Holiday Extras

2017 / 18



Placement Journal

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Engineer

03/07/2017

I started my day getting ready for work having no idea what to expect out of my first day, but I was still excited. I was a little nervous too but knowing how relaxed HX has seemed so far calmed me down quickly.

We started the day with Denise who gave us some basic introductory talks before helping us to collect our work laptops. Once back downstairs she gave us a presentation about the company’s mission, earnings, projected earnings and we learnt about the German and Bulgarian branches as well as the sub-companies like Airparks.

She also had us setup professional email signatures, showed us some of the intranet and explained some of our employee benefits.

We then toured the HX campus, checking out fire exits and fire assembly points as well as the kitchens, and other lounges and self-development areas that can be used for working. We were also shown the Oak Creative building where the insurance team has been working due to the main call centre being too loud.

After the tour we took our lunch and met some of the previous IPs again and played pool with them and our technical mentors. It was nice to spend time with them and helped me feel comfortable chatting to them if I ever needed help.

Post-lunch Luke gave us a talk about the process of onboarding, time at HX and how we can make the most of the year. This also included the exact schedule for the first 5 weeks of on boarding and the pod rotations we would go through. We were then given our assigned technical mentors, mine was James McNeill. After this we were sent home early (4:30pm)

My first day at HX was full of information about the company and how we’d be working for the next year. I’m really excited to get past the information filled induction days and start getting my hands dirty.

04/07/2017

We spent the first half of the day setting up all of the software that we needed during our year, including; node, git and slack.

When installing slack we were pointed in the direction of certain channels to join such as #developers, #web-general and my permanent pod channel: #pod-cust-experience. Once joining each of these channels we were strongly urged to introduce ourselves to the groups which seemed like a daunting task; throwing our first message in to the mix in the midst of other conversations. However, replies were friendly and re-assuring. When joining my full-time pod the Agile Lead, Han Cork, welcomed me before I had the chance to say anything; which was a welcome relief.

After this we setup various accounts and had our GitHub accounts invited to the Holiday Extras organisation; allowing us access to push+pull all of the HX repos we would need for development.

Then we went through with the long process of cloning and setting up the main repos and systems we would need, including HAPI (Holiday Extras API), Render and Tripapp(lite). The main time consumer was that each repo had different initial setups which were sometimes complex and more often slow to download/unpack/install. Although this was still a reasonably enjoyable process with our friendly mentors Damian and James.

Eventually, once we were done with everything besides Tripapp we went to lunch. It was relaxing to spend time playing pool and getting to know our mentors and peers further. I looked forward to the workshop after lunch in which we would begin to learn more about the structure/architecture of the technologies we would be involved in developing.

The workshop covered elements of HAPI, CHIPS, Tripapp and render, as well as showing some of the older legacy problems and explaining a few hacked workarounds that have come from the legacy CHIPS base. (I.e Chauntry, Hotels, Insurance and Parking [CHIPS] is not built to handle lounges etc so it has weird flags and workarounds to store lounges as ‘car parks’). It also showed us how each of these technologies work together to serve different elements of the business for different purposes. For example, Render is built to support older browsers (Ie8-) and uses typical server requests throughout operation. Whereas Tripapp serves more modern browsers (ie9+; Firefox; chrome) and therefore is able to run as a single page client-side application where everything is handled client-side with Ajax requests for page changes/information loading. All of these systems rely on CHIPS (booking information storage etc) via HAPI. This shows some of the architectural structure of the system:

Render <-> HAPI <-> TripApp

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CHIPS

After we covered this we had some spare time so us IPs, our mentors and Luke (manager) went to play some pool and table football before the end of the day.

I headed home, tired from constantly paying attention to lots of new information being thrown at us but having enjoyed gaining a deeper understanding of the systems we’d be interacting with daily.

I look forward to tomorrow where we’ll be pairing with testers and shadowing them; beginning to see some of the processes involved and experience them for ourselves.

05/07/2017

First day of tester pairing with my tester, Jamie Matthews

Met Jamie, Mark and Becky, talked somewhat; general introductions

Went to the sprint planning meeting

Introduced to my final pod

Looked at current tickets planned for sprint

Helped with estimating ticket difficulties and times

Was assigned 2 of my own tickets to estimate

Jamie gave me a casual presentation of his presentation that is for testers to help them gain the right mindset; for example in relation to cognitive; motor and visual strain it is best to sacrifice motor strain if you have to sacrifice any of them. Since an extra click or two is less of a delaying/annoying factor than cognitive strain

Jamie struggled to find something to show me since it’s the beginning of a sprint and then JIRA went down

Whilst JIRA was down we just relaxed and chatted

Once JIRA was back and Jamie had a meeting Tom came over to assist me with my first ticket. It went quite well; although it took a little getting used to the code base and the workflow for committing/jira commenting at first. In the middle of inspecting the code for this ticket we decided to go to lunch.

We played pool for a while and relaxed before I went back to solve the issue alone.

Once I had it fixed I asked for Tom’s help on how to deploy the code to GitHub for the PR.

After that I began to investigate the second ticket assigned to me when there was a fire drill all of a sudden.

Once back inside I continued to investigate where the right area of the code base was make the appropriate customer number changes. Once I’d identified how the process worked (which took some time since the contact us box is populated by 4 separate sections of the system) I began to think of my solution

I managed to quickly get my local test page to look similar to Mark’s Marvellous Mockup but I had to figure out where I would go to make the “quoting…” line appear continuously with the one above; rather than starting below it.

After figuring out where exactly the contact us box was populated from (easier said than done) I fixed the linebreak and the aim of the ticket was met

I then had to commit this code to my branch (CEX-1668)

After this I ran ’npm test’ to test the repo and ran into some teething issues with syntax which I fixed. Although I still had a problem that would occur without showing much reason.

I spoke to Tom and he instructed me that I need to leave Tripapp running whilst I prepare it for tests since it will automatically re-build itself if it is running simultaneously. After it built itself the test passed with no issues and I was ready to commit the test changes.

After this, I pushed to my branch and submitted the PR for the code to be deployed once it had been tested.

During the final stretch of my second ticket my first PR request was approved by the pod and was moved on to being ready-to-test

It felt great to be on my third day at HX and already have 2 PRs created with one already on its way to testing. I’m glad the pod had some bitesize work ready for me so I could begin to get a taste for what I’d be doing for the year.

06/07/2017

Today I worked closely with Jamie and Becky throughout the entire day. First starting with setting up gas mask and CC accounts to help me tests systems in different environments.

During the CEX standup everyone explained their progress and I gave updates on my 2 PRs, I’m glad this was an inviting process and didn’t feel like I was just tacked on at the end. In the standup Adrian said he was blocked by data being missing from HXCM which was a high priority, so Becky + Jamie + I all worked on putting this data into HXCM.

Then Jamie explained to me some information about testing routes and different paths you could take. Like the anti-social path where you’re purposely trying to break stuff.. The guidebook tour where you’re sticking to exactly what is expected and nothing extra

We went back to testing CC which I found what we thought was a problem where dover port would also offer airport hotels and parking but eventually it was decided that rather than being a display issue it was merely unclear text and the Airport will be changed to Port labelling

Jamie and Becky then left for a testers’ meeting which I was called into half way through when some of the less relevant (to us) topics had been covered

* Discussed some of the testing procedures, automation of certain white label merges etc (Becky opted to just keep doing it manually since it’s simpler)
* Just before the end of the meeting we were sent to lunch since we only had an hour until our workshop at 2

During our workshop we were shown some basic javascript; types used and some things especially in relation to the way the company prefers them. (i.e let and const rather than var due to var hoisting outside of the scope)

We also ran through 9 basic test lessons online which were relatively simple.

- Problem 8 was extremely simple once you googled the js function that would perform a Math.max.apply(…) for you rather than hand coding a “largest” comparison for varying parameter lengths.

- This was done to teach us that it’s perfectly acceptable to use google to find solutions; this isn’t a test environment it’s better to use google and do a job in a simple+concise way rather than redundantly re-making functs.

- After the workshop it was 4:10pm and I was due to work till 4:30pm so I went back upstairs; On the way up Jamie was on his way down and out for the day so I sat next to Becky

Becky offered me to help her with some cross-device testing for SEO of the mobile app for HX

During this we found a few seemingly minor bugs that we reported to the team through JIRA comments

I was enjoying working and chatting with Becky so I stayed till 5:30pm when she finished so I had more opportunity to socialise with my pod members. It was definitely worth getting more comfortable with people I’d be spending a lot of time with in future.

07/07/2017

CEX standup

- Talked about how my testing of cc + becky SEO (<br> booking) went the day before and what I would be testing with Becky today (SEO extra devices on booking; especially on the issue with selecting to include parking that we found yesterday)

SEO standup (since Becky works 50% SEO 50% CEX)

- People had only a few things being put out to testing

- 50-50 was becoming a struggle for Martyn and Becky agree’d.. Talked about swapping to 1 week on at a time and interchanging since it’s too hard to context switch multiple times in a day over a short time period.

Managed to get gabble working locally with the help of Simon Woodcock

Nick Loe-Startup approached me for a chat about new products since I would be rotating their next week. He said he’ll be away on Monday but he ran me through the pod structure and their unusual Kanban board (wangban).

All of the IPs, mentors and Luke then met up to chat about how it’s going and what we’ve learnt so far. We all had lots to say and it was nice to be given the opportunity to get together and share our progress.

10/07/2017

Today was my first day on my rotation into New Products, I was introduced to Nick Patrick and George Fisher as two of the engineers of the pod that started to help me get up to speed with new products and work on my first ticket.

This ticket was to re-align a price that was floating in the wrong position on the website, which didn’t take too long to fix but gave me some valuable learnings in the project structure.

I then started to look at tickets for added images to the limousine transfer and updating the SUV image on the resort transfers products. Unfortunately both images provided looked terrible when in use, they were the wrong size and didn’t scale/stretch very well. We delayed on the ticket until we get new images.

I think I hit the ground running today and managed to make a good early impression. It felt good to be able to get a ticket done within my first day in the pod thanks to George and Nick’s help.

11/07/2017

‘Wang’ planning

I was given a new ticket on e-commerce events but unfortunately the description was very lacklustre. Since Nick was too busy to help explain the ticket I spent time shadowing the tester of New Products, Andy Hart. He was testing payments on gabble as the call centre were reporting that they couldn’t make any fasttrack bookings. This was a bit slow since I couldn’t do much but watch as Nick and Andy worked to solve this issue.

In the afternoon we had an agile workshop that let us practice estimations and let us see different delivery approaches via a few games. One of these was an egg colouring exercise. We had 3 members to each team and we had to colour eggs to a certain specification, cut them out and have them checked by the quality assurance person. We had to estimate how many eggs we could do in a given timeframe before we attempted it. Initially with 15 estimated and 1 egg delivered it didn’t go so well. But as the rounds went on we got better at estimating and optimised delivery. When we re-analysed our approach we consistently had less waste and better estimates.

We then got shown the sprint and Kanban difference with a lego game and a pizza game. This was a really fun way to be shown the differences and it helped give a visual aid rather than just being a lot of definitons to remember. I really enjoyed this workshop and learned a lot from it.

Whilst I didn’t get to do much actual work today I did get to watch and shadow as issues were being solved, as well as participating in a fun and worthwhile workshop in the afternoon.

12/07/2017

Fixed issues that were raised in the PR review for the floating price; now works on mobile and the PR was updated and moved to test-ready with a new JIRA comment. Andy approved explanation of how to run the local render tests due to the weird gas mask disable for location lookup box. (‘Nice notes’)

Awaiting Nick at 11 for further progress on the ecommerce events or something else.

Talked to Nick about e-commerce events; he says it is more complicated than we originally expected and took me to meet Pedro, who made the current e-commerce events for the other products. He showed us about 5 different changes that we would have to make in order to make FastTrack work with the new e-commerce events for bookings (PROD-2223).

The first of these changes was to add fast\_track product type to the data platform’s e-commerce schema, we spoke to the data platform and figured out what we’d need to change and which version handling they’d want us to perform and then we made the appropriate changes. We changed the schema and submitted a PR; George approved it and now it is awaiting deployment.

At this point we went to talk to Nick Loe-Startup who agree’d that this ticket would take up too much time right now since Nick Patrick had other work to do rather than spending all of his time going through this ticket with me so we re-prioritised and I moved on to ticket 2355 which was to remove the mobile input’s popover from being displayed on mobile devices and replacing it with text underneath. This was an easy ticket to undertake and didn’t take too long besides some bootstrap css figuring out. Once I had this PRed and looked for a reviewer; Andrew Hart asked me for some clarification on why ‘Shared Limousine’ hadn’t been given information with the Render changes I made to give ‘Limousine Transfer’s information popovers. I told him I had no idea shared existed and that it wasn’t in the JIRA. I then investigated the config and found that SHARED\_LIMOUSINE does match the kv pair for info popovers but we hadn’t been given a description to add so I requested Emma Pozzeti do this for us.

This eventually lead me to being out of tickets after a bunch of JIRA comments/boring re-moving of stuff on there. At this point Nick Patrick went home and since I had nothing else going on I decided to take a look at the e-commerce events by myself and I now have finished the first 3 steps of the implementation (schema, passthrough function in FT index.js, chipsBooking.js) which will all need checking to ensure I have done them correctly.

Overall, this day felt productive. It was good to be able to get quite a lot of work done independently whilst also working as a team on the e-commerce events. It was nice to be able to network with other employees and gain insight into the ticket from Pedro and Nick together.

13/07/2017

Today I basically messed with the e-commerce events all day. In standup Andy appointed me to help him test but that fell through once we found an issue with all bookings that weren’t live; then during the downtime I got busy with my e-commerce event work. I have it working now and have spoken to Erkin who seemed to give some bad answers about the schema format that I should make the transformer produce.. He complained about the booking-date format but that is created by the base transformer (transformer results are just a json merge of baseTransformer + actual product-specificTransformer). He also talked about the supplier being wrong since it isn’t an ‘’airport’’ and it should chips/fritten etc; George+Patrick confirmed that it is all handled by chips.

I’ve tried to push back as much as possible since some of the changes requested weren’t my responsibility in the first place. I was asked by Chrissy to raise a new ticket for the data team to go and fix the date problem at its core. Some debate was still occurring on the PR which hopefully I can resolve soon.

14/07/2017

Today was my first Project Lounge experience and I got to sit with Becky and Jamie. I enjoyed some of the social aspects with them as it was good to get to know my future team better.

Whilst doing this I was also busy working on my New Products presentation to wrap up my rotation and present back to Luke and the other IPs later in the day. This presentation went relatively smoothly, and I did a reasonable job of conveying exactly what the pod does and who is involved. I could have probably spoken a bit more slowly to ensure I kept my words clear, but otherwise it went well.

17/07/2017

Today was my first day with the API pod. It started off with a hugely technical overview from Connor Meredith who explained:

* Data safe guards – small copies of chips for scaling (can respond to availability lookups to reduce load on actual chips so it’s reserved for actual booking retrieval + creation)
* Chauntry Service – Chips+Fritten combined into one bypass service, it sits as a middle man between HAPI and CHIPs as part of the testing process for the thunderbird project
  + Every request that goes through it is duplicated, being sent to Ingrid and Sunset to compare the differences in the two requests, when 100% aligned the thunderbird project will be complete
* Sunset = chauntry’s test area for chips+fritten

Finished off Chauntry tidy ticket 2068 and submitted a PR for Connor to review; then took a look back at PROD-2223; looks like I need to change it slightly to match what the schema expects/requires. Then it should be ready to go. Will submit this as a PR to Nick once I have finished the changes.

Overall, this day felt very productive. I gained a huge amount of insight from Connor this morning into how some the biggest systems at HX fit together, especially those involved in the big thunderbird project (merge chips+fritten, uk+de). It was nice to also be able to complete a ticket for the pod, even if it was just a tech-debt maintenance ticket. It’s a good place to start.

18/07/2017

Slow start to the day, nothing left in this sprint that isn’t blocked, in progress/PR/done at the moment. I’ve been here for an hour and a bit and I’ll I’ve done is re-run a travis build after a re-base. Connor is moving around a lot so I can’t really get anything to do from him either.

Waiting on HAPI deployments to be clear so I can deploy the HAPI cleanup branch.

@15:01; Jamie took my position in the HAPI merge queue so I’m now merging TECH-2068 into HAPI.

New ticket - TECH-2086 (Chantry-service) to remove some old TESTT test code that forced the sunset environment needed to be removed. 10 Minutes later it’s all removed; documentation updated and put in PR. George reviewed quickly and approved it, now merging into chantry-service and ensuring the travis build log is successful. Build was successful on the merge to staging; hxtravis generated a branch PR from staging->production which I have now merged into master and am awaiting the travis build for. Successful build; code deployed successfully.

The morning started out slow but when I eventually had a new ticket it felt great to be able to complete it quickly. I’m enjoying the challenge of solving tickets so far and I’m addicted to wrapping up and closing a ticket with a well-done piece of code.

We then had a workshop on unit testing. This showed us the libraries and tools (mocha + chai) that could be used to prove code works as expected. We were taught about when to employ unit tests and how they are one of the most basic forms of testing which purely proves that the code’s logic is in order. We were also taught about spies and stubs, which can be used to monitor a function or completely prevent the functionality respectively. Each of them having a unique use case In unit testing, including the ability to check whether a certain function was called.

This workshop eventually came to a close after a few exercised to put into practice the unit testing methodologies we’d been shown. I enjoyed being able to actually try out what we’d been shown and use it in a practical way. I’m sure this knowledge will help me a lot going forwards, ensuring I can provided the basic level of testing needed to prove my code is logically correct.

19/07/2017

Couldn’t sit with anyone from pod and after stand-up there isn’t much going on. I’m waiting on NOMREP files from Lyndsey before I can start to figure out diffing those which should be fun. In the meantime I’m working on finishing up a ticket for new products (fast track events) - need to conform to schema validation.

George Bates eventually talked to me and helped give me some guidance. Eventually, I decided I would start to script the NOMREP files in a fake comparison; comparing a single NOMREP file to itself rather than waiting on perfect matching files to compare across. I started to work on this with George’s assistance and right now I need to work on extending the makeJSON function to turn the arrays of rows related to each booking into a set of JSON values related to the booking ref key. This shouldn’t be too complicated; especially due to the fact that in the afternoon Lyndsey managed to get correct NOMREPs as well as a file containing 78 header titles, so we aren’t completely clueless about the values of each field since the titles weren’t included in the tab separated mess. Just before I left work I was investigating why I have 83 columns of values instead of the described 78; will look more into this.

@2pm we also had a retro meeting; where we retrospectively talked about how well the sprint went and things we could improve. I partook even though I was only in the last 3 days of the 2 week sprint. The first task was to write an amazon review of the sprint with a star-rating and description. I gave it two different star ratings; one for productivity (5\*) since the team had obviously got a lot done but a personal rating of 2 stars; because it was boring for me since I got to the sprint at the point when everything in the sprint scope was complete or close to completion with nothing to really pickup so it was pretty dead. Then we used a system of ‘Something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue’ Where you write 4 post-its each for each of the categories where

\* Something old = something we’ve been doing for a long time that needs feedback pos/neg

\* Something new = feedback on a new technique we’ve been doing or a suggestion of what we could potentially start doing

\* Something borrowed = feedback on something we have borrowed from elsewhere OR a suggestion of what we could borrow

\* Something that hasn’t gone well; everyone said the revolver deployment delays at shortbreads

20/07/2017

Today I worked on my NOMREP diffing ticket and it currently diffs and makes the JSON in some form, I just have to figure out an issue with JSON generation before I can have it properly formatted in HTML. Other than that, I also attended sprint planning for the first ~20 minutes before I had to leave to go view a potential property in dover.

This afternoon we had a workshop on selenium/nightwatch testing. This looked like a step above unit testing where the tests would check if the website behaves as expected in an actual browser. We were informed about page tests and user journeys. With page tests being a set of tests that target a single page and prove that ALL functionality works as expected. Whilst a user journey aims to prove that a single path through the website functions as expected, for example making a hotel booking for 3 guests. We were also taught about fixtures which are similar to stubs in unit testing but instead block out network requests and return a fake pre-recorded response. This prevents tests from being slow due to network latency and also removes the chance of them failing due to network failure, which wouldn’t prove the code was actually the problem.

I really enjoyed my day today, it felt like I got to make some good independent progress on the NOMREP work and expand my technical skills whilst doing so. I also found the workshop in the afternoon beneficial, it was interesting to learn more about automated testing as I’d never really seen any of it before joining HX.

I also chatted to Luke in my 1-2-1 today and he said that he’d received feedback from Ryan (API pod lead) that he was impressed with my work. Luke seemed to think that Ryan wants to keep me in the pod, which might put me in the technical area I would enjoy anyway, win win.

24/07/2017

Today we spent our time downstairs in the Call Centre. CEX apparently does this once every 2 weeks as the call centre staff are technically one of our consumers. It provides an opportunity for them to come directly to us with issues they’re facing or suggest any improvements they want.

I spent my time working on new designs for the gabble login, which is the system the CC use the most. They would see this login every day so I planned on coming up with three designs to show some of them and gather opinions. I struggle for a little while to find a third design but eventually had enough to survey the CC. Han offered to go with me since it was a bit intimidating approaching these people. She made me feel a lot more relaxed and it actually went quite well. Everyone unanimously picked the same design so that was the one that I pushed through and prepared for testing+deployment.

The afternoon was then filled with a workshop on HAPI by George Bates, who I’d previously worked with in the API pod. He described how HAPI is monolithic in it’s packaging but is actually quite modular in its design/functionality. He talked about the main areas including controllers, the supplier factory and the product factory. He then began to explain how HAPI is being broken down into smaller sub-systems, these are known as microservices. This is being done as an attempt to kill the monolithic API and keep everything as a smaller system that’s easier to maintain and work on.

Overall, I found today very productive. I managed to come up with 3 different designs and survey the CC with them so that I could provide them with a new login screen that they’d enjoy, it also brought the old page in line with our new branding styles. The workshop in the afternoon was packed with information and overloaded my brain a bit but it was all valuable knowledge. I’ll forever have a better understanding of how the systems at HX work together thanks to the detailed explanation given here, all of which will help me implement changes in an effective and efficient manner.

25/07/2017

Today I was invited by Han Cork to attend a washup about an expedite involving the MasterCard Payment Gateway. She said this was nothing to worry about and she just wanted me to attend an expedite wash-up as early as possible, because she’s heard horror stories of engineers whose first wash-up was caused by their own work. I appreciated this opportunity and got to see that the wash-ups are actually quite chilled, there isn’t any worry about who’s to blame – everyone just cares about a good solution and ensuring it doesn’t happen again.

I spent the rest of my day implementing my original design in gabble. I managed to get all of the changes into PR by the end of day, so it was ready to review in the morning.

I enjoyed my day today and really appreciated Han’s thoughtfulness in bringing me to that washup. I’m glad my first washup is out of the way and I’ve had insight into how they’re run. I was also proud of being able to get my gabble work in to PR, I’m still thriving off the enjoyment of getting work completed and closing off tickets.

**Gabble design shared and feedback in pod channel!**

[**https://cloudup.com/cG69HN1a6vi**](https://cloudup.com/cG69HN1a6vi)

27/07/2017

For this project lounge I spent some time on a website called Code Wars which Tom Price told me about. It essentially gives exercises for you to complete in NodeJs and has various difficulties to improve technical skills in a practical and fun manner. I enjoyed this.

I also had booked in for the afternoon time with Tom for him to hand over work that he’d been doing in the pod. He ran me through all of the booking history work and some email work he’d been doing in Render. This included some PRs that were awaiting review which he wanted to pass on to me, putting me in charge of them if someone requested any changes. At first this felt quite strange as I wasn’t expecting as much responsibility, luckily Han had already been in touch and told me that I just had to speak to her if the pressure of being the only Dev in the office got too much.

Today felt quite productive, I managed to expand my technical skills in the morning through exercises on Code Wars and then had a successful handover with Tom Price. I managed to pick up a lot of information about the tickets he was working on and plenty of useful knowledge I could carry on for the benefit of the pod. I’ve enjoyed stepping up and trying to absorb this info so we don’t suffer from losing the genius mind of Tom Price.

31/07/2017

Today we had day booked full of workshops, both of which were introductions to certain teams.

We started with an introduction to the data team. They taught us about different data pods within the business:

* Data-platform – Build architecture and our in-house data pipeline
* Data-products – Data on transaction view aggregation, business stats
* Insights team – Split test data and other data that comes directly from the website to them

They taught us about the complicated legacy architecture that keeps HX’s data flowing on the day to day. This batch process seemed overly complex and it involved a range of scripts that ran daily to pull data from Webp+transp -> S3 -> Talend -> Redshift to eventually be available in Looker. There is a huge reliance on this data being readily available every day as it affects many offices and stakeholder when this process goes wrong. They also told us about how they’re working to re-invent this process into a new Airflow system combined with Google’s cloud storage and BigQuery solutions. There was even more information about these systems given but it was quite hard to follow and to be honest it wasn’t hugely interesting.

After lunch we then had an introduction to Tech Foundations, something which I was a bit more excited for. We were rune through a lot of information about HX’s infrastructure including the datacenter in Maidstone. The session then turned into a lesson about containerization using Docker from Mark Fermor. This was extremely complicated and due to how much info we’d already been exposed too today this was hard to take in. Ultimately it felt like to much knowledge being chucked at us in one day.

Overall, I didn’t particularly enjoy this day. There was too much information thrown into one bundle. It’s quite hard to sit through for an entire day and still find value by the end of it. I probably didn’t benefit from the second talk as much as I could have purely because my brain was tired from the morning. I think these would have been better as separate sessions on different days.

02/08/2017

Today was my first day in the pod after Tom’s departure since I had workshops all day on Monday and Tuesday this week. Because of this I turned up 30 minutes early (8:30am) so that I had time to read through some of the prioritised backlog and get an extra grasp of what we’ll discuss; as well as reading through the notes I made from my meetings with Tom Price before he left the pod. This gave me the best possible chance of being able to properly explain Tom’s tickets to the group as I wanted to help pass his knowledge on and really get deeply integrated into the team by stepping up to the responsibilities of being the only in-office dev. During sprint planning I managed to help explain certain elements of Tom’s email PRs that I’m taking over from him as well as some of the duplicate-booking-service that we had discussed. This really helped make a better impression back into the pod that I’ve been focused and dedicated to picking up the pieces from Tom’s departure and helping the team to move on in the right direction. After the meeting I began to work on CEX-1726 which involved sending SMSs to customers when a duplicate booking is detected via a pubsub event. This was my first real chance to dig into a serious ticket in the CEX pod rather than small bitesize changes; which I really appreciated. I’m looking forward to the API work and back-end of some of the upcoming projects that the pod is taking on. This ticket took a little while to get going properly because there was a lot of dockyard-local setup to actually run micro services locally successfully. However, once done with this I managed to get the contact-service API to send me an SMS once dispatched by the duplicate-booking-service - All locally. Right now I need to fix a 404 error when dispatching the SMS through the production version of contact-service instead of a local version. Progress on this includes the fact that Tom Vance (big contributor on contact-service) noticed that the API endpoint now operates at http:/contact.dock-yard.io/sms rather than http://contact-service.dock-yard.io/sms like the documentation wrongly said. Hopefully I’ll be able to resolve the final stages of this 404 issue tomorrow morning and get SMS working through the production API endpoint.

Overall, I felt that today was a great start to my time with CEX without Tom Price. I managed to provide valuable insight into some of his tickets during the sprint planning session and I hope the pod found value in my doing this.

06/08/2017

Diary remember

Friday - unit tests; hungry hippos — unit tests were weird because my test events (noRef and singleRef) didn’t copy in phone numbers.. On Saturday I tried this but the weirdness of javascript means that using noRefEvent = sampleEvent copies the reference of sampleEvent and not a fresh copy of the data. On Sunday I fixed this by doing a json.parse(json.stringify(sampleEvent)) to copy the actual object’s data in instead of making 3 objects reference the same source of data and mutating it in ways that affected one another’s test cases. (Single, vs success) etc

- 1-2-1: apparently I say ‘good’ too much and shouldn’t be entirely focused on work and technology. I need to find a ‘topic’ of something to begin the initial steps of giving a presentation on

Weds; sprint planning - lots of estimation and not a whole lot of discussion between devs or interesting ways to plan the sprint (maybe should be in retro anyway that I couldn’t go to :( )

Early this week; workshops all day - bit of a drag and some overlap repetitiveness but some useful info

Last week - Care login and property viewings; sit-in call centre day but didn’t quite finish gabble login because of the workshop in the afternoon. (George Bates short HAPI thing and then REACT coding in the afternoon) - Thursday workshop is another CodeAcademy thing on REACT but code academy was down so we did some tic tac toe thing.

08/08/2017

9am start; spent time investigating tracking before standup. During standup talked about my meeting with Mike, Viktor and Brad due to happen at 11am and explaining the situation on Tom’s duplicate-booking-service setup being wrong since it lacks the GCLOUD environment variables to correctly log to sumo logic. This prevented us having any data for Mark about which refs are being seen as duplicates. I have since fixed this by adding the correct (base64 encoded) environment variables to the travis build and rebuilt the service. It should have been logging any duplicates through the day but I am yet to gain sumo logic access; I may push for this tomorrow with Han Cork being able to hurry IT up since it’s blocking that ticket from ever deploying. From 10->11 before the meeting me and Mike investigated and implemented a system for storing the &origin=duplicate\_booking\_sms parameter when hitting render’s MMB landing page. This is now stored in a cookie which we have accessed through a handlebars helper to script it into the cancellation page to trigger a ‘duplicate-booking-cancelled’ when the user successfully cancels a booking. The meeting at 11 then discussed where we should publish the data and what form it should have; we basically need to create a few new event schemas and toolbox’s publishing methods will take our data payload and wrap it with a few of the mandatory schema fields anyway (is\_client, service). I’ve looked into working on the schema for pre-SMS-dispatch events and just trying to figure out exactly which information will be useful to store. Me and Mike plan on keeping track of the customer via Mobile Number and Email since both should be mandatory fields for making an order and therefore should be obtainable already. At 2pm we had a meeting about planning the next phase of Terminal to Terminal where it becomes Product to Product to allow customers to switch between similar products themselves instead of just adjusting the terminal. (I was unfortunately 20 minutes late to this meeting because It hadn’t been mentioned much and it slipped my mind) This was frustrating since it left me a little behind and having to play a bit of catchup on the early information that was shared. Moving forward; me and Mike will work on making the Jira’s for this stage of T2T so that Mark can work on prioritising them. This will involve Mike making basic Jiras and then speaking with Me and Adrian to flesh them out in a more technical manner. I spent the afternoon getting kicked out of my seat by a granny because a plugged in laptop with headphones and a rucksack under the desk, ‘’looks abandoned’’ apparently. Luckily Becky spotted this and moved the entire team to a new desk instead of leaving me to move alone. Becky is great. Spent time on this desk on the schema talked about above and chatting a bit to Han and Becky. Han is still creeped out by Tom Vance having a crush on her because he came and sat with her when she sat back against a wall to help her pregnancy pains. Becky and Han then gave me some lovely advertisements about how good pregnancy is and that I should try it.

10/08/2017

Solving the duplicate events….

Request cache for booking\_ref\_[method]

Cache hit

- If method is ‘new’ or ‘cancel’

- ignore request; refresh cache timeout

- if method is ‘amend’

- if(current matches the cache’s data)

- Ignore request; refresh cache timeout

- if(doesn’t match cache’s data)

- Find which one is newest and update that into cache, also insert to the db

Only cache if the insertion to the db is successful? - Then again the duplicate events are always the same anyway so it’s not really going to make a difference than a normal failure

15/08/2017

Too much segregation in today’s planning, puts everyone context away from the current sprint and basically forces the sprint to end on Monday since today is full of meetings and everyone researching every ticket.

- Sprint planning should bring to the board a single person’s explanation of tickets

14/08/2017 – Duplicate Event Caching (testing time)

Today we had our usual stand-up at 9:30am but it was followed by a 15 minute meeting with Mark to discuss the booking-history API. Unfortunately the directors seem to be struggling to understand it's purpose and why it provides a benefit to the business, therefore he has asked us for an update on the progress and usage it will see so he can report back to them. Mike, Adrian and I all explained various benefits including customer love, and I especially talked about the recent progress I've been making. This will eventually be the one source of truth for booking information rather than having to retrieve it through CHIPs which stores it in fragmented forms; which is why it was such a big deal to ensure the data we input is clean with no more duplication issues before it goes live. I spent the day battling with the testing for this because of recent changes to the node-toolbox which are half-way completed and during the intermediate state has caused a few annoying nuances of database handling for micro-services. Oliver Rumblelow managed to help me fix this when he found a chance; it seemed to work fine for a while until late in the afternoon when I got a new but not too dis-similar error about DB access restrictions. I looked into this alone since Oli had already left but had no luck; I was already extremely frustrated with the MySQL issues I was having when running the service locally and this just made matters worse. I left work 40 minutes late and dis-satisfied that I couldn't figure out the problem before I went. I'll most likely look at this more in my personal time after this diary entry.. Although I should leave it for the day at work tomorrow; I hate leaving issues unsolved.

15/08/2017 – VERBOSE

Today I tried to look into my testing the booking history service some more and ran into issues with pubsubs having a delay locally, as well as intermittent DB ACCESS issues. This might have been fixed today by Oliver's new SQL change completion but that happened late afternoon so I haven't had a chance to update the DB details and test it yet. These issues are frustrating but the day has mostly been filled with intermittent meetings.

Starting with the backlog review which was extremely detailed and felt more like the full sprint planning session that we have tomorrow; we also then split up and every developer spent time investigating every single ticket and the technical side of their implementation. After researching, every developer spent ~30 minutes in a call discussing each ticket and writing down their technical aspects. This seemed like an extremely high level of knowledge redundancy and was rather tedious; why should every developer research every ticket? Instead we should have a few tickets each and then in sprint planning we're each responsible for explaining the tickets we have researched.

In the afternoon I brought this knowledge repetition up in our retro (review of our process) and Mark Cridland (CEX pod lead) strongly agreed. There was also retro suggestions by Jamie or Becky that developers should think more like testers. However, I argued that we shouldn't have to change our entire mindset just for that; testing scenarios should be provided by the testers before the work is being done so we know what we should factor in. It's not a developer's job to completely understand a tester's mind and be responsible for two sides of the story. Mark Cridland also strongly agreed with this, stating that that was how it used to be done a long time ago. I know that Jamie Matthews hates test scenarios so that's probably a contributing factor to why it's not being done like that anymore.

Most of my day was spent in these meetings and a bit of attempted pubsub testing in between, overall the day didn't feel extremely productive but that's what happens when there's a lot of meetings and discussions going on, especially including the preparation in between. I wish it felt more productive with more tickets being finished in the sprint rather than pulling over the booking history fixes and all of the tracking tickets. To help with this I just spent an hour or so at home making schemas for the SMS pre/post dispatch event, this puts those tickets in a blocked state until Viktor or someone from the data platform pod can verify and approve of the new schemas. It at least puts us a little closer to completion even though I'm dissappointed to be ending the sprint with unclosed tickets that belong to me; frustrating that discoveries come up from the booking-history foundation that I didn't build. Although I can understand and sympathise with Tom Price on why he thought that approach would be appropriate.

18/08/2017

Today

Slow morning - Tripapp PR got reviewed by booked mitch

Waited on Oli and tried to figure out my own issue a bit. I eventually fixed my toolbox issue by going back to the original database insert function without the logging

I still had an issue with empty ‘jError’ printouts and he helped switch it to toolbox.logger( obj first ) format to view what comes out

He also pointed out that ANY error you might as well attempt to cache and insert to the database anyway

Otherwise; do the other stuff - this allows modularity and early returns on that situation

**ALSO** he said that my insertion code etc etc needs to be inside the cache.Find callback otherwise the ordering gets all dun fucked up

21/08/2017

Now that i've ironed out the kinks of HX's 'node-toolbox', which is an in-house tool used to *simplify*the process of creating, developing and deploying micro-services. This allows us to quickly build applications from scratch rather than spending a long amount of time on initial project setup and opinionated planning disputes. It simply constructs and initialises a micro-service project, where each micro-service has smaller functionality that can be combined to make a larger network of useful tools.

Due to Oli's feedback on Friday that my code needed to be adapted to handle the asynchronous nature of NodeJs I began to implement the changes that I had planned on Friday afternoon/evening. The first step of this was to break my code down into smaller modular functions and allow them to resolve/reject as Promises. This will eventually allow me to chain all of the Promises together into one small sequential flow that is easy to read and understand, as well as taking the stress out of a-synchronicity. I found this work quite easy and it felt amazing to be finally making progress on the issue at hand rather than dealing with setup issues and project-based problems. I'm glad to have made some actual progress and I look forward to tomorrow when I will hopefully finish up what I have started and get everything running and caching smoothly.

22/08/2017

Today was our Call-Centre (CC) day where we sit downstairs in the HX call centre every other Tuesday. This allows call operators to approach us more comfortably and talk through issues they've been having in their daily workflow, after all they're a large part of who we work for when we're here to improve the customer experience as a whole; they're our second set of customers. This usually tends to be a regular day except the entire Customer Experience (CEX) pod sit together, which is quite a nice experience. We're a very friendly team so it's quite nice to be grouped up on some days.

Throughout the day I mostly just continued to progress on my duplicate event caching solution. When I first got to work it didn't seem to be working for any case, whether it was a new booking, an amended booking or a canceled booking. This was discouraging at first and kind of disappointing that my re-factor looked to have failed at first.

During the standup at 9:30am, Mark (pod lead) talked about how important it was to get this service delivered by the end of the sprint because the product owners (executives) don't really understand the benefit of it and are close to canning the project. He believes if we get it live it will be hard for them to can it and they'll begin to see the benefit when projects start making use of our data source.

This was a little bit worrying with that level of pressure when it looked like a hopeless battle from what I tested in the morning just before stand-up. However, it must have helped me to keep my focus on and get the work done because throughout the day I slowly fixed every single different case. It didn't take long to solve the new & canceled booking events because those are the most simple to handle logically. Amended bookings are harder because you need to actually identify which events contain the freshest data so they can be stored. At 17:30 I should have already been going home but I was determined to figure out the last little issue that was stoping the very last case from working. This case was for a duplicate-amend that contained different data and had a newer timestamp; meaning the current new booking is newer than the cached version and should be stored to the database. This was caused by the duplicate query promise resolving as "params.needsStoring" and then the database handler which followed in the promise chain trying to access this boolean via "params.needsStoring" but the duplicate query promise resolved a raw boolean and not an object with a .needsStoring key. After changing the initial promise to resolve the entire params object this code then worked flawlessly and I went home at about 17:45. It felt like a day filled with good progress and it seemed we were back on track for finishing this project; this was a wonderful feeling after some struggles along the way.

Lastly, on the drive home I found it strange how the "params.needsStoring" could cause issues on that very final case but not on the previous cases. However, I realised that it was because the "if (params.needsStoring)" check was evaluating false-y instead of actually false; which lead it to work correctly in the other 3 cases where it should be false anyway but not when I expect it to be true. Oh Javascript and it's quirks.

23/08/2017

I started my day by co-ordinating with Sam Smart by arranging to DEVQA the progress I had made. This is simply a testing process for code that is too difficult for the testers to test and it's easier for developers to handle it instead of trying to teach testers. I felt it would be beneficial to go other my code together and run through the tests with another pair of eyes as a bit of a sanity check.

After our daily stand-up this process took us around 2 hours to go through a full code review and slight tidy-up as well as running through every testing scenario. It was an amazing feeling when all 6 provided scenarios and cases worked as expected multiple times. I felt like I had really achieved something when such a complex problem had been solved smoothly and it seemed to work exactly as intended now. I also enjoyed the testing procedure because it was very technically involved, having to flush and check the redis cache storage through terminals and check the database for expected information. This really helped build up a wealth of understanding around the docker & dockyard process at HX for running and deploying micro-services. It feels like I am really getting up to speed with these systems now and can hold my own. This was re-assured to me the other day when Tom Nunn asked if I "had worked here in a previous life" because of how well I seemed to have picked everything up.

I spent most of the afternoon working on getting this code into a pull-request, where another developer would have to give it a final review before it's pushed into production. I arranged this with Tom Vance but he demanded that I should stick to procedure and write out full testing instructions on my pull request even if he knew the general gist of it. Since it's quite a complicated thing to test I wrote about 1000 words of testing instructions alone. Because of this I didn't get finished until about 16:30 and Tom Vance had already gone home. My only other real option of a reviewer was Tom Price and he was caught up with an expedited issue. Therefore I spoke to Mark and he agree'd that since nobody else consumes data from this service yet it would be acceptable to push it live in it's current state and come back to the review stage later.

Since it's so important to have this out before the end of the sprint we didn't want to worry about fixing the automated tests right now either. So any that were broken by my changes have now been disabled and the coverage restrictions have been disabled. This allows me to push my code to production without worrying about any failing tests on the production systems and simply get it running force-ably. Of course, this isn't the optimal route and we'll definitely need to come back to look at tests later but the timescale restrictions mean it was a necessary risk and it was calculated to be relatively small since nothing uses this service. Just after pushing it live it was time to go home.

Outside of this event caching I also had to put some time aside to send an email out to the team about the spike meeting we have tomorrow. This meeting is about re-designing the homepage that our agents use when they're booking customers' products. Currently it doesn't prominently display how to manage bookings to amend/cancel them etc. So every member of the team is expected to bring a mock-up to the meeting that I am running tomorrow in order to plan out our course of action for this. Originally Mark was planning on running it if I handled booking it in but he now has a clashing meeting and since Han doesn't work Thursdays I will be in charge of running this meeting which is a bit strange to thing and a little nerve wracking. It was re-assuring when Mark told me that he had forwarded my email on to Luke (My Manager) since he believed it was a perfect example of how this situation should have been handled and it couldn't have been said any better.

This evening I took a quick look online to check for any succesful storage of events and found nothing. I checked on sumo-logic which is a tool used to store logs of our service online and I saw that there were issues connecting to the database in production. This means that the changes that Mike and Oli had made to switch which database it connected to hasn't quite worked and will need to be tweaked slightly. I'll speak to Oli as early as possible tomorrow morning.

16/10/2017 – 1-2-1 notes

Hx new objectives

Fortnight 1

- Explore other/core systems

- Recently paired up with Adrian on work in HAPI to change how reviews are pulled back and accidentally became the go to guy for reviews for a few days. A couple different review problems were highlighted and asked of me during this work.

- Jess Everton - Asked me to investigate certain product codes that were coming back with no reviews on live trip app (was before I had deployed and it seemed my updated code would fix it anyway after checking oldcrone)

- Jackie King/Cridders - Asked to investigate why Cardiff Parking products show that there are reviews but won't actually pull them back when you open the modal. This was highly important since we just signed a contract with Cardiff and it turned out that HAPI wasn't stripping out all product prefix codes correctly, meaning the 'NC' prefix that Cardiff products had would fail a lookup in oldcrone where the reviews are stored against a non-prefixed product ID.

(https://github.com/holidayextras/hapi/pull/2060)

- Also reflected my changes in the reviews-service so that it would be ready to exactly match HAPI when it becomes used fully. I also raised the prefix issue with Joseph Norman and thanks to that he has now figured out a lot of the earlier issues the service had since he had missed some of the reviews functionality in HAPI.

- Some really basic trip app stuff: https://github.com/holidayextras/tripapplite/pull/6847

- Contribute more to technical discussions/conversations/planning

- Not really had any big discussions, slightly happens in day to day conversation with Sam but nothing particularly key

- https://monosnap.com/file/6nPimtkEQ2CSF7nC9UX8CGvLWwUuFN.png ?

- Improve mindfulness/self-reflection

- Nah

17/10/2017 – Post Onboarding regrets

Today was our first call center day in a while and we due to the HARP issues and different things that came up. After our previous successful visit and chat with the CC staff we didn't do much talking this time.

I spent the day looking into the duplicate booking dashboard further and did manage to find a fix a couple of bugs that caused rendering problems. These have been difficult to tackle with Oliver Rumblelow (biggest knowledge of micro-services) being on annual leave for 2 weeks; how inconsiderate.

I then had my 1-2-1 with Luke Hansell after lunch where we spoke about how things have been going since onboarding. I regrettably had to tell him that my previously full diary had become bare and that I've gotten a little lazy on collecting feedback now that I've onboarded. We spoke about ways we could try to target this and now I'll hopefully be back on track with this journal as well as continuing to write about personal developments during the day; which will help me reflect on soft skills and things I don't notice usually.

After talking to Luke and being encouraged back into my old habits Louis Pryer and Jess Everton of the Parking (booking) pod approached Mark and I. They had problems with Tripapp failing to retrieve any reviews and wondered if it was related to the recent changes I'd been making to the way reviews are calculated and retrieved. It turned out it was because of some silly duplication of code across platforms. To put it simply: HAPI, which is in charge of fetching reviews, was removing 2 letter prefixes from the product codes which are simply used to identify what system they were made in. However, when Tripapp was requesting reviews it was also removing the 2 letter prefixes, meaning in certain complex scenarios we would end up removing the first 2 letters twice. Which obviously leaves an invalid product code and the reviews couldn't be found. Louis and I quickly agree'd a fix on both systems and I pushed mine into a PR very quickly for his review. Although we decided to merge this in to production tomorrow since HAPI builds can take up to an hour.

I feel the day was relatively productive and I quite enjoyed having responsibilities over the review changes even if I don't like when errors occur. It's important to see why these things happen and keep them in mind for the future; and think of ways to centralise this sort of thing to avoid it in future.

**Personal developments**

Today felt like a good day for my social skills within the pod since we were all sitting together. This is obviously an important part of being able to communicate with the team.

I also feel that I have improved slightly with my assertive language. This was clear when Jamie had some issues testing my work and throughout helping him and providing solutions I spoke with certainty. For instance, telling him "that's caused by caching" instead of speaking with my usual habits of prefixing everything with "I think...". This is something I brought up in my onboarding review and I really want to improve my use of language to give firmer instructions/opinions/contributions that sound like I believe in them.

26/10/2017

Went to look at hammertime, got pulled into a stupid backlog call, then helping germans in a groupchat then a meeting then investigating then making a ticket then doing the work and trying to figure out why lang is EN.....

31/10/2017

Did a bit of work on Kiril's PR, mike's PR but barely anything. Now looking at SSG pages, trying to talk to SEO but they're mostly gone home

17/11/2017

Got pulled into a random meeting with Nathan Scott and Sam Smart today since apparently some stuff me and Sam complained about Jamie in the office came off as tester-hatred and he wanted to see how we feel about the process and understand our problems.

22/11/2017 – Don’t look back in anger

The last 2 weeks

* Cautions
  + Be more careful with what I say
  + Take longer to think of who might be impacted, who's around?
  + Time, place, people - What is appropriate in the situation?
  + Bring problems up with the person themselves in a fair environment
    - Good points:
      * I took feedback on board quickly, talking to Jamie straight after the incidents and seeking a solution and re-assuring him that I didn't mean to offend him. We both agree'd that we know that, we have a similar attitude and he understands the way I am
      * 40 Minute call
      * Messaging him about scenarios
      * Sharing my unit test scenarios with him, explaining the differences
* My attitude towards tickets needs improving
  + Probably settled in too much, being too honest, or too vocal even though I'd still do the tickets
* Actual approach to work is still strong, always communicating with people when I need to,
  + been a bit better at approaching Kiril/Adrian and calling them sometimes
  + (previously talked that I don't really seek their help too often)
* Need to get more involved with stuff outside of sprint work
  + Expedites
  + Projects

Find a stretch - talk to some people who hold it and message Luke

29/11/2017

After being forced to rush out the FAQlink work yesterday I accidentally left in a bad test URL in the config (http://take.ms/8oeSd) - Putting out a fix for this as early as I possibly can but it still feels silly that I let it happen. Just purely from the rush and pressure that was on the ticket yesterday in order for it to be ready to demo to Matt.

08/12/2017

Today I spent the day teaching a new guy the ropes of CEX.

Jordan Claque is his name and he spent the entire day shadowing me from about 10:30am onwards. We started having a chat with Sam and I, both helping him get to know all of the projects that CEX has. It was a bit awkward at first trying to scramble for things to explain and say but eventually we sat down together and I talked him through the work I've been doing and we loosely pair programmed some of the work - Using his input for validation and sometimes coding improvements (input cookies check instead of a callback param)

He will be joining this pod so it's good to hit the ground running and start building a bond at the early stages, as well as helping him get to grips with the projects we have. Towards the afternoon we found a bitesize ticket for him to do: CEX-2025 - To add a "current product" title to MMB's P2P page we've been working on. I helped get him set up on Adrian's branch and then tried to let him find his feet a little, answering some questions as he went. It took a little bit of time but he found the right area and made the change. I told him to use Jamie for advice on UXUI and they made a prettier design with a paneled header. We then spent time trying to get an automated test working for this but struggled with bad re-mock dates since the branch was so old. Some of this will be automatically fixed when we merge master back in and take Sam's recent changes. However, I feel that it really helped me notice how far my social abilities have come to be able to spend an entire day with someone new and not really struggle to talk much and survive the day whilst being productive and teaching him as much as I could. I don't think I would have been near this confident or comfortable to help guide someone so much had I not had 5 months experience at HX. I also noticed that I used a lot more assertive language and prompts now; which is something I mentioned in my previous review - that my language was too wishy washy and unconfident. I believe that has made a change for the better nowadays and I confidently lead this newcomer to a reasonable understanding of CEX and some of our systems.

11/12/2017

Today was quite an eventful Monday, it started off quite normally - Just trying to write tests and helping Jordan a little bit. It was also extremely snow-y but none of it 'pitched'. Anyway, early in the morning there was an expedite on Render that I got a little bit involved in since I set out to in my objectives with Luke. I mainly helped Rosie/Sam investigate and it was caused by an issue where Slav merged his HAPI work before his Render work by mistake and left the payment page broken. This prevented customers making bookings on some older browsers as well as the partner sites that use Render.

Throughout the afternoon we were having a lot of discussion about how to handle the requests to the Priority Pin service on Heroku. It's hosted externally on Herokuapp and I asked Adrian to check with Pod-PII (Personally identifiable information team who fixed previous data breach issues) and the approach seemed a bit off. Upon some further investigation we found that our changes to allow the Manage-My-Booking (MMB) pages to use the service had actually put customer data at risk. We were storing their booking reference and user\_ext\_id (identifies the user) against the priority pin which is publicly accessible. This means that any person (or scraping bot) would be able to pull back this information and be able to View/Amend and even Cancel customer's bookings. Obviously this is a huge security flaw that we'd introduced via Render. However after a bit more investigation Tripapp was also storing customer emails against these numbers and could have been exploited by members of the public for potentially 3 years. At this point our discussion got pretty involved and the entire Pod joined a call to resolve the issues. We ended up deleting all current entries in the Herokuapp database so that all currently stored information was removed from public visibility. We also then put in a pull request into the Priority Pin service to disable all of it's functionality - prevent generation of numbers (and therefore the storage of customer info) and re-culled the database once this was live. Looking back, I knew it was a publicly accessible source of information but hadn't realised that we were storing such important information there. I always thought we only stored basic information about the customer's search etc so that the CC could provide contextualised help. We'll hopefully move the service all to a micro-service instead which will put the features under the .dockyard-io domain which is already internally secure. This is something we discussed at this sprint planning and I pushed for over the christmas period where we're not allowed to deploy anything big anyway. We'll see tomorrow what happens to this sprint since it was all based on the customer number and now that is on a hiatus. Fun fun!

JANUARY REACHED

03/01/2018

After a bad sleep and barely waking up on time I had to be in a 4 hour meeting from 9am to 1pm without haviing breakfast. This felt quite long but Mike and myself did a good job of keeping the process moving with presenting tickets and running the plan-it poker since Nathan was away for.

http://take.ms/aMSjR

Right after the meeting and a lunch break there was a euro kinda expedite that Sam, Rosie, Stobie and I got involved with investigating to see why there was an issue in the payframe rejecting seemingly valid cards in the german CC (non-customer facing). Then had my 1-2-1 with Luke but lost all of my prep time to the expedite so winged it a bit but still had a few things to talk about.

Then towards the late afternoon Mike wanted a hand with merging in 4 of Adrian's PRs for the customer number work to make it secure again. We merged in Tripapp and Render successfully before merging in the Priority-Pin work which caused the Heroku app to crash a couple of times and fail requests. We investigated up until about 6:20pm before we decided to revert it all out since there was no obvious solution and deployments/reverts are still going to take time to get done. We ended up leaving around 7pm

http://take.ms/raRnZ