**Group 15 Focus Group Interview**

**Interviewer:**

Now, just two seconds. Okay. We wait for it, yeah. But meanwhile, as soon as Ling joins us, can you tell me a bit about the project? What is the project about? Yeah, hold on told some things. But

**Interviewee 1:**

Yeah, it's this portal for open data that the different municipalities collect. And the goal is to make it easier for the municipalities to collectively share this data and share it in the same format. So users can easily use the different datasets to create apps or, yeah,

**Interviewer:**

What kind of data and what kind of users are you talking about?

**Interviewee 1:**

Data can be like, beaches in Norway and the water temperature there, okay. Or toilet facilities, public toilets, or fishing places in different municipalities. And then users can be either other municipalities that want to share or collect the same kind of data, or users in the way of like app developers that want to create an app for people to use if they want to visit beaches in Norway, and then they can easily get all the information on what the temperature is at that beach, or if that makes any sense if anyone wants to add to my explanation.

**Interviewer:**

And then the end user, who is it? Who's going to use this data? Because you said some people can create apps or something.

**Interviewee 2:**

It's mainly focused on, I think app developers, if they are going to use like datasets for creating a tourist app, then they will use our datasets and get our APIs to display the certain beaches, temperatures, etc. So it's mostly targeted toward developers and people with technical backgrounds.

**Interviewer:**

What is the key motivation for being in this course? Or are you all obliged to have the course in your curriculum?

**Interviewee 1:**

I think we all have to have it. It's a mandatory course for us.

**Interviewer:**

Yeah. But any further motivations, apart from being mandatory? Suppose it was not a mandatory course, would you have picked it?

**Interviewee 1:**

I think we are quite lucky with our project. This is where I get to program a lot. And I think the course is good because I learn more programmes, I get more programming skills. Okay, so, therefore, considering having had it now, I think I would choose it again.

**Interviewee-03**

And it's also very relevant. When do you think about work? It's very similar to I think we're gonna work when we're finished studying, so it's good.

**Interviewer:**

How about the interaction with the customer? How do you think you have benefited from them? Having a customer developing a project for the customer, interaction with the customer? Well, what kinds of benefits do you see?

**Interviewee 1:**

We get to try out the consultant role. I guess. A lot of people from our study end up as consultants and developers and I think this is a way for us to try out that way of working where you get some demands from a customer and you have to achieve those and if the customer is not happy, then you kind of just have to deal with it and make a different solution. And that's quite beneficial for us considering a lot of students in our study turned out to get to be developers, in the end, so Yeah?

**Interviewer:**

That's good. Does anybody want to add something? Or do you all going? Are you all going to be consultants in the future? Or are you all going to be developers or project managers? I don't know. What's your ambition?

**Interviewee 2:**

It's difficult to say. At least think that this course gives a nice introduction to the consultant type of work. We can get, like the introduction to if we like it or get a feel for it.

**Interviewer:**

What technical skills do you think you have gained? And what challenges do you have? Have you had it so far? I heard development skills coding skills and a little bit. Any other? Did you have any challenges with the coding aspect of the project? What technologies are you using? By the way?

**Interviewee 2:**

We're using next for the front end. Sort of like our React framework? And .Net for the backend. Okay. So we have learned those technologies, I guess and also gotten a lot of experience with Scrum. And just communicating with the customer in a professional way. Okay.

**Interviewee-03**

Also prototyping in Figma, making the site sketches.

**Interviewer:**

Mockups?

**Interviewee-03**

Yeah

**Interviewer:**

That's good.

**Interviewee 1:**

Kind of difficulty or challenge there has been to recreate what we made in the prototype in the Figma prototype in the markups. Because you, they're not based on the same kind of technology. So we have used some design tools to help us design the website, and they don't always contain everything that we made in the mock-ups. So it's been difficult to replicate it exactly as the mock-ups, which is difficult when the customer expects the website to be exactly like the mock-ups if that makes any sense.

**Interviewer:**

Yeah. So that's, that's tricky sometimes to get. Did you develop requirements afterwards, based on mock ups? For the project? Did you like it after making the mock ups? Did you write a list of requirements for the project? Or did you update the tasks that you have?

**Interviewee 1:**

I think we made the markups based on the requirements.

**Interviewer:**

Yeah. Did you update them? Based on comments iteration over the mock ups and so on?

**Interviewee 1:**

Yeah, I think we got some comments from the customer. And then we updated the requirements, you guys remember?

**Interviewee 2:**

Yeah I do, we sent the Figma to the customer. And they showed it to other municipalities as well. And came back to us with the feedback and we updated some of the parts they had feedback on.

**Interviewer:**

Now, but that's good. How about soft skills? I know it's all engineers here. So do you have some soft skill challenges or communication challenges with the customer between yourself team dynamics, how is it, and so on?

**Interviewee-03**

I think our main challenge has been that we are not allowed to meet at the center, they can only meet us digitally on Zoom. So it makes it a bit more difficult, I think to have good communication and to understand everything that they Yeah.

**Interviewee 1:**

And also anyone, Oh, sorry.

**Interviewee-03**

No, okay.

**Interviewee 1:**

Yeah, I was just gonna elaborate that especially when the customer they are multiple, there are like three people. And they also sit in different places and are then taught they talk over each other and they have different talking. What's this word in English?

**Interviewer:**

Discussion?

**Interviewee 1:**

No, they have kind of different opinions on what they want. Okay. So it's been difficult for us to really take the input when they have different inputs and we're unsure of what we are going to use so that would also probably be easier if we sat in a meeting room altogether and could have a discussion about it in person.

**Interviewer:**

I understand, how about the team between the team members and the challenges so far? Do you have to tackle?

**Interviewee 2:**

We had some disease and sickness in the group but not COVID.

**Interviewer:**

Yeah, fortunately,

**Interviewee 2:**

I think it made the response times for messages answering messages will be too long. Okay. So we had to, we had one demo for the customer where one person didn't attend. And we didn't really know what he had done before the end of the sprint so we can present his work. Now, it's the greatest.

**Interviewer:**

How about project management? Did you learn something about project management during the course or already knew everything before?

**Interviewee 2:**

I think I learned a lot. I've never been a project leader before. And everything from the lecture on project management and just holding meetings, demos, etc. I think I've learned quite a bit

**Interviewer:**

What you don't ask was, what else are you using apart from Scrum? Or just Scrum is the main.

**Interviewee-04**

We used some XP elements as well.

**Interviewer:**

For instance,

**Interviewee-04**

We have used some pair programming, okay, where we use the discord working, let's share your screen. Okay, I guess kinda like soup. And then you can say one can sit on the right and another, other people can watch your help. And that's interesting. I think we had some experience with it from earlier projects. So it's nice and nice to think.

**Interviewer:**

How did you use the skills from before? Or

**Interviewee-04**

At least for me, when we had we had a project earlier, where we use Scrum and XP. So for me, it was so nice to use it again. Because I had the experience. And I had some knowledge about it from before. So yeah, sorry. So I felt it was easier to implement it this time when I knew more about it.

**Interviewer:**

Was the customer participating in all the meetings every week? How was it?

**Interviewee-04**

They are participating in our scrum planning. And, do we have a review with them? Every two weeks? So we involve them in everything except the team retrospective.

**Interviewer:**

Okay. Then I have a quite a question that I would like everybody maybe to answer. And maybe it's a surprising question, but let's assume what would be the motivations for you to create a startup with this project in the future? Do you feel like this is a project that you can just do for consultancy, for instance, like you mentioned, before we develop a project we get paid. And that's it? Or do you feel there is a new startup formation opportunity with the project? Also in collaboration with SINTEF?

**Interviewee 1:**

It seems like there is a, what's it called a wish kind of for this to be to happen, they want the product and that is kind of a motivation that this product is wanted in the market. So you kind of want to fulfill that need.

**Interviewer:**

Okay. That's it, you don't have any additional. Or maybe somebody else can say more?

**Interviewee 2:**

Well, when we had the presentation today for the municipalities and states, people, showed some interest in some of our functionalities and sort of expressed that they wanted that sort of functionality into other existing data, open data platforms, not necessarily just for municipalities. And I feel like when we develop this project, it's quite motivational to see that some of our ideas are not developed today and wanted. So that's sort of a motivation if we wanted to start a startup.

**Interviewer:**

So by the nature of the project a bit, be extended further. And anybody else wants to say more? Or would you involve the existing team members Haukeland, the team members that you have in this course to make this extension for open data?

**Interviewee 2:**

Of course. Everyone.

**Interviewee 1:**

So, we are a good team.

**Interviewer:**

Yeah, this was a good team dynamics. Are you also managing to work online? That's very good. Yeah, that's a very good thing. So I say, I know this is a bit of an awkward question. But I find it positive that you want to collaborate in the future. And then I'm wondering if the course had this sort of, let's say at the beginning, things like Bootcamp activity, innovation Bootcamp, or hackathon, where you could work a lot with the customer at the beginning to understand the requirements to get the prototype fast. Would that be helpful for you guys? Or do you think it's not relevant?

**Interviewee 1:**

I think for us this this kind of project and the task is quite, it was quite difficult for us to comprehend the needs and really understand the task in the beginning. And we spent a lot of time trying to figure out what the customer actually wanted. So I think if we had a workshop or something like that, in the beginning, that will be really helpful. And we would have come further along because we wouldn't be stuck in trying to understand what they wanted from us.

**Interviewer:**

But much of the Bootcamp could be also about the innovation aspect of the project, like brainstorming, how to make the project better, and so on. Maybe somebody else wants to say more, but what do you how do you feel about adding activity such activity three days at the beginning of the course?

**Interviewee-03**

I think it can be a good idea we had when I worked at my summer job this summer, we started the project by having like a design sprint, or we just focused on understanding the task and coming up with ideas in like, a few days. And that was very helpful. So I think it could be a good idea in this course, as well. And I said that said we were we didn't really or I didn't really understand the test before, like a month into working with it. Okay, oh, I think it could be a good idea.

**Interviewer:**

You have to sit with all the teams have to sit in the same room, it would be a big room. But the Bootcamp activity will involve all the teams and you could hear a little bit also from other projects. And you, of course, brainstorm with your customer, but you want to be alone with just your customer. There will be many other teams there that work in parallel. Is this context also interesting, like being in not with COVID? But let's assume things get normal next year. Would it be interesting to have all the teams in one room and do this Bootcamp where teams discuss their project? They spend three full days on that.

**Interviewee 2:**

I don't really see why everyone has to be in the same room. Are we going to have presentations or?

**Interviewer:**

Yeah, sort of, to make presentations to get feedback from other teams, from different customers to open up ideas, not just have one customer giving you feedback, like master-slave sort of approach, like do this because I wanted what you present and you get ideas, feedback.

**Interviewee 2:**

I think that would be a good idea. I think that's cool. At least,

**Interviewee-03**

I think also it might be a bit overwhelming if, at the same time, I'm trying to understand my team's project and task, and then I have to also understand every other group's project at the same time, it might be a bit too much.

**Interviewer:**

You have to be that's that will be a drawback.

**Interviewee-03**

Maybe if you're in a room with like a few other groups, not all that could be good.

**Interviewee 1:**

Yeah. Perhaps, yeah. Perhaps divided and be like five groups in one. One room or something instead of the entire class?

**Interviewer:**

Yeah, that's that's a good idea. How about having a hackathon? Like a coding, sprint? Would that be relevant? Right, okay. That's do this minimum viable product for our project? Of course, you can improve it later. But let's do it in three days. And you work hard on that.

**Interviewee-03**

How much you can do in three days? I mean, if Yeah, are you gonna do the front end and the back end and connect them and also add functionality?

**Interviewer:**

That's the main goal of the hackathon to be intensive, but maybe it can be it's a bit, it's a bit more interesting in this context, to break more motivation. Also, to connect the bootcamp a little bit, maybe having an innovation booth can help you sort of have a mindset towards creating a startup and not just being, like doing consultancy, for the or just development for the customer. Will that open new windows? Of course, you cannot answer the question now, because you didn't have any Bootcamp. So what's your perception? Maybe? Yeah, maybe it's just hypothetic.

**Interviewee-03**

But I haven't really thought about the startup thing. Is that something that you guys want us to, to do make startups out of these projects?

**Interviewer:**

Not this year, don't worry. It's not a requirement for this year. But it's something that might be interesting next year, and we want customers to come up with innovative projects. I have reviewed the project for the last three years, and they are very good. But they seem to be very similar as well. So they don't change much. You see the projects from previous years, and the customers are almost the same customers. And then the startup mindset, I think comes also from the project itself. So if it can be extended further, and if we can find the place in the market, and so on. So the the idea is not just to do coding, it's also to extend it a little bit do coding with the usefulness for a startup or for the good social good or whatever you think about it. Okay, call them to make an impact. That's the idea. Yeah, but I mean, the done, anybody that hasn't spoken, Erling? Are you here? Okay, I guess.

**Interviewee-05**

Is it working now?

**Interviewer:**

Yes, it is. You have to say something because you didn't speak at all?

**Interviewee-05**

I don't have much else to add, I think. I feel like we've covered most of what I maybe thought. Yeah, that's fine. Anybody else wants to add something before we close?

**Interviewee 2:**

I can say for the hackathon idea. Having three days intensive, Stark is kind of difficult, because in the beginning, everyone has to learn the technologies they are using before they can actually do anything. So I think it would be three days of just learning instead of actually progressing the prototype.

**Interviewer:**

That's true. But it could also shift the project a little bit in different directions. Now but I feel the Bootcamp it's more interesting if you ask me but it's not me that we should answer this. Yeah, but hold on. I have a task for you. You send me the time and place no place I tell you shall who said or said contain but you sent me daytime and the order preference for the pizzas?

**Interviewee 2:**

Yep. Perfect.

**Interviewer:**

And please do this before the end of the semester.

**Interviewee 2:**

Yeah, can send it today.

**Interviewer:**

Okay, that's great. Thank you, everybody. I hope you have fun with your project and you get the most out of it. Of course, good grades.

**Interviewee 1:**

Thank you.

**Interviewer:**

And good luck.

**Interviewee 1:**

Thank you so much. Bye

**Interviewer:**

Bye bye.