Christopher Benjamin ASHTON

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PROFILE

Award-winning 1ˢᵗ class Software Engineering graduate (*Best Bachelor Degree in Computer Science, Best Major Project*); I am a highly efficient, organised and creative full-stack web developer, currently working as a developer in test at the BBC. In my spare time I run my own web development company and am a tenor in the prestigious BBC Symphony Chorus.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND SKILLS

- **Testing** – world-class author of declarative Cucumber features alongside clean, reusable Ruby step definitions for BDD. Hand-built an in-house Cucumber framework in Node. Set up suites of automated tests inside Docker on Jenkins CI. Manually tested apps across multiple devices and browsers, using exploratory techniques to validate application behaviour and responsiveness.

- **Technical leadership** – taken ownership of the BBC's open-source Wraith project. Regularly assign company work to subcontractors through my own installation of JIRA, managing their time alongside project deadlines and code reviewing their work on GitHub.

- **Front-end web development** – developed responsive websites using industry best practices of "mobile first" development and progressive enhancement. Example: http://reff.it, a web app allowing users to share relevant text from long web pages.

    - I was the main developer of the Commonwealth Games Quiz (*Best News Data App*, Data Journalism Awards 2015), featured on BBC Breakfast and most read and shared article on BBC News on the day of publication: http://bbc.in/1ll3XHE. Developed to support internationalisation, I took the initiative to translate it into Welsh: http://bbc.in/1nDNxjD

    - **JavaScript** - masterful developer of self-documenting, object-oriented, cross-browser vanilla JavaScript developed through TDD. Comfortable with publish/subscribe and MVC design patterns, jQuery, RequireJS, Jasmine/QUnit. Developed a 3D solar system in WebGL:

        http://chrisbashton.github.io/solar-system-webgl/source/

    - **Accessibility** - I write clean, modular, semantic schema and HTML5 markup and only use unobtrusive JavaScript for progressive enhancement. Tested sites against WAI validators, colour contrast checkers, and using different IO interactions in my role as Test Engineer.

- **Back-end web development** - developed my own custom PHP-based CMS for a food review website: http://studentmunch.com, using a MySQL database for persistence and an Apache server configured to use SEO-friendly URLs.

    - Highly experienced with OO PHP, MVCR architecture and PHP unit tests, using frameworks such as Zend and F3. Actively use Grunt, Bash, SASS and other CLI tools to lint, compile, test and deploy applications. Use security tools such as snyck alongside my knowledge of XSS and prevention of SQL injection through PDO.

    - **Tooling** - 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 their last dependencies on legacy systems. Templated the 'datapic' format: http://bit.ly/1wT6XTz

    - **WordPress** – expert at crafting bespoke themes and plugins, including plugins defining custom taxonomies ('app reviews'): http://musicmakerapps.com; a responsive e-commerce theme: http://hover-bike.com; and parent/child themes for related magazine websites: http://loopinglive.com and http://thevintagemusician.com.

- **Communication skills** - led BBC Visual Journalism's adoption of Cucumber feature files as a communication tool and a developer aid. Gave a well-received presentation to 40 developers on a technical subject while at the BBC. Work effectively in scrum teams adopting agile techniques.

Employment

07/2015 - Present	**BBC, London** *Test Engineer* Set up suites of automated Cucumber and Wraith tests (using Docker) on CI to test against other products' usage of our In-Depth Toolkit and pinpoint regressions early. Took ownership of the maintenance and development of the open-source Wraith visual regression testing tool. Came up with the cost-effective "Three Phase Attack" testing strategy, sharing this innovative approach with the industry through a soon-to-be-published article in Smashing Magazine.
08/2014 - Present	**Webdapper Ltd** *Founder* My company offers end-to-end web development solutions to clients including the BBC. I project-manage and lead technical implementations by subcontracting work to a team of trusted developers and designers, accommodating differing schedules, managing expectations and regularly code reviewing to ensure codebase cohesiveness.
07/2013 - 08/2014	**BBC, London** *Trainee Web Developer* Created multiple self-contained, robustly tested, bespoke responsive applications within tight deadlines for the BBC News website, delivering to an audience of millions. Built and maintained toolkits and frameworks to ease development and production workflows.
07/2010 - 09/2011	**NatWest Bank, Ceredigion** *Customer Service Officer*

Education

09/2011 - 06/2015	**Aberystwyth University**, Wales BEng (Hons) Software Engineering (1st). BCS-accredited. Grade: 84% Dissertation: *Online Dispute Resolution for Maritime Collisions*: an open-source ODR platform with plugin support for AI-driven automated resolutions. Hosted on AWS: http://smartresolution.org
2003 - 2010	**Ysgol Gyfun Llanbedr Pont Steffan**, Wales A Levels: Mathematics (A), Music (A), Chemistry (B) AS Level: Biology (B) GCSEs: 13 total, 11 at grade A*/A

Awards and Affiliations

Best Bachelor Degree in Computer Science (Aberystwyth University, 2015)

British Computer Society Prize for the Best Major Project (Aberystwyth University, 2015)

Professional Member, British Computer Society (MBCS) (2015 - present)

Interests

I'm currently a tenor in the *BBC Symphony Chorus* and regularly perform complex choral repertoire at internationally televised concerts. Previously: *National Youth Choir of Wales* (Tenor: two years), *Elizabethan Madrigal Singers* (Choral Director: one year, Tenor: two years).

References

References available upon request.