

# 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 use of analytics detect problems and drive development.

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 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](#).