

SUPERVISED WORK EXPERIENCE - Final Report

Placement at TeleWare as a software Developer



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Supervised work experience

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# 1. My general placement activities

This year I did my placement at TeleWare, which develops cloud-based communications software. We provide a platform where companies can communicate more efficiently with their customers. TeleWare provides business intelligence and analytics. TeleWare does all this and are very flexible to specific needs of the company and meets all the regulatory, compliance and governance requirements.

## 1.1 What my role was?

As mentioned in the previous 2 placement reports, My key role was to be a front-end developer for the web team. Which mostly consisted of working on The Hub which is a combination of other products that we have developed in the past and we are planning on adding more in the near future. However, this is not fixed as I have worked on the mobile app, as I am on the web team something on the legacy products and Sometimes even working on the API and Frameworks if required.

For coding I was using React which is a programming library from JavaScript made by Facebook. The files that we use are .jsx which combines JavaScript and HTML and for styling we use .less which is a separate language that uses CSS nesting. Again, these are just the main languages I use. I have had to work with some other languages such as plain JavaScript or C# from time to time.

For our project management we are using TFS developed by Microsoft. We used this for project management, time tracking, reporting and building releases. From this I also work with excel to create the TFS monthly time tracker reports and send these to the developers and engineers leads

Our team development methodology is Scrum Agile. A single sprint lasts for 2 weeks. During daily stand up we have the developers, testers and product owner who are involved in the sprint. This is so everyone has an idea of what is going on with the sprint and the products. Along with this sprint review involves multiple departments and teams, because these are going to affect not just us the development but also the rest of the company e.g. Sales, engineers and others.

## 1.2 What learning opportunities did the year provide?

During my time with TeleWare I learnt a lot, firstly and mostly importantly my knowledge in programming has increased greatly and so did my passion for it. When I came into TeleWare I had little knowledge. The only programming knowledge I had so far was doing my computing courses being taught through my education and one very simple game that I developed. Although my main role was as a developer, I did have a lot of opportunities to learn more then just that. I learned about testing from working with some of the testers and making sure little bugs were being found. I also was quite vocal on the design aspect of the product I was working on, I was quite hands on with the layout and user functionality, I had to know that the customer. Along with this with the new head of development joined TeleWare, a lot of the sprint process was changed and other new things were added this was a great place to pick up on management and leadership from him learnt a lot from him.

## 1.3 What technical skills/knowledge I required?

To get the role required as being a junior developer I needed to have some sort of programming background and that I was doing a programming related course. Since I was mostly going to be working on the frontend side of the development. However, this was not completely true as I was going as a junior developer and not a frontend developer so I had the options to working on other backend side of development, Which can be seen in my previous report as I working on a few API related task along with designing models. But this would mainly focus on frontend which could really be shown during my interview as most of the technical question were related to HTML5, CSS and JavaScript with few other topics mixed in. Along with this after I passed my interview and asked my manger what I would need, he told me to study React framework and get as much knowledge as possible. I had to continue learning throughout my placement as there was always more I could learn. I also had to have some understanding of Microsoft Server Side Web Technologies mainly web API and MVC.

## 1.4 What personal skills I required?

TeleWare has these 5 skills that they really live up to. It’s a very import part of TeleWare and it can be shown everywhere. Whenever they want to recruit new members to the TeleWare staff they list these skills as a requirement. During every 1-2-1 meeting they are checking that these skills are met. Whenever they do an end of year staff review they use these 5 skills as a guideline to assign points. These skill are a very important requirement to get into TeleWare.

Curious: - In the field of tech and development the field is constantly changing. I needed to be curious and see what new things I could learn and what I could do to improve my workflow. Every 2weeks on Wednesday The development team would get free time to learn anything new that was helpful to them and helpful for the company. This would improve the developers code, efficiency and knowledge. So it was required that I had this skill.

Dynamic: - I always had to be motivated. If I wasn’t motivated I would not have met my goals/ task in the time required. This not only set me and my team behind but the testing, products, sales and much more. I had to be self-motivated.

Partnership: - The entire company is built of partnership so it is important that every staff member has the skill. During my time I had to gain the trust of my staff members at certain times, so I could pick up that task. Like how I needed to have enough knowledge on the product/app, C# and MVC in order to work on a WebAPI task.

Collaborative: - I also needed to have a good communication skill as TeleWare was a very friendly environment. The methodology we used was Scrum Agile and everything was team related so it required a lot of communication with one another. After out new department head arrived and our workflow was change we now had to be more vocal and more active with other teams.

Confident: - Confidence was very important. During every end of sprint we had to stand in front of the department and do a sprint review as our development was going to impact their work and they needed to know. Along with this we needed to be confident enough to work outside our comfort zone and pick up tasks that were new to us. So this skill was a very important requirement.

## 1.5 How these skills/knowledges linked with the taught material of years one and two?

Almost all of the programming languages I had to use, I had done during my first or second year. Like the JavaScript, CSS and HTML, I learnt during Dynamic HTML and CSS. I also had the opportunity to work with C# during Cloud and web Services, I also learned a lot about MVC and Frameworks during this module. I was also able to know a lot about the development process and so on during my industry project and open source web design. All of these were crucial for me to secure this job.

# 2. How I personally have benefited from your placement?

There were a lot of things I learned during my time at TeleWare, as this was my first time working in industry job. It was not hard for me to learn new things as I was adapting to this work lifestyle. A year is a long time to do something repeatable which helps you get into a habit of something. Added with this my manager Tim was pushing me to try harder and get better at my job, by setting goals and targets. I was able gain a lot of experience that I was able to benefit from.

## 2.1 Main lessons learned?

I learnt to take responsibility for my decisions as it was important that the team knew how certain thing were working so they can pick it up when every I am gone or if the testing failed and a bug came back the people responsible was quick to fix it rather than a new person to pick it up. The time management was another huge thing I acquired during my placement. Since I had to work fixed hours and I lived 40mins away from my house it was difficult to keep in time but after getting into habit I was able to manage time around my work to suit my needs.

## 2.2 General benefits?

I have gained a lot of benefits from my time at TeleWare. My work ethic has increased as the things I am currently doing will affect another people’s lives and not just mine and this has also increased my appreciation for working people as I have gone through the same experiences.

Along with this I have also benefited from efficiency with my time and money. I was able to save up and build myself a PC, that I am currently using to work on my own projects, along with this I was able to pay for driving lessons and get a Driving license.

I have along started reading a lot of news in my free time to pass time, this has made me more aware of what is going around the world.

## 2.3 What technical skills/knowledge I acquired?

Previous to this I had only learned programming through teaching in classes and an application I built using C#/ As my task was mostly working on a web application. But now I have acquired enough technical skill to work on my own projects. I am especially fluent in JavaScript, HTML and CSS as I was working with them most of the time. I also had changes to work on WebAPI, Entity Framework and models.

Project management was also another skill I acquired during my time at TeleWare. I had very little knowledge on what project management was and how the work flow was going to pan out. Since I am now working with professionals and have used tools such as Team Foundation Server and recently GIT as git has proven to be better than TFS mainly for its merge branches and Microsoft themselves started supporting GIT. ‘if you are starting a new project, or if you are looking for a way to improve your team practices, then do yourself a favour and move to Git.’ (Has Altaiar, 2016). Along with this the work flow the agile methodology we used every day to plan, review and so on is all the skills I have acquired with my time at TeleWare.

## 2.4 What personal skills/knowledge I acquired and its Effect?

The aforementioned 5 personal skill that TeleWare lives by have also affected me. As my curiosity for learning programming and tech in general has increased. I am reading a lot of articles on latest tech related stuff, trying these things myself in my free time and keeping up with the latest news in tech world because ‘Technology has always changed the world, often for the better.’ (Brian B.H, 2017)

I am also able to work in a team with more confidence being able to get my opinion in from to professional and be a crucial member of the team. I also had to opportunity to lead a full sprint which helped my confidence, management and leadership skills.

## 2.5 Influence of training on choice of final year options and project?

Although my final year project isn’t going to related to my placement work. It has influenced on what I am going to pick and how I will be approaching this project. As during my conversation with some of my team mates I was able to come up with this idea of social media (mainly Facebook) not being safe for kids and there needs to be a better solution. I am also going to be picking an agile approach for this project, because when I was there the new department head made these changes which I was able to witness from the start, learn its pros and cons and this is what I felt most comfortable with going forward.

## 2.6 Influence on future career choices, aims and expectations?

My expectations have increased a lot. I believe I will be doing a lot better at my University work, as I have learnt more and have developed my skill far more than what I previously had. I was also very unsure on what I was going to be doing for my future career as I was not sure whether to go down the programming or networking route, and this placement has very much made me interested in programming as going home to develop my own project, reading articles on tech related topics for fun.

# 3. My contribution to the Host Organisation.

## 3.1 How my work contributed to the department /group/section team?

During my time at TeleWare the staff didn’t treat me like a student but a fellow colleague and whenever I made a point I was sure that they would take it into considerations. During my time working on the Hub I have made several design and functionality changes. I was also involved in 2 TeleWare hackathons where I had few inputs of my own and being a developer that was hands on with the applications I have more ideas and knowledge than others had. I was also involved with getting the unit testing code coverage up. Now we have started to use it on every new implementation of the hub and are it is planned to be used in the mobile app (Re-Call) and API.

## 3.2 How my work influenced the future direction of the department/group/section/team?

I was also involved in bringing the new Re-Call app from Xamarin to React-native with Jason. This has been kicked up and entering to Re-Call phase 2 which will all be done on React-native. I also joined the software security team which will kick off soon but while I was there it was just at its start-up stage and we were only doing meetings getting the team set up and setting out our goals.

# 4. Acknowledgements.

## 4.1 Host Organisation

I have loved every second that I been at TeleWare the staff are very helpful and friendly. Everyone was really nice to me treated me like I was their own. It was a great experience and I want to thank the staff at TeleWare for supporting me. Not just as a work colleague but as a friend.

## 4.2 Industrial Supervisor.

Tim Clyburn was very helpful to me. He was a very good role model. He taught me a lot, not just in programming but other skills along with it. He was always pushing to be better. During 1-2-1 meetings with him he would always give me things that I could do to improve upon. He was also great at picking out my flaws and telling me how I could improve it and avoid it. Overall he a great tutor and he helped me a lot. He was always there when ever I needed help or advise.

## 4.3 Visiting Tutor.

Myriam Mallet also played a crucial role in preparing me for my final year and my ongoing role at Teesside as a placement student. She gave me advice on what to expect of the final year project and she did help me a lot. I was having difficulty picking my final year project and she gave me advice on what I should expect and what is the best course of action going forward. She also helped me improved my reporting if you compare my first and second placement report there is a huge improvement as she told me what I was missing and what could be done a better outcome. She was also very vocal in her email and a very reliable source if I needed anything from my placement team or Teesside.

## 4.4 The University Placement Team.

The placement team was very helpful, they taught me everything that was required for me to secure the placement from preparing my CV and cover letters. All the placements that I applied for were done form the student placement on Teesside Backboard. I did some looking up in other services one of which was RateMyPlacement but every job I could find that was listed was already in this place. The placement team did a very good job of preparing each individual student and making sure they get the most out of this experience. Sara Jane Lawton was always there to fix any problem I had with during my placement and was another individual that I went to whenever I needed a question answered regarding my placement. Barry Hebbron is a very good teacher his teaching was very crucial in me getting this placement and he is also another person that I used to email whenever I had an issue regarding my placement. Eimer Bourker help me prepare for my interviews and taught me how to deal with employers.

# 5. References

* Brian B.H. (2017) *How Technology Is Rapidly Changing the Way things Get Done Across Industries*. Available at: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/288025> (Accessed: 24/08/2018).
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