

Ben Plotke

Skills

Python, Linux, Git, Sass, Javascript, MySQL, SQL, PHP, R, Splunk, Scikit-learn, Scope, Cosmos, C#, .NET MVC5, Test Driven Development, Visual Studio, Java, C, GDB, LaTeX

About

A year and a half ago I took a break from tech. I am now refreshed and excited again. Sadly, it seems I am coming back at a bad time. None the less, I am hopeful you will consider me for an interview.

Work Experience

Microsoft: Bing Backend Dev, 2018-2019

My job was to develop Cortana answers. This involved everything from scraping and data mining, to triggering and testing. But my primary responsibility was developing and maintaining the actual voice responses.

I was often up against poor documentation, buggy and slow internal tools, and bespoke languages. Overcoming these challenges provided the most enjoyable parts of the job, reverse engineering the technologies and writing new performant tools for analyzing and modifying code.

For example, the main tool for visualizing and editing the Cortana internal language was unable to handle larger files, taking a minute for every GUI operation and 24 hours to run regression tests. In spite of little documentation and unavailable source code, I wrote a replacement tool that performed operations instantly. Adding additional tool features now became possible. One feature I added identified dead code paths. Deleting 6000 lines of Cortana code in one fell commit was immensely satisfying.

HP: Full Stack Developer, 2017 – 2018

- Implemented web pages to match design using **SCSS** and **Razor views**
- Planned and executed incremental refactors of **MVC controllers**
- Employed **TDD** to insure high quality code
- Tested and explored endpoints with **Postman** before incorporating into code
- Setup and configured web applications on **IIS**
- Wrote **feature tests** using Selenium, headless Chrome, and HttpMock

Conversica: Integrations Intern, 2016 – 2017

- Transitioned integration processes to horizontally **scalable thread pool**. The new system reduced server load, scaled to handle spikes, and allowed us to guarantee customers faster processing times
- Developed and maintained web UIs for customer success team using **Yii**
- Crafted performant **MySQL** queries with careful use of indices
- Helped manage over 50 integrations including FTP, SOAP, and REST

Tune: Data Science Intern, Summer 2015

- Coordinated with many teams and departments to gather reports, endpoints, databases, and pertinent read permissions
- Used **R** to generate data visualizations for labeling and presentation
- Wrote a **Python** script for automatically fetching data from databases and **AWS S3** with caching to disk to speed fetches in subsequent runs
- Used **R** packages to do robust statistical analysis
- Crafted a **Python** script for queuing and launching pipelined tasks while remaining within memory constraints

North Seattle College: Math/Computer Science Tutor, 2013 – 2014

- Tutored math and computer science in the general tutoring room

- Privately tutored computer science

Education

- **Western Washington University:** BS in Computer Science, 2017