The G6 Internet Explorers Team had the pleasure of interviewing Mr Tom Tighe Director of Operations – Payment Solutions - Shiji Group.

*What kind of work is done by the I.T. professional.*

Tom, who is based in Sydney Australia, is responsible for the release and deployment of hospitality industry solutions globally. He manages a team of support and implementation technicians that deliver primarily, payment solutions to hotels, sporting stadiums, casino’s and the like. He has several staff with him in Sydney but most of his team is based in Atlanta in the U.S. His role also involves working with sales to develop new solutions based on customer requests, liaising with suppliers and vendors and dealing with clients and potential customers directly.

*What kinds of people does the I.T. professional interact with? Are they other I.T. professionals, Clients?, Investors?, The general public.*

In his role, Tom mainly deals with other I.T. professionals, CIO’s and I.T. Managers from client sites and potential customers as the business provides technical solutions to the market place, that they will have responsibility for. There is some interaction with Managers in Finance roles within these same organisations with the solutions primarily payment gateway focused. Other interactions are with internal Sales and Marketing teams.

Interestingly he mentioned the importance of networking with I.T. professionals particularly those in the same field or industry. He is a member of an organisation that meets irregularly, that provides a social environment to meet and engage with I.T. and Finance professionals that he may not normally encounter. Through these gatherings and the contacts made several business opportunities became available.

*Where does the I.T. professional spend most of their time.*

Currently the business is undergoing rapid expansion with new products being released to the market and additional clients coming on board. Most of Tom’s time is being spent on managing the release and deployment of the new software, that is ensuring the products work as expected, that any specific platform requirements and configurations are well documented and in planning and organising the implementation of the new products. Additionally being responsible for a team based in the United States that he does not see in the office on a daily basis, means he tends to focus more on their output and issues and generally keeping tabs on them than he would if they were Sydney based.

*What aspect of their position is most challenging?*

From the interview it was apparent that the greatest challenge was the diversity of technology found not just in the marketplace but also within his own organisation. One major client in the United States has a unique solution developed only three years ago that is not duplicated anywhere else in the world. It is so different to the other solutions provided, that support staff often struggle to understand and remedy issues. Fortunately, many of the developers who worked on the original project are still with the business and are called upon to provide assistance. Some clients are still running quite old technologies while new implementations are using AWS and other cloud based product. With the explosive growth of the business and release of new software this gap continues to widen. Legacy and more recent implementations have very different configurations, very different technologies and in some cases terminology which provides challenges for support and installation staff performing general support as well as impacting on any upgrades to the systems.