

Alex Bird

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Profile

- Software engineer
- 5 years of varied commercial experience
- 1st class Honours degree in Computing and Electronics

Recent work:

- Developing custom back-end components for major public and private sector websites.
- Developing and maintaining business-critical web scraping, deep-linking and tracking.
- Migrating voluntary organization website to WordPress – structuring, skinning, SEO.

Skills summary

Core: Web Technologies and Languages (from the perspectives of both developing and scraping content)

HTTP, HTML, Javascript, CSS, AJAX, JSON

PHP, Python

MySQL, PostgreSQL

XML transformation

XSL, XPath, XSD

Microsoft Technologies

.Net and C#

SQL Server / TSQL

Active Directory / Directory Services API

SharePoint WebPart development

Reporting Services development

Also: LAMP – have installed and configured, mostly Debian flavours, Apache 1.3/2.2

Other scripting languages: Perl, VBScript, Windows batch scripting

Java (J2SE, JDBC, J3D) – academic experience

C++ and C – have successfully modified software

Electronics – building, repairing and modifying equipment

Page layout and typesetting for print (Indesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, GIMP)

Video/audio editing, and DVD authoring (FCP, Premiere Pro, Encore, VirtualDub)

Employment

Since my last job I have taken a break and some long overdue travel to foreign parts. I travelled through Madagascar, Finland, Tokyo and Australia. I started learning to sail, with a couple of multi-day trips in UK waters. I also experimented with cooking and brewing, making a lot of jam and a little of most things.

Digital Media Developer @ Whitespace LTD *March 2009 – April 2010*

Whitespace is an independent, Scottish, digital design agency based in Edinburgh. Winner of Scottish Design Consultancy of the Year 2010.

Worked with a team of 3 on development and maintenance of Sprocket, an in-house CMS.

- Added video and audio content functionality, including integration with Amazon S3 and Encoding.com
- Added mailing list functionality, integrating with Campaign Monitor
- Developed custom modules for clients including:
HBJ Gateley Wareing (national law firm), Genius Gluten Free (bread), Sekers and Wemyss (textiles), Dream Escape (bespoke holidays), Robert Wiseman Dairies, Sexual Health Scotland for The Scottish Government, Caorunn Gin for International Beverage Holdings (alcoholic beverages), Cashmaster International (cash scales), Cryptic (theatre group)

Technologies used: PHP 5, GD, PostgreSQL 7, XML, XSL, XPath, Regular Expressions, Javascript, Prototype.js, AJAX, HTML, CSS, SVN.

Web Scraper Developer @ Skyscanner LTD *October 2007 – January 2009*

Skyscanner is a price comparison website for air travel, based in Edinburgh.

I took responsibility for keeping accurate and up-to-date price data flowing to the site, during a period of rapid growth for this start-up.

- developing and maintaining:
 - indexing systems to collect airline prices and schedules
 - deep-linking and tracking for advertiser's campaigns
- interacting with major airline partners by phone and email
- monitoring the quality of prices on the site – using automated reports, scheduled testing, and customer feedback
- managing migration from a legacy VB6 application, to a considerably more flexible Python-based web service
- Team Leader for 9 months – for a team of 4 in an operations environment

Technologies used: XML, XSL, XPath, Regular Expressions, Python, Javascript, VB-Script, MS-SQL/TSQL, SVN, Fiddler (HTTP debugging proxy), Aptana Studio.

Station Engineer @ Festival FM LTD *August 2007 (also 2006, 2005, 2004)*

Festival FM is a radio station broadcasting during August and covering the Edinburgh festival season.

I took a voluntary role as station engineer at the project's inception, which later became paid. This role required organisation and flexibility in an often chaotic working environment.

- visiting sites, installing studio, transmitters and links, inc. Wi-Fi and VoIP
- keeping the studio running smoothly, training users, inventory
- developing hardware and software, based on an open source product, to record statutory audio logs with extra meta-data, and a web interface to retrieve the logs

Technologies used: C++, PHP, ImageMagick, HTML, CSS, MP3+ID3, TTL logic, Raduga, Rivendell.

Junior Developer @ Pareto Solutions LTD *January 2006 –June 2007*

Pareto Solutions was a small (3 person) team, based in Edinburgh, providing bespoke software to the public and private sector.

This small development company allowed me a high degree of autonomy in my day to day work, but also gave me the necessary support to learn a range of new technologies and project lifecycle skills.

- Event Booking System with customisable forms - Citizens Advice Scotland. Developed the admin panel (SharePoint WebPart) and event reports (Reporting Services) branches of this 3-tier application, for the full development lifecycle.
- Active Directory Integration - Citizens Advice Scotland. Developed tools (SharePoint WebPart and discrete application) to manage users and synchronise CMS users with an existing Active Directory installation, and provide management reports (Reporting Services).
- Case Search System - Citizens Advice Scotland. System testing, troubleshooting (query profiling), UAT, and deployment of an advanced search tool for the preparation of reports on social policy.
- Intranet CMS - Realise LTD for Supporta PLC (specialist outsourcing company). Tenant Application System – Grant Management LTD.
- Bluetooth/GPS Deployment to Embedded Systems – Cabtivate LTD. Developed batch scripts and daemons (Python, Perl, BASH), and tested on the hardware prior to deployment across the fleet. The system used Bluetooth hardware to send adverts to cab passengers.

Technologies used: C#, .Net, SharePoint, SQL Server, SQL Server Reporting Services, Active Directory, Windows forms, DotNetNuke, ASP, HTML, CSS, ASP.Net-Membership, Perl, Python, BASH shell

Freelance web developer *January 2005 – November 2005*

After university, I initially worked alone as a freelance web developer.

The bulk of my work was on one client project, the travel-dive.co.uk website (no longer online). Projects included:

- Interactive Map using Google Maps API and AJAX, which integrated geodata (e.g. cities) which were not on Google's map at that time, and articles, diving facilities, accommodation, etc.
- Gallery using PhotoPost gallery product, modified to rank photos by rating, match the site style, and allow voting via AJAX
- integrated forum and gallery logins across separate domains/databases, to link with a partner site
- various login, comment and admin functionality

Technologies used: PHP, MySQL, JavaScript, AJAX (xajax framework), ImageMagick

Education

2000-2004

**Heriot-Watt University,
Edinburgh.**

**BEng in Computing and Electronics
(1st Class Honours)**

My final year dissertation project "Digital Audio Restoration" investigated algorithms for replacing damaged parts of audio recordings and assessing the restoration.

Third and Fourth year work included:

- Digital Signal Processing
- Image processing
- Advanced digital electronics and networking
- Programming 3D graphics with OpenGL and Java3D, for figure animation and inverse kinematics of a robotic arm
- Programming and interfacing PIC microcontrollers in two group projects
- 3rd year group project involved design and implementation of a 'Management Information System' using Java and an SQL database - I developed a dynamic translation layer between the object and relational storage systems, because I didn't know any better at the time.

1989-1996

**Beechen Cliff School,
Bath.**

3 A-Levels

References

Available upon request.