Project Group: Locally

Response

Our group was working on the Android app Locally. The purpose of the app is to allow users to view nearby vendors, locally grown produce being sold at farmer's markets, and check what's in season. Now that the project is done, we can conclude that we have been able to successfully achieve our main goal and even add a couple of amazing features on top of it. In retrospect, there is still room for process improvement, especially now after we have realized the importance of planning and designing clear requirements before starting the project. Let us now look in more detail at what we could have done differently and what we think worked really well for our team.

Over the course of our project, what we struggled with most was communication and coordination. Because we each had our own busy schedules and responsibilities, it was difficult to find time to meet for discussion during the week more than once. Consequently, not all members were always informed of what the other members were currently working on. This lack of coordination led to confusion and occasionally resulted in members unknowingly working on the same feature simultaneously. As a result, we eventually utilized Trello to organize our tasks, and keep track of what other group members are working on. In hindsight, what we should have done differently is to strictly enforce the use of Trello or other PM tools and set aside dedicated time every week to meet face-to-face and touch base. This would allow every member to stay up-to-date on everyone else's tasks and give members the chance to bring up any issues they were having and receive assistance.

Improvements

In regards to testing, it would have been more effective in the long run to create at least a rough test plan from the beginning of the project, including enforcing the use of unit tests for critical components, and looking ahead to plan time for integration as well as stress testing. What we were lacking was the end user testing of the app during critical stages of implementing requirements, and especially of the vendor side functionality. If we were to do the project over again, it would have been ideal to contact some of the vendors we approached during market research to ask them about their opinion on features and general usability around the time of demos. This would have had a potential impact on how we implemented certain features, or perhaps whether we needed to expand app functionality.

What Went Well

Despite our struggles, we all view our project as being very successful. The majority of the members did not have any prior experience with Android development; however, because everyone was willing to put in the effort, we were able to pick things up relatively quickly and contribute to the project. This coupled with the fact that members made themselves readily

available to help one another led to good morale within our group. What also went well was the relative pace at which we worked. For example, because the backend AWS database was efficiently set up in the beginning and overall easy to work with, we were able to build the frontend features upon it. Additionally, as a result, all our main features are currently complete and functional or well on their way to being finished. We were also able to design an aesthetically pleasing, polished, and unified UI for our application.