

# Christopher Benjamin ASHTON

@ChrisBAShton; Website: <http://ashton.codes>; Email: chris (AT) ashton.codes

## PROFILE

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Award-winning 1<sup>st</sup> 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. In my spare time I run my own web development company - whose past clients include the BBC - and am a tenor in the prestigious BBC Symphony Chorus.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND SKILLS

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- **Full-stack web development** – passionate about test-driven, self-documenting, clean and collaborative code. I specialise in front-end web development.
  - **JavaScript** - masterful development of modular, object-oriented, unobtrusive JavaScript developed through TDD, using progressive enhancement to support backwards compatibility. Comfortable with publish/subscribe and MVC design patterns, cross-browser vanilla JavaScript, jQuery, RequireJS, Jasmine/QUnit, Node.
  - 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/1l13XHE>. Developed to support internationalisation, I took the initiative to translate it into Welsh: <http://bbc.in/1nDNxjD>
  - **Front-end technologies** – “mobile first” development of responsive websites, including <http://reff.it>; a web app allowing users to share relevant text from long web pages. Implemented semantic schema/HTML5 markup and modified Apache to use SEO-friendly URLs. Active user of CSS3 (pre-processed with SASS) and BEM syntax. Developed a 3D solar system in WebGL: <http://chrisbashton.github.io/solar-system-webgl/source/>
  - **Back-end technologies** – highly experienced with OO PHP, MVC/R architecture, PHP unit tests, Bash, Java, SQL, Node, Grunt. Knowledge of XSS and prevention of SQL injection through PDO. Some experience of Zend, Ruby on Rails, AWS.
  - **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>.
- **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, spanning unit, functional and visual regression tests. Manually tested web apps in multiple browsers, including old versions of IE inside virtual machines, using exploratory techniques to validate application behaviour and responsiveness.
- **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 their last dependencies on legacy systems. Templated the ‘datapic’ format: <http://bit.ly/1wT6XTz>
- **Technical leadership** – I assign tasks to subcontractors through my own installation of JIRA, managing their time alongside project deadlines and code reviewing their work on GitHub to ensure the code remains maintainable. Good communication skills, demonstrated through giving a well-received presentation to 40 developers on a technical subject while at the BBC.
- **Agile/Scrum** – worked in scrum teams adopting agile techniques including continuous integration (Travis CI), pair programming, code reviews and refactoring. Regular stand-ups, sprint planning and retrospectives.
- **Professional Memberships** – Professional Member, British Computer Society (MBCS)

## EMPLOYMENT

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- 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*  
Gained skills in record keeping and in maintaining professionalism under pressure, communicating through the medium of Welsh where required.

## EDUCATION

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- 09/2011 - 06/2015 | **Aberystwyth University, Wales**  
BEng (Hons) Software Engineering (1<sup>st</sup>). BCS-accredited. Grade: 84%  
  
Awards:  
  - *Best Bachelor Degree in Computer Science*
  - *British Computer Society Prize for the Best Major Project*  
Dissertation: *Online Dispute Resolution for Maritime Collisions*: an open-source ODR platform with plugin support for AI-driven automated resolutions. <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

## INTERESTS

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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: three years).

## REFERENCES

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References available upon request.