Workout
- Search for a Saved Workout
- Edit a Saved Workout

4 Business Model

Chapter 5: Business Model

By analyzing industry trends and identifying opportunities we plan to tailor our business model. This tailored approach aims to not only effectively reach our target audience but also strategically position our offerings amidst competitors. Based on personal experience and the today's world full of digital content and enormous social media influence, we came to the conclusion that there would not be better way to attract customers than doing so digitally.

Our Coaching Freelancing Platform aims to solve a key problem that the majority of the fitness enthusiasts and health instructors have to face when it comes to online coaching – the absence of communication, the lack of easy-access workouts and direct contact with your trainer and the difficulty of effortlessly finding trainees. Our product provides digital environment where both coaches and trainees benefit from each other. Trainers can create their own profile listing their expertise, awards and pictures, diplomas and certificates, years of experience, area of training, result of previous clients and their feedback. If they already have a greater number of followers, it be extremely easy for them to find clients through the platform. If not, they can promote themselves and rise above other of their colleagues. Additionally, building clients' workouts won't be so time consuming and demanding for them as we provide a workout builder with variety of exercise to choose from, set reps and sets and place it in a monthly calendar. Fitness enthusiasts on the other hand will have the easiest way to find someone to help them achieve their health goals. With the

ability to filter area of training, years of experience, testimonies, picture-based result, etc., their decision will be trouble-free. Furthermore, we have solved the inability to communicate with your online coach by providing private one-on-one chatting channels between the trainee and the trainer. In those channels, both sides will be provided with statistics of the progress of the customer.

Our business plan include multiple revenue sources to support. Our primary source of income will come from transactional commissions, where we take a percentage from each coaching transaction made through our platform. Additionally, we will explore revenue streams by letting different sporting brands to promotes their products on our application. Moreover, leveraging a comprehensive database featuring user preferences, gym performance metrics, sleep and dietary habits, as well as body measurements, stands as a pivotal asset.

Having said the wide scope of our web-application, we will have a lot of research and development expenses, programmers' wages. Additionally, a budget for marketing and advertising fees has to be allocated as well.

We are going to have retail partnership with sports well-known brands who have big influence over the health community. Trainers will have easy access to their accounts through a web-site whereas trainees will be able to download the application from the App Store and Google Play Store.

The key task our team needs to face is the development and deployment of the Coach Freelancing Platform. This includes various stages, including planning, software design and architecture, coding and programming, testing and quality assurance, user interface and experience design, as well as implementation and ongoing

maintenance. Additionally, our team will focus on providing continuous support to ensure the platform operates smoothly, addressing any technical issues promptly, and incorporating user feedback to enhance the overall user experience.

Two essential resources critical to building and operating our software are a robust database infrastructure and the intellectual property associated with our application. A well-structured database is fundamental for storing and managing user data, coach profiles, workout routines, and other essential information efficiently. Furthermore, safeguarding the intellectual property rights to our application ensures that our innovative features and functionalities are protected, preventing unauthorized use or replication by competitors.

Two strategic partnerships crucial to our business model are with payment processing platform Stripe and handling transactions efficiently. Integrating with Stripe enables seamless and secure payment transactions on our platform, enhancing user trust and facilitating monetization through commissions. Additionally, partnering with transaction handling services ensures reliable and efficient processing of coaching session payments, reducing friction for users and coaches alike while streamlining our revenue generation process. These partnerships play a vital role in optimizing the financial operations of our Coaching Freelancing Platform and enhancing the overall user experience.

Health and fitness is an industry that is extremely dynamic and develops faster than ever. Therefor agility and adaptability are very important for our business model. By closely monitoring market trends, technological advancements, and user feedback enables us to quickly adapt and improve our platform, adding new features,

improving user experience, as well as staying ahead of the competition. Our agile way of working guarantees that Coaching Freelancing Platform adapts to diversifying customer tendencies as well as changing the market situation, thus, ensuring the project's success in the long-term perspective.