Work Placement Report

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29 April 2015
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INTRODUCTION

Setting the Context

In my time working at Teamwork it has become clear to me what the function of the work experience component of my course is. As a Computer Science Student, I have studied modules in a wide diversity of areas relating to both Computer Science and Enterprise. The work experience module has given me the opportunity to engage the knowledge I have acquired as a computer science student and apply it to working in an organization such as Teamwork, which delivers a number of key advantages. Firstly, it exposes the student to situations and pressures which cannot be easily simulated in a classroom environment, like staying up 36 hours straight to build a web site. Secondly, it gives the scholar an opportunity to showcase their skills and potential to possible future employers before they ever even achieve their degree. In this way the student is imparted the best opportunity possible to make a head start on securing graduate employment. The student also shoulders the responsibility of assuring that their employer maintains a successful relationship with the college. By learning to represent the college, the pupil learns how to effectively represent their employers in future careers to showcase them in a positive way. The work experience module simulates life after college for the student, gives them the best possible start in securing graduate employment and grants them the opportunity to be ambassadors for the college.

Name / Nature of the Organisation

Teamwork.com is a Private Limited Company, situated in the North Point Business Centre in Blackpool. Teamwork as a business specialises in online project management software for small and all size business.

Length of Placement

My placement started on the 12th of January 2015 and lasted until Friday the 6th of September.

Nature of the Placement

I was given the role of working at an intern with the chat team in Teamwork. My main goals were to work on bugs, this was difficult for me. I was then moved to rewriting their website and creating software and the website. My role at Teamwork also involves Apis, algorithms, creating and commenting code.

Work Place Supervisor / Academic Supervisor

My work placement supervisors are Michael "MJ" Heffernan (Support Specialist) and James Draper (Developer) .My placement co-ordinator is Seamus Langford.

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

Role and function of the Teamwork

Teamwork's mission is By 2020: "A Better Way to Run Your Business" - i.e. All the tools you require to run a successful small business. The function of Team work is to build all the products that help you need to efficiently operate your business - everything from sales, accounts, support, collaboration and getting things done. One product suite that manages it all: PM | Chat | Desk | CRM | Time tracking.

Teamwork provides an online industry leading project manager (plus other software).

Teamwork aims to tackle an age-old problem, which has become ever more predominant with the huge rise in startup companies, that to allow for correct collaborate work from around the world. Their most popular product Teamwork Project, does the following, it admits you to stay connected and in control of Projects from Anywhere! Teamwork.com is an online project management tool that keeps your team and customers working together.

Presently there are a number of companies trying to solve the problem collaborate work from around the world, such as Basecamp, need others. However, in the past decade, there has been very little innovation in this blank. Teamwork is unique in the way that it is the world's first company to use what the customers actually need, for example adding notes to task. When a creating a task you can set a date, level of importance along with more.

Teamwork Projects is an online project management application designed to manage your largest of projects, yet usable enough to convey even the least-experienced user on the board. This user-friendly PM application guides you through creating complex projects and handling resources for them. External and generic accounts are easily made, and client contact information cards can be quickly converted to client accounts, where you can set permissions to use and accessible. The same can be done for external resources that may be working on more than one task.

The interface is project-based; each appears as its own thread. Assigned users can attach files and photos, comment, or just get updates on the status of a project. Privacy settings on each user limit access to only the information you want them to see. You can further regulate user access, see how many times they logged in and when they last did. This application also happens to have some of the best security i have ever seen,

History of Company

Peter Coppinger & Daniel Mackey founded their company Digital Crew almost 9 years earlier and have made a living building websites, intranets and custom web-based solutions for clients in Cork, Ireland. At this point their company has a good reputation internationally and they sell website components online.

Peter and Dan spent some time reviewing and using labor management software. They tried Basecamp, ActiveCollab, and GoPlan etc. Many are very expensive and excessively complex, some were lacking basic features such as dates on tasks and some seemed to remain stagnant with the developers simply ignoring basic feature requests from customers. They wanted something intuitive that doesn't take time to learn and keep up. Something everybody in the company can use - not just the labor manager.

Peter and Dan were too busy with 'real work' to dedicate time to developing the product idea. But fate intercedes and a manager from a multinational client calls Peter to ask if he would have time to do a "simple" project management system. They want something extremely easy-to-use that would list upcoming and late milestones. This is the opportunity Peter has been waiting for. He eagerly tells the client about the software he has been thinking about making for a while and the client agrees that it is exactly what they need.

Peter first reviews other popular project management schemes to find out what they are doing right and what they are doing wrong. Although other Project Management solutions exist, they are all too boring, clunky and badly designed. None are what the client wants and Peter has in his brain. He makes a list what he likes and dislikes and puts pen to paper designing the software.

While on holiday to visit his sister in Boston for 3 weeks, Peter shamelessly neglects holidaying to stay up night-and-day working on the 'Project Management System'. Dan, busy with other client work back in Cork, checks in every morning. Screenshots fly back and forth but Peter is reluctant to show the software running "until its ready". Dan, also passionate about the development of their first "real" product, provides a steady stream of encouragement and suggestions.

Everything is ready and has been tested a hundred times. Teamwork Project Manager is launched on **October 4th 2007.**

The user interface and look of the application has grown a great deal since the early days. As Peter and Dan were active customers of Basecamp, the most popular online project management application, early adopters of the Open-Source ActiveCollab and trial users of many other applications the early design features were heavily inspired by the ease of use of these types of applications. Inspiration comes from a lot of areas such as Apple Software, Desktop based software, online applications, the iPhone etc.

Today, Teamwork Project Manager has adapted and changed to shape its own identity. Peter, Dan and the residue of the Teamwork, team love technology, user interface design and spend a lot of time seeing what works and implementing ideas to make Teamwork Project Manager both intuitive to learn and use.

In April of 2012, they rolled out one of the all-time top requested features, sub-tasks, which none of their competitions had.

5 years after founding Teamwork business has reached an all time high. To cater for this growth and future scalability they have moved the whole Teamwork infrastructure to Amazon's EC2 Cloud.

2014 starts in a blaze of fireworks with the unveiling of their new domain name. Two years after negotiations first started they finally purchased Teamwork.com. It cost them a pretty penny but it was unbelievably well received and we haven't looked back since. It laid the foundation for incredible chapter that followed. Another huge milestone. Teamwork Chat is revealed. Real time messaging to help maximize communication across the business for free. All the features of a great Chat app and then some! Users can create rooms or brief conversations. All of this and the ability to action tasks directly to Teamwork Projects. 10,000 downloads Chat's first 2 days (I wrote code in this).

In March 26th 2015, Teamwork's third baby has finally arrived. Say hello to Teamwork Desk; there cool new ticket tool to support your customers. Having found a way to deliver amazing customer support we felt it would be wrong not to share it with the world. Measure your customer happiness, monitor your feedback and keep harmony between your customers and your support team. We use it every day to deliver the ultimate customer experience. This is a Game Changer. Teamwork.com are now the proud creators of a suite of productivity software

Organisational Structure

Being a start-up, Teamwork's organisational structure is quite dissimilar to that of a technology organisation. It is run as a flat structure whereby every member of the team is given quite a heap of responsibility. This became quite apparent to me when I started at Teamwork and was invested in the chat team. Even though I have to work placement supervisors who delegate work to me and instruct me in what direction to take my work, I have given a great deal of free reign to take on tasks with little or no interference from other team members. The same is true for the other interns currently working at Teamwork.

Also, because of the small number of staff currently working at Teamwork, it often means that we must carry out tasks which do not necessarily meet our job descriptions. For example, I have completed tasks which affect areas such as human resource and system administration.

Communication is key at a start-up, as we need to be able to respond to quickly to any issues that our first customers may have. We hold a daily '15 min' meeting every morning at 10am. The company itself works and plays together in the scene they do a deal outside the workplace together. The whole team eats pizza together and has lunch together. There doors are constantly open.. During this meeting each member of the team takes a turn at telling the rest of the team what they will be going on for the day and whether they need any help from another member of the team. We also use Teamwork chat, a desktop and mobile phone application which allows us to put up private chat rooms within the organisation for instant messaging within our office.

Decision making usually falls in the hands of those whose job function it affects. However, as a start-up, we must be financially lean and aware of our burn rate, so every decision that involves spending money must be earned with either Billy of DC.

Human Resource Issues

Teamworks currently employs 30 staff members, 25 of which are full time and 5 interns. The age profile at Teamwork is mixed, with the five interns (including myself) being of the ages 21-31, with the full time staff being aged in the region of 22-55. 5 of the 30 staff members are female and the rest are male. While this may look like there is a gender imbalance from an outside perspective, the truth is that this is nothing to do with discrimination; we simply have not had enough female applicants thus far. However, as the company is expanding and currently looking for new staff members, a number of female applicants have been shortlisted for open vacancies, so I expect to take in a more even gender balance in the very near future.

Teamwork aims to have 20-30 staff employed by the year end 2015. To help the recruitment process we have commenced using an online tool called stack overflow jobs. This application allows the centralised management of all the businesses we advertise online across multiple platforms. So for example, if we are advertising a Data Scientist role we will create the job description in Stackoverflow and then share the job through the jobs section along with the site. On the Stackoverflow admin dashboard, we can regard the candidates who have applied and categorize them along with the use of teamwork desk. Depending on what category the candidate is put in, they will be sent an automated response informing them whether they have been successful or not in their diligence to get shortlisted for an interview from Orla.

After a candidate has been shortlisted, they are give an a online puzzles to solve.
The interview is normally carried out by the development team or by Orla o Connor head of HR. Successful candidates are taken based on their qualifications, skill set and personality. At Teamwork a sense of humor and a great interest in the company and technology are very important.

Relevance of the Organisation to any aspect of the degree programme

Teamwork, as an organization and the services they supply are very relevant to several aspects of the degree course. In the 3'd year of our course, we learned many aspects of project management , Online Fraud and promgamme skills. Being at the Frontline of the latest code and technically, I have found that what I have learned at Teamwork has greatly raised my knowledge in these areas. The information I learned in this module was a expert base of information to allow me to be familiar with certain terminologies and technologies, but I have found that what we are being taught is outdated. For example, we were never thought about mvc in javascript :(

DESCRIPTION OF MY DUTIES

Main functions you had during placement

The main functions I had during my placement were in the areas of writing code , reviewing code, checking and fixing bugs and Project Management.

Project Management — I was responsible for drafting plans and finishing the website for the launch of our teamwork desk, after my boss fell ill and it was left to me in 3 days . This included asking for help, planning what should go first , what can be left, woking with a fellow intern with the Virtual machines. They bought me an iPad for getting it done in time.

Writing Code — I was resoluble to different tasks that where posted online. This included fixing spelling mistakes, writing small bits of code and getting it reviews by my supervisors. Along with the project management parts I talked about earlier. Along with writing and build systems from sratch but cannot talk about that.

Reviewing Code — I was given feedback of code I wrote and made changes as need, Examples of that are improving the from a scaleable environment.

Bug Fixes — Everyone morning after coming in , I first check if theres any new tasks for me. If not I will work on bugs until all of them are fixed, including those that are not assigned to anyone yet.

ACCOUNT OF ACTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Initial Expectations

The outcomes expected and the outcomes achieved Initially when I started at Teamwork I was expecting to be given a project that wouldn't ever see the light of day (EMC, MICROSOFT), but not with Teamwork I have been given tasks and jobs that users get to use. In the Web development modules I completed this year, I learned about the various duties and roles of a Project Manager, Progammer and duties of teamwork in this type of role and so assumed that my work placement would be something quite similar to this. When I started at Teamwork, I was quite eager to put these practices into place, but soon learned that at a start-up, the role of Intern is quite different. I can honestly say 90% of the code we used hasn't been used while here as its outdated.

During my first week I was introduced to Micheal Heffernan and was given research to do by bug testing there software and reporting anything I found. I was also given tasks on researching different programming lanugues like Node.js, gulp, coffee script and go.

Apart from learning the basics of these langue, I was also able to put my knowledge of server side programming into practice by actually being responsible for live code such as the teamwork chat , desk sign up (which has been used by 7,000 so far) and the website. As Teamwork has developed during the past few months, I have seen the company grow and change in front of my eyes , which is pretty cool.
Initially, I only planned to gain learning experiences in the area of Javascript , but I also gained valuable experience in the areas of Teamwork,Github,sharing thoughts, commenting code and open source and even some experience in the area of human resources.

Critical Assessment of achievement of placement learning outcomes

As previously mentioned, in a small startup organisation, the workload is delegated among the entire team, which often involves various job roles overlapping and so I was exposed to many different learning outcomes that I may not have the opportunity to experience working at a large organisation. I feel that this is a valuable experience, though in my development as a software developer, because in the future, I may be responsible for leading a small team or having to work with different, and so it is important to have some knowledge of what each person's daily tasks may entail.To be a good programmer it is good to have a high-level knowledge of everything to do with the end product and the work of the project team, but at the same time, be somewhat external to the process and I feel that my varied experiences at Teamwork have been quite reflective of that learning outcome.

In relation to the other job roles that I have completed at Teamwork, I feel that I have excelled in each of them. Working under pressure has been one of these roles and during my placement I have been responsible for getting the code done within time frames, so the customer can get it sooner, unless there are too many absences in the office.

I would assess my involvement in the skills I talked about as a success as I was awarded and trusted with more changeling tasks and parsed by the owners plus learnt a new programming long in 2 days. Which to quote a fellow employ this the some work placement.

Difficulties Experienced

The first and probably the most difficult task I encountered in Teamwork, was getting familiar enough with our industry, company and software to enable me to understand and speak about them. The week I started placement I had to spend a considerable amount of time researching these areas by studying our stage decks, company press packs, online material and high level information about the technology used. On top of this I also had to research the project management industry. Trying to soak up all this information was quite difficult, given that I was trying to complete my daily duties and was also being encouraged to interact frequently throughout the day with other Co works, I am quite shy by nature. In the beginning I found it very hard to focus on one task at a time and it took me a while to learn the system and set up dyslexia software. Once my knowledge of the company and the industry had reached a certain level, I found it a lot easier to focus on my daily work tasks.

As briefly mentioned above, trying to focus on one task at a time proved very challenging in a fast-paced start-up environment. Because of the fact that I was exposed to many functions from a variety of job roles at Teamwork, I found that on a given day I could be completing multiple tasks. As a result, I overcame this difficulty by learning to focus one specific task at a time, get it done and move onto the next one without procrastinating or wasting time by over-thinking the list of tasks ahead of me, I made a few mistakes at the start, amazed Adam didn't kill me.This difficulty was an important experience to have and overcoming it will stand to me in my final year of college and when I enter the workplace after college with the whole dyslexia.

The majority of my tasks at Teamwork revolved around technical levels, but when I was on the Teamwork chat team I was getting stuck with the coffee script because of the dyslexic that would take me twice as long to write simple code. I was moved onto the website and onto the server side code which I am excelling at. I was upfront about it, but not at first.

Lessons Learned

I have learned a number of lessons about the organisation, the startup industry, myself and working in a professional environment. Firstly, I learned a lot about Teamwork's technology, particularly how it works from a high-level and how it fits into most every company and their code base. I believe that this will be highly beneficial to me if I were to pursue a career with Teamwork in the future.

 I also learned a lot about the startup industry and the direction that it is heading in. Teamwork's technology is cutting-edge and breaking new ground in the way that it is the first project management software that is simple to use and creates features that users want. By looking to the future of Project Management and Business software suites and working with an organisation that is helping to introduce this change, I feel that I have learned a considerable amount of knowledge which is not possible to learn in a college classroom.

I have learned a great deal about myself during my time in Teamwork, specifically how best I work in a professional environment. As previously mentioned, when I started at Teamwork, I had many tasks at once to concentrate on and found it difficult to manage this workload. I have learned that I work best when I identify every task ahead and give myself plenty of time to complete each task individually, rather than trying to multi-task.

What were the benefits for me of working in this organisation?

I have gained a large number of benefits from working at Teamwork. Teamwork has given me a large amount of responsibility in my time here, which has benefited me because I have learned to adapt and mature as a person and as a worker to handle stress and better organise myself and my time to meet goals and deadlines.By learning to adapt to a professional working environment before I even leave college, the work experience has given me the best possible start to my professional career and will hopefully help me to adapt even quicker to these changes when I start with my first job after college.

The work experience has also helped me to identify my strengths and weaknesses, which makes planning my career a lot easier. By working in Teamwork, I have identified that I enjoyed several aspects of the placement such as server side, front end and even written blog-posts. I have also identified that while my future career lies in working in the tech industry.
I also believe that my road to employment after college has been given the best possible start by working at Teamwork. During my time there I have been introduced to many big players in the technology industry at various networking events. If I had taken away nothing else from my time at Teamwork, the networking opportunities and exposure to the tech community that I have received have been overwhelming, most importantly Is the knowledge that was shown and thought of me during my first 6 weeks by Donal, Adam and Jago.

I hope that the benefits of working in Teamwork will continue long after my placement ends, as I plan to apply for a graduate position at the company and travel back to the Untied States.

Could this placement assist in my future career planning?

Yes, I believe that this placement has already assisted me in my future career planning because of the previously mentioned personal and educational benefits that I have attained during my time with Teamwork. Teamwork has been a great place to work at and at the moment I have my mind set on either working there, another technology start-up or a company with a similar culture to Teamwork. At Teamwork, the contribution of the individual is not measured by the person's ability to sit at a desk from 9am until 5pm.Instead, the individual is given the tasks they must complete and all the responsibility lies with them to ensure they complete these tasks on time and that they are of a high standard. At Teamwork each member of the team shoulders the responsibility of making sure that the company is successful and with this responsibility comes a range of exciting challenges on a daily basis. This is typical of the many tech startups that I have come across during my time at Teamwork and I feel that my future lies in either Teamwork or working on another technology start up once I complete my placement (I even have offered). I have also taken inspiration in my future career planning from some of my employers at Teamwork. I do plan one day to pursue a business venture of my own, but until I am ready financially and built the necessary credibility and skills, I believe that my future career will lie in the Start-up scene.

5. CONCLUSION

Any individual thoughts on the overall experience and any recommendations about future placement with this organisation

As I mentioned in my opening paragraph, the work placement module simulates what life will be like for a Computer Science student once they gain employment through their degree after college. I truly believe that by representing the college in the working environment, I have learned how to represent myself in the best possible way once I begin my professional career after college.

Working at Teamwork has introduced me to experiences and people that I would not have had the privilege of seeing, had there been no work placement module in our course. Working at a Start-up has been a challenging experience, but that is the best possible introduction a student could get at an established company. At Teamwork I was given the role of techial Intern. This meant that I was given the kind of responsibility that most have to wait years in their career to gain.This is the best possible start that an intern can have, rather than having their hand held through the entire experience, because it is not reflective of how quickly they will have to adapt to handle responsibility when employed in their future career. For these reasons I would highly recommend that placements with Teamwork should continue for Computer Science students in CIT in the foreseeable future. It is a unique opportunity to work at a local company that has taken one of the world's fastest growing industries by storm. It is an opportunity that I have been lucky to have and one that I hope to have again in the future.