

# ALEX SPURLING

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SOFTWARE DEVELOPER

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## Profile

I like to build software to the highest possible quality and that people *want* to use. I believe in constantly looking for the tools and processes that can make that happen.

I am a strong supporter of automation, short iteration cycles and monitoring of analytics.

I have over 5 years' experience working in Agile teams developing Java web applications but am looking to broaden my experience to new languages and problem domains.

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## Technical

java jee jersey oracle mysql linux sql xml spring guice  
haskell go clojure scala ruby SVN git maven TDD android

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## Experience

### Playfish - Server Side Developer

2010-Current

Playfish is the UK's leading developer of social games. I was responsible for developing the server side Java web application technology for games handling up to 10m unique players per day.

#### Game Development

As a server developer, I worked on two major games, Restaurant City and The Sims Social, at their peak reaching 5m and 10m daily players respectively. The Playfish architecture is heavily service-oriented and hosted entirely by Amazon Web Services. I was responsible for developing high quality features in collaboration with game designers, PMs, QA and other development teams.

- Built monitoring page for The Sims Social to visualise the real time performance of our games.
- Improved performance by analysing thread dumps, heap dumps and garbage collection statistics.
- Released shared code as maven modules such as common game features and clients for game services.
- Automated the Maven build process by writing a command line script in Ruby saving hundreds of hours of developer time.
- Modularised the game code for Restaurant City by converting the build process from ant to Maven.

#### Game Content Management System

The Playfish Contentment Management System is a tool designed to speed up iteration cycles and eliminate errors for all our games' content. Built on top of the hierarchical database Jackrabbit, it supports locks, transactions and branching for game content data.

- Helped to design a clean and consistent REST API for clients to interact with the server.
- Implemented REST services on the server side using Jersey.

#### Evangelism / Training

- Presented an introduction to git
  - Presented an overview of OSGi
  - Ran training sessions on git for SVN users over 5 weeks
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### Markit - Associate Developer

2007-2010

Markit's primary business is the calculation of prices for derivative financial instruments by the aggregation of prices provided by banks. I was part of the development team of their CDS product and starting in 2008, the Clearing service.

#### Clearing Project

- Lead developer from the start of our very high profile Clearing service to provide banks with reference prices for CDS and credit index instruments.
- Developed a web application to receive and process XML price feeds based on Java, JEE, Spring and Oracle.

- Developed a Java algorithm to calculate CDS prices and trades from contributed bid/ask prices using a simulated [auction process](#).
- Mentored and guided other team members in their general development practices.
- Aided the project lead with planning, estimating and architecture and design decisions.

During the project, I suggested and implemented many improvements to our development process such as:

- Moved build process to [Maven](#).
- Created [RPM](#) distribution mechanism.
- Automated our database upgrade process with a perl script.
- Implemented continuous deployment to our development server using Maven, [Hudson](#) and some custom deployment scripts.
- Created a suite of regression tests with [TestNG](#) which would run automatically after each successful deployment.

#### Other Projects

- Created a batch task to calculate composite [loan credit index](#) prices (aggregation of contributed prices).
- Re-architected our caching mechanism to give clients access to historical reports.
- Implemented a historical record for client mappings (i.e. the data a client is subscribed to) to allow reports to be generated for past dates.

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#### Rubric Inc. Technical Engineer

2003-2006 (Easter / Summer)

[Rubric](#) is a software localisation company that translates software for clients such as Toshiba and Adobe. I worked as a technical engineer.

- Followed and wrote test scripts for testing and reporting bugs.
- Responsible for taking screenshots in translated versions of software for use in documentation.
- Responsible for recording screencasts of translated software with Adobe's Captivate software.
- Wrote a Visual Basic tool for analysing web logs.
- Installed operating systems and software in up to 20 different languages.
- General technical support.

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#### Education

##### University of Cardiff Computer Science BSc

2003-2006

- Graduated with 1st class honors (79% overall mark).
- Won the LogicaCMG prize for best [final year project](#).
- Won the British Computer Society prize for excellent first year performance.

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##### Berkhamsted Collegiate School A Levels

2001-2003

- Physics — B
- Maths — C
- Chemistry — C
- French (AS) — A

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#### Projects

Some projects that I've worked on in my spare time are publicly viewable:

- Android Restaurant Search app: [source](#)
- Nationwide OFX download tool: [project page](#).
- Mandelbrot fractal renderer written in Clojure: [tutorial](#), [source](#).