Christopher Benjamin ASHTON

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Profile

I am a creative, organised and highly efficient web developer, currently contracting for the BBC since completing a 13-month internship with them in London last year. In tandem with running my own company, I'm in my final year at Aberystwyth University and am on track to graduate in summer 2015 with a first in Software Engineering.

Key Achievements and Skills

- **Front-end web development** – Masterful use of cutting-edge, enterprise-level techniques, demonstrated in my work for BBC News. I develop modular, object-oriented, unobtrusive JavaScript in a test-driven way. Passionate about self-documenting code, progressive enhancement, cross-browser and backwards-compatibility.

  - **JavaScript** - Functional and Object-Oriented/Modular JavaScript, ECMAScript 3 (for backwards compatibility with IE6+), Pub/Sub, jQuery, RequireJS, AJAX, Jasmine.

  - Demonstrated these skills as the sole developer for the Commonwealth Games Quiz: http://bbc.in/1ll3XHE; within 24 hours it was the most read and shared article on BBC News, viewed in the UK 1.7 million times, shared on social media well over 20,000 times and featured on BBC Breakfast. Developed to support internationalisation, I also took the initiative to translate it into Welsh: http://bbc.in/1nDNxjD

  - **Responsive web design** – http://reff.it - fully responsive web app allowing users to share snippets of text rather than long web pages. Developed using a "mobile first" Bootstrap front-end, supported by a MySQL, PDO and OO PHP backend.

  - **WordPress** - http://hover-bike.com - hand-built a custom, responsive theme; http://voicecouncil.com - bespoke plugin for slideshow and app review format.

  - **Node & Grunt** – Used on projects for linting and minifying code and running tests. I'm the highest contributor to the open source grunt-cloudfile-to-vocab node module: https://github.com/BBCVisualJournalism/grunt-cloudfile-to-vocab

  - **WebGL** - http://users.aber.ac.uk/cba1/webgl/source - Solar System 3D Visualisation. Developed for a university assignment and achieved 89% (a high first).

  - **Search Engine Optimisation** - Implemented semantic schema markup for improved search rankings. Modified .htaccess to use SEO-friendly URLs.

  - **Other technologies** – actively use TDD, object-oriented PHP, cloud computing (some AWS), Ruby and Cucumber for regression testing using continuous integration (Travis CI), Git, Rails, SQL, XHTML/HTML5 and validation, CSS3 and SASS. Away from the web I also know Java (proficient) and some Python, C, Perl and Bash.

- **Efficiency** – Developed a 'common tasks' toolkit at the BBC, cutting the time taken to perform some tasks down from half an hour to under a minute and removing one of our last dependencies on legacy systems. Templated the 'datapic' format: http://bit.ly/1wT6XTz

- **Organisation, Leadership, Management** – Use my own installation of JIRA to manage the logistics of my company tasks, including negotiating and delegating work to subcontractors. Planned and ran weekly rehearsals as Choral Director of the Elizabethan Madrigal Singers.

Education

2011 - Present	**Aberystwyth University**
	Software Engineering (BEng) - Fully Accredited by the BCS
	Expected outcome: 1st Class Honours
	Average module grade achieved last semester: 88.33%
2003 - 2010	**Ysgol Gyfun Llanbedr Pont Steffan**
	3 A Levels: Mathematics (A), Music (A), Chemistry (B)
	1 AS Level: Biology (B)
	13 GCSEs: 11 at grade A*/A
2009	**The Open University**
	Elements of forensic science - 10 credits - Pass

Employment

08/2014 – Present	**Webdapper Ltd** – *Managing Director*
	My company offers web development and design solutions, ranging from end-to-end product delivery to general website maintenance, specialising in front-end and responsive technologies. My biggest client is the BBC, for whom I maintain development frameworks used by the Visual Journalism team.
07/2013 – 08/2014	**BBC** – *Trainee Web Developer*
	Regularly created bespoke, self-contained applications within tight deadlines for the BBC News website, with an audience of millions. Built and maintained toolkits and frameworks to ease development and production workflows.
06/2012 – 08/2014	**VoiceCouncil Magazine** - *Marketing Consultant and Web Developer*
	Generated 10,000 likes on Facebook through carefully planned campaigns. Developed bespoke plugins for the WordPress site and performed general site maintenance. Worked on a freelance basis.
07/2010 - 01/2012	**NatWest Bank** - *Customer Service Officer*
	Gained skills in record keeping, maintained professionalism under pressure, communicated with customers through the medium of Welsh when required. Worked 30 hours per week on my gap year, and on call thereafter.

Interests

Though much of my spare time is devoted to running my company, I am a keen chorister and am currently a member of the Elizabethan Madrigal Singers, whom I myself conducted during my second year at university. In London I was and still am a member of the BBC Symphony Chorus, regularly performing complex choral repertoire at internationally televised concerts including the Last Night of the Proms at the Royal Albert Hall. Historically, I was a member of the National Youth Choir of Wales for two years.

Referees

References and/or referee contact details are available upon request.