Richard Neave

Automation Manager/Architect

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Profile

An Automation team manager with experience in the architecture and development of end-to-end automated processes, using a wide range of DevOps tools. Always looking to increase technical knowledge and work on projects with exposure to new and innovative IT solutions. Has worked extensively in client-facing positions providing technical support, training and expertise. In addition, projects have required proving assistance to the Sales team for proof-of-concept demos to highlight key features.

Experience

November 2018 - Present
Automation Team Manager, Europe, *IPsoft*, London.
Manager of the Automation team in Europe, responsible for the development & delivery of automations on the IPsoft IPcenter and 1Desk platforms. Development of client proof of concepts utilising a wide range of technologies and programming languages.

November 2016 - November 2018
Automation Team Lead, United Kingdom, *IPsoft*, London.
Regional lead of the Continual Service Improvement (automation) team responsible for client automation development, architecture and API integrations. Primarily focusing on automation targets for IPsoft banking clients.

June 2016 - November 2016
Senior Automation Engineer, *IPsoft*, London.
Development of high impact automations supporting software deployment, application management and live reporting. In addition wrote and hosted the automation training courses, with introductions to Python, JavaScript and PowerShell.

May 2015 - June 2016
Automation Engineer, *IPsoft*, London.
Event monitoring triggered Windows OS based automation development across mutliple clients, with primary client requiring SC clearance.

May 2013 - May 2015
Development & Operations Engineer, *Star Financial Systems*, London.
Responsible for the development of continuous deployment infrastructure reducing time to production. Also owned the provising of production instances the of Web trading platform developed by Star Financial Systems.

August 2012 - May 2013
Senior 2nd Line Support Engineer, *GroupM*, London.
Project work such as large scale OS provisioning/upgrades and software deployment/remote configuration.

August 2009 - August 2012
2nd Line Support Engineer, *GroupM*, London.
Hardware, OS and application support for staff across GroupM London offices.

May 2009 - July 2013
Rifleman, *British Army (Reserves), The Rifles Regiment*, London.
Infantry training improving team building and organizational skills through monthly weekend and annual fortnight training courses.

Computer skills

Infrastructure	Windows, macOS, Linux (Ubuntu, Redhat), Kubernetes	CI/CD	Jenkins, Teamcity, Octopus Deploy, NuGet, GitLab, Helm, IPcenter
Interpreted languages	Python, PowerShell, JavaScript (Node.js, Mozilla Rhino), Shell (sh, zsh, bash)	Compiled languages	Go
Databases	MySQL, MSSQL	Data structure	JSON, XML, YAML, HTML
Virtualization	Docker, Vagrant, Virtualbox, VMWare vCenter	Documentation	Sphinx, reStructuredText, Markdown, LaTeX
Reporting/Analysis	Jupyter, Elastic Search, Kibana	Other	RegEx, Vim, Tmux

Education

September 2005 - July 2008
Northumbria University.
Bsc (Hons):
- Product Design Technology: *Second*

September 2000 - July 2005
Harrow School.
A-Level:
- Information Communication Technology: *A*
- Design Technology: *B*
- Business Studies: *B*

AS-Level:
- Photography: *A*

GCSE:
- Maths, Geography, Design Technology, History: *A*
- French, English Language & Literature, Chemistry, Physics, Religious Studies: *B*

Interests

A keen interest in a wide range of science and technology topics, this is fueled by a subscription to the New Scientist magazine as well as Kindle book reading. Other reading topics include Biographies, Military History and Science Fiction.

I have a long term enthusiasm for running (ever since training to climb Mt. Cotopaxi, Ecuador when I was 17-years old). This is now mostly limited to local parks!

I will be renewing my interest in sailing through a week-long course on the Isle of Wight this summer.

Experience - Detailed

November 2018 - Present

Automation Team Manager, Europe, *IPsoft*, London.
Manager of the Automation team in Europe, responsible for the development & delivery of automations on the IPsoft IPcenter and 1Desk platforms.

Led the project assigned by European CEO to containerise (Docker) our IPcenter IT service management platform product using Kubernetes (Helm) within a 2-month timeframe. The objectives achieved were to focus on the automation and related services, producing a lightweight, rapidly deployable automation engine. This product could be provisioned in AWS within minutes, including any client customisation and pre-built automations. Also included was an integration with Elastic Search to provide real-time reporting of automation executions via Kibana dashboards.

Proposed and implemented the automation standardisation program to ensure all automations conformed to the same documented development and testing standards. This included the use of Python Sphinx / reStructuredText as well as the development of automated QA reporting for automation engineers. This has resulted in automations that are more easily portable between instances, as well as ensuring that engineers can support multiple clients effectively (without retraining).

November 2016 - November 2018

Automation Team Lead, United Kingdom, *IPsoft*, London.
Leading the automation team in the UK primarily working with our new client (a leading UK bank) to configure the IPcenter AaaS Instance to their needs. This included developing custom automations to execute on and remediate 10K+ Windows events from their monitoring platforms.

Also, I designed and implemented integrations with client CMDB data, password stores and incident/change management (ServiceNow), using SQL and RESTful APIs. Since implementation, the engineer time saved (as calculated by the client) has risen to approximately 10K hours per month.

June 2016 - November 2016

Senior Automation Engineer, *IPsoft*, London.
Client facing role writing requirements documents, then developing high impact automations. Development is based on client requests as well as proactive suggestions based on experience and analysis of event data using Jupyter. All tasks were managed on JIRA sprint boards utilising Bitbucket integration for git source control.

Automations primarily developed in JavaScript (backend) and Powershell or Bash (client-side). Where needed Python and Perl scripts were used to keep in line with client development frameworks.

Key automations:

- SCOM agent reporting: Query the SCOM APIs for agents in a downed state, on a schedule, then rasing standard change requests via client systems, before restarting services on the remote server. If required the agent would be upgraded. This would be followed up with an HTML e-mail report to the product and server owners.

- VM provision Web Form: An automation that would generate a web form presenting options to provision a VMware VM via PowerCli. Post-build scripts were deployed to VM to install software requirements. This was written using JavaScript, HTML/CSS, PowerShell and Bash.

- Pre-application deployment: Multiple automations to stop application services across multiple servers, before backing up config files (and databases), then calling external deployments tools such as Jenkins. Finally restoring all services back to a running state and validating their status.

Wrote and hosted the automation training courses for internal and client staff. This included training with the IPcenter platform as well as an introduction to JavaScript, PowerShell and Bash.

May 2015 -   **Automation Engineer**, *IPsoft*, London.
June 2016   Developing automations to trigger on events generated from alerts monitored by the IPcenter platform. The automations developed were for Windows OS and application events.

Key automations:

○ Service restarts: Restarting of failed services including analysis of system events and logs.

○ Disk space: Analysis of local and remote disks, followed by file/folder deletion based on Regular Expression whitelist.

○ Host down: Review of hosts not reporting to monitoring, in the case of virtual machine this would include connecting to vCenter to perform additional check and restart of VM if required.

This development work was performed across multiple IPsoft clients, with the primary client requiring SC clearance.

May 2013 - May 2015   **Development & Operations Engineer**, *Star Financial Systems*, London.
Build and maintenance of the VMware hosted QA environments, as well as the datacenter, hosted production servers. Provisioning of the QA builds was achieved using PowerShell - PowerCli on Windows Server 2008R2 with TeamCity for application build/unit testing and OctopusDeploy for application deployment (and MSSQL backups).

The use of Octopus Deploy along with PowerShell scripting helped to reduce the deployment time to production from more than 6-hours to 30-minutes (30+ services distributed over 5 or more Windows hosts).

The use of PowerCli allowed for on-demand provisioning of standardized testing host for development and QA teams. This helped to ensure that all client production environments were closely replicated in QA/dev builds.

All tools were integrated with Slack APIs to ensure real-time notifications for all teams. Including alert notifications from Nagios monitoring for production client environments.

August 2012 -   **Senior 2ⁿᵈ Line Support Engineer**, *GroupM*, London, Advertising media.
May 2013   Project work including the provisioning of around 400-laptops using Symantec Ghost, then installation of all required user and support software using LANDesk. All hardware/software was deployed successfully within a tight delivery window.

Provided IT support for C-level staff using Windows & Mac OS X operating systems. This also included providing technical support for off-site client presentations by senior management.

August 2009 -   **2ⁿᵈ Line Support Engineer**, *GroupM*, London.
August 2012   Providing second line support to GroupM (and sub-company) staff for all escalated desktop support incidents. This included hardware and Windows OS support, as well as troubleshooting for in house and enterprise media booking applications.