**Sarah Howlett**

sarah@saravalkyrie.me – 01135126886 | 07425313830

32 Woodnook Drive, Leeds, LS16 6DZ

**PERSONAL STATEMENT**

Insightful, results-driven IT professional with notable success directing & implementing a broad range of enterprise IT deployments while participating in analysing and implementing solutions in support of business and customer objectives in time-sensitive environments. Excel at providing comprehensive first-time fix, systems analysis, and full lifecycle project management. Hands-on experience leading design, testing and support of enterprise projects. Outstanding team leader; able to coordinate and build relationships with all areas of the business to deliver a unified IT strategy to deliver on business KPI’s while managing, motivating, and guiding support teams.

Areas of Expertise:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Network and Systems Security * Research and Development * Regulatory Compliance * Cost Benefits Analysis | * Data Integrity / Disaster Recovery * Contingency Planning * Team Leadership * ITIL |

**Technical Proficiencies**

* Platforms: Windows 7/8/10 Server 2008 R2/Server 2012 R2/Server 2016/2019, MS Exchange Server 2007/2010/2013,2016 and 2019, MS Lync 2010/2013, MS Hyper-V, MS SQL Server 2008 R2/2012, VMware ESX/vSphere, Vyatta Network OS, Ubiquiti UniFi/AirMax/mFi, Barracuda Networks, 3CX Phone System, Watchguard XTM, Watchguard XCS, Sophos XG
* Networking: LAN / WAN Administration, VPN, SQL, ISCSI

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

**Head of Live Services April 2019 – Oct 2019**

VTR

Leeds, UK

Recruited to lead the Live services team during a challenging period following a disaster recovery for an ecommerce firm.

Responsibilities:

* Resolve service desk tickets with issues ranging from 1st line through to 3rd line.
* Review existing IT topology and supplier contracts
* Provide support and assistance to staff members and customers
* Design and deploy a high-performance Windows 10 imaging solution and images for the customer environment.
* Recover the entire infrastructure from a full data loss scenario following drive and backup system failures.
* Liaise with the insurance provider to investigate and move the data loss claim forward providing technical logs, reports and architecture diagrams.
* Comply with PCI-DSS in all system designs from design to implementation.

**IT Contractor (Dixons Kings Academy) Jan 2019 – March 2019**

Dixons Academies Trust - www.dixonsat.com

Bradford, UK

Recruited to provide 1st to 3rd Line support during a challenging transition period at Kings academy

Responsibilities:

* Resolve service desk tickets with issues ranging from 1st line through to 3rd line.
* Provide advice and guidance to staff & Group IT
* Provide support and assistance to staff members and students
* Design and deploy a high-performance Windows 7 image for staff and students
* Setup a new MDT system at the academy
* Deploy several POC trials of windows 10 for staff and students
* Provide proactive support for students and staff during lessons
* Clean & Organise the IT Suite

**IT Contractor (Service Desk) Dec 2018 – Jan 2019**

Direct Voice & Data - www.direct-voiceanddata.com/

Skelmanthorpe, UK

Recruited to provide 2nd & 3rd line support during a backlog within the department.

Responsibilities:

* Resolve service desk tickets with issues ranging from 1st line through to 3rd line.
* Provide advice and guidance to customers where required.
* Provide support and assistance to staff members within the sales & support team.
* Monitor & maintain proactive stance using the remote management and monitoring solution.

**Infrastructure Engineer – Infrastructure & DB team Aug 2018 – Oct 2018**

BTL Group Ltd - [www.btl.com](http://www.btl.com)

Shipley, West Yorkshire

BTL we’re seeking a multi-skilled engineer with a view to transition to a DevOps role following a period of growth and expansion of their live services team supporting their in-house SaaS exam platform.

Responsibilities:

* Maintain, support & develop the company’s azure cloud infrastructure
* Develop a standardised design for the companies Surpass platform for clients
* Provide advice, support and guidance to the service desk
* Resolve 3rd line systems tickets
* Update and deploy new patches to the companies SaaS platform
* Complete a full cost analysis of the azure platform spending and provide recommendations on improvement.
* Provide SQL DBA support as required.
* Design & Develop an internal tool for the team to prepare and deploy specific patches to the SaaS platform.

**Senior Customer Engineer - Mobile June 2018**

CompuCenter

UK Wide

Working with CompuCenter on a major uk client rollout of Windows 10

Responsibilities:

* Liaise with senior staff on site conditions and readiness for deployment
* Perform site audits to ensure data accuracy for deployment
* Ensure safe handling of equipment at all times
* Work with end-users to ensure migrations are completed and issues are resolved.

**IT Systems Engineer Mar 2017 – Nov 2017**

QA Ltd - [www.qa.com](http://www.qa.com)

Leeds, West Yorkshire

I originally joined QA as a contractor when another member of their team left the business, initially on a 3 month contract, I joined them as permanent staff in May 2017.

Responsibilities:

* Maintain, support & develop the company messaging environment (Exchange 2013)
* Maintain and support the company datacentres (On Prem) and site servers.
* Provide advice, support and guidance to the service desk
* Resolve 3rd line systems tickets
* Resolve & manage cybersecurity security incidents
* Design a geo-redundant load-balancing system for exchange as a TMG replacement project.
* Develop, Test and deploy PowerShell scripts for the business IT team.
* Liaise with high-level staff with technical faults and change requests.
* Adhere to ISO:27001

**(Contractor) Service & Infrastructure Specialist Mar 2016 – Dec 2016**

ShearsbyHill Computers Ltd - [www.sh-computers.com](http://www.sh-computers.com/)

York, North Yorkshire

SHC approached me to work with them as the principal Infrastructure SME during business launch phase until transition to larger premises which is currently on-going. I was responsible for the business IT Strategy and Design and implementation of the appropriate solutions.

Responsibilities:

* Design & implement full business IT architecture for Ecommerce operations and internal systems management.
* Design & implement a N+1 Redundant Hyper-V environment
* Design & implement a Unified communications solution involving Skype for Business, 3CX, Fax & 4G
* Provide ongoing support to the director and lower level staff in the use and benefits of UC infrastructure
* Maintain & Test business continuity
* Respond to outages with suppliers & other 3rd parties.
* Maintain regulatory requirements (Data protection Act, PCI-DSS)

**Electrical Training July 2015 – Feb 2016**

**(Contractor) Skype for Business SME April 2015 – June 2015**

Northumbrian Water Ltd - [www.nwl.com.uk](http://www.nwl.com.uk/)

Pity Me, Durham

NWL approached me to work with them as the principal Lync consultant for their Lync 2013 POC., the overall project was to upgrade the current Lync 2013 POC to a high-availability installation with support for Enterprise Voice.

Responsibilities:

* Investigate the current state of the Lync 2013 Infrastructure and recommend changes to support the planned usages
* Take ownership of the Lync 2013 deployment, provide High level designs and configuration of the Lync Installation
* Deploy Enterprise Voice as part of a POC trial
* Investigate and Deploy Skype For Business Server 2015 once stability of the current infrastructure is confirmed via a UAT

**(Contractor) Polycom Engineer October 2014**

ITEC -[www.itec-is.com](http://www.itec-is.com/)

Manchester, UK

ITEC approached me to install and configure a Polycom HDX 8000 series system for a leading retail brand in Manchester.

Responsibilities:

* Meet with the client to provide resource during the installation, acting as the sole source of advice and guidance on the polycom solution.
* Test the system using manufacture provided endpoints & with one of the clients contacts
* Train the end user on basic operation & positioning of the system
* Provide sufficient technical information to the MSP for on-going support & maintenance of the system post implementation

**(Contractor) HP Technical Design & Implementation Manager September 2014 – October 2014**

ITEC -[www.itec-is.com](http://www.itec-is.com/)

Essex, UK

ITEC approached me to work with them as the principal TDIM for one of their clients, the overall project was to Design and deploy a new 10Gb HP comware network to support the company’s expansion

Responsibilities:

* Meet with the client to provide resource during the technical meetings, acting as the sole source of advice and guidance on the network solution.
* Liaise with all parties
* Provide sufficient technical information to the MSP for on-going support & maintenance of the system post implementation
* Provide resource to assist with the deployment of HP Intelligent Management Center to manage and monitor the new HP networking infrastructure.

**(Contractor) HP Wireless & LAN Solutions Engineer September 2014**

Dimension Data - [www.dimensiondata.com](http://www.dimensiondata.com/)

Enfield, UK

Dimension Data once again contacted me to configure and install a HP MSM 775zl wireless services module and configure the HP switches as part of the Phase one installation for an academy school in Enfield

Responsibilities:

* Work with multiple contractors & clients across multiple sites to resolve technical issues relating to the deployment & design of the new networks. Including onsite support whilst they are installing their own equipment.
* Complete network documentation accurately and within agreed timescales with the project manager for delivery to the client.

**Contractor (IT Services Department) June 2014 – July 2014**

Shelter - [www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk/)

Sheffield, UK

Recruited to provide 1st & 2nd line support during a major rollout across the charity, Ensured accurate ITIL practices during daily duties on the service desk and routed and resolved tickets where possible I also maintained a high First contact resolution rate during the contract.

Responsibilities:

* During my first few weeks in the role I noticed a trend relating to tickets & calls regarding slow or unstable office 2013 installations, I began to investigate this and discovered it was taking an extended amount of time (10-15 minutes) for outlook to load. After checking the Office telemetry reporting tools and the PC event logs it became apparent that the root cause was the Microsoft Dynamics CRM plugin. There was a mix of 2011, 2013 & 2013 Update 1 versions rolled out across user PC’s. I began with a small test group of five users and removed all versions of the CRM outlook plugin and installed the latest version, then recreated the outlook profiles for the users. This resolved the performance issue and provided a moral boost for staff who were unhappy with the CRM 2013 migration.
* During my time in the role apart from the outlook issues with office there was also a high number of reports relating to crashes and application lockup’s, again using the Office telemetry reporting tools and the event viewer I found that the root cause of 99% of all the cases was either accessing a network file or a dll file which from experience I knew was the Intel Integrated graphics driver. I quickly discovered that Graphics acceleration & the default trust center settings were in use, by deactivating graphics acceleration and manually setting the trust center settings to trust network documents the issue was resolved.

**(Contractor) Hyper-V Platform Technical Design Manager February 2014 – March 2014**

ITEC -[www.itec-is.com](http://www.itec-is.com/)

Slough, UK

ITEC approached me to work with them as the principal Hyper-V TDM for one of their clients, the overall project was to Design and deploy a private cloud solution to support a multi-tenant Lync 2013 Deployment & AD Resource forest.

Responsibilities:

* Meet with the client to provide resource during the technical meetings, acting as the sole source of advice and guidance on the Hyper-V Platform.
* Liaise with all parties
* Take ownership of the Platform design, provide all the initial High level designs and configuration of the Hyper-V Hosts.
* Take ownership of the Storage infrastructure which included to HP P2000 G3 iSCSI SAN arrays, MSL 2402 Tape Library and two HP A5500 Switches
* Provide sufficient technical information to the MSP for on-going support & maintenance of the system post implementation

**(Contractor) Lync/Exchange 2013 Consultant August 2013 – April 2014**

Dimension Data - [www.dimensiondata.com](http://www.dimensiondata.com/)

UK Wide

Dimension Data approached me to work with them as the principal Lync consultant for one of their academic clients, the overall project was to upgrade the schools three sites to utilize the latest technologies including Lync & Exchange 2013 and Cisco Unified Communication Manager.

Responsibilities:

* Meet with the client to provide resource during the pre-sales technical meeting, acting as the sole source of advice and guidance on the Lync 2013 product.
* Take ownership of the Lync 2013 deployment, provide all the initial High level designs and configuration of the Lync Installation
* Take ownership of the Exchange 2013 Unified Messaging deployment, working with the Dimension Data specialist to integrate the CUCM system.
* Provide sufficient technical information to the School’s MSP for on-going support & maintenance of the system post implementation

**(Contractor) Network Configuration & Deployment Engineer March 2013 – August 2013**

Dimension Data - [www.dimensiondata.com](http://www.dimensiondata.com/)

UK Wide

I initially began working with the business as a HP Network Engineer to complete a Wi-Fi network deployment for a community centre in London, this involved traveling to the site in London to complete the configuration of all the switches, Wi-Fi controller, access points and basic configuration of the Cisco ASA Firewall. Due to my performance on this project I have been working with them since on multiple projects including the deployment of a HP Network at a Power plant/Incinerator in Runcorn.

Responsibilities:

* Work with multiple contractors & clients across multiple sites to resolve technical issues relating to the deployment & design of the new networks. Including onsite support whilst they are installing their own equipment.
* Complete network documentation accurately and within agreed timescales with the project manager for delivery to the client.
* Post-Implementation, I was contacted to troubleshoot performance & provide a solution for monitoring the network by the new MSP that took over after implementation I decided to utilize a remote installation of HP IMC in a VM Environment I provided off site with redundant connectivity into the network. The performance issue was then identified and rectified.

**(Contractor) HP On-board Administrator August 2013**

ITEC - [www.itec-is.com](http://www.itec-is.com/)

UK Wide

Short Term contract to assist with the deployment of a HP C-Class Blade Chassis, HP On-board Administrator & HP Flex-Fabric networking.

Responsibilities:

* Complete initial configuration of the HP On-board Administrator Modules, including firmware updates & network configuration
* Complete configuration of the HP Flex-Fabric management system, including firmware updates & network configuration.
* Implement Firmware Management on the Cassis, Blades & on all installed modules.

**Contractor (IT Services Department) January 2013 – March 2013**

Benenden Healthcare Society - [www.benenden.co.uk](http://www.benenden.co.uk/)

York, UK

Recruited to provide 2nd & 3rd line support during a staff shortage within the department, Ensured accurate Process management for system builds & rollouts. Provided monitoring and troubleshooting on the new Avaya IP Telephony system in partnership with the supplier. Produced accurate diagrams of the companies’ server cabinets. Installed & provisioned workstations and network points for a newly refurbished section of the office.

Responsibilities:

* The head of finance was using setup using two desktops as the current team was unable to migrate her applications to windows 7 while some of her applications required windows 7. After gathering an inventory I discovered that the problem applications were Office 2007 (Required for some IBM Analytics plugins) and Infor 10 SunSystems. I managed to successfully build a Windows 7 Machine with both Office 2007 & Office 2010 and all of the required finance applications. This resulted in her being able to use a single machine and was a great success for the department.
* After a major power failure the voicemail server failed to come back on-line, after some initial diagnostics I determined that the system board had failed, the supplier provided an SLA of 48 hours for an engineer & parts to be sent to site. Using my knowledge of HP equipment I checked the warranty for the server myself. After speaking with HP an engineer and parts were sent to site in 4 hours, I supervised the repair out of hours and brought the system back online.
* Within the first few days on site I was advised by one of their IT staff that key members of the team were unable to access exchange using ActiveSync on their mobile devices, after speaking with the staff member that performed the exchange 2010 migration I determined that they had not set the correct security settings on the user accounts and resolved the issue.

**3rd Line Helpdesk Analyst February 2012 – August 2012**

SouthPoint International

Leeds, UK

Promoted to lead 3rd line Analyst for the server infrastructure arm of the business. Ensured accurate pre-production testing for MS Exchange, MS System Center, and MS Lync upgrades. To liaise with external providers to arrange suitable project delivery deadlines. To complete site visits to install equipment and software for customers, whilst providing “go-live” support. Average calls handled per day 15-35.

Responsibilities:

* Designed and implemented the Windows Server 2003 R2 & Windows XP Migration to Windows Server 2008 R2 and Windows 7 respectively, this was a staged migration that involved the implementation of the server environment first to support the new System Center platform followed by the Windows 7 Migration.
* Designed and implemented customer call-centre support procedures and customer solution design strategy for sales teams.
* Worked with the internal operations team to implement a twelve hour datacentre migration, including service switch over from the old London based facilities. I was responsible for the MS Exchange & VMware migration.
* Designed and implemented the MS System Center 2012 deployment to follow ITIL, MOM Framework, and ISO27001 guidelines.

**Freelance Consultant December 2010 – February 2012**

Worldwide

Working on multiple projects for a range of companies utilising multiple technologies and platforms ranging from on-going system administration roles to full blown private cloud deployments.

Notable projects:

* On-Going maintenance and redesign of infrastructure for a Canadian venture capital startup, the previous incumbent had not built the infrastructure correctly and the issues were now preventing the business growing, a full redesign of Active Directory, Exchange, SharePoint and the network edge and implementation.
* Lync 2010 Enterprise Voice deployment, brought in for an Indian call-center provider to take over architecting and implementation of a new Lync 2010 deployment utilizing Enterprise voice for internal communications and the call center.
* Office network re-design, An independent finance broker required a new office wireless & wired network after discussion of the objectives I implemented a HP wired LAN and a Ubiquiti wireless LAN with 802.1x authentication for compliance with the security requirements of the industry
* Shared property network installation, hired by the homeowner to design and install a solution to ensure fair usage of the internet connectivity for all the tenants, using a custom built pc to serve as a Vyatta router to implement traffic management & HP switching and ubiquiti wireless to provide wired and wireless connectivity. queries

**CPP July 2009 – December 2010**

York, UK

Originally hired as a telesales agent for a pilot project for the business, the project was an overall success with me receiving a permanent contract with the company to continue with the project and assist developing the role as necessary. Upon my departure in 2010 I was the only remaining member of the original pilot and I was being developed as a systems trainer and call coach.

Responsibilities:

* Meet or Exceed business KPI’s for sales performance during the pilot telesales actives.
* Assist with the development of successful call scripts to enhance the performance of new and existing staff members.
* Work with the data & compliance teams to ensure regulatory compliance and accuracy of systems data provided to staff.
* Actively take part in the initial training process of new starters including but not limited to sales training, systems training and initial call coaching.

**EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Professional Certifications**   * Microsoft Licensing Sales Expert * Microsoft Licensing Sales Specialist * Microsoft Licensing Sales Lite * HSE Operatives Environment Test * HSE Managers & Professionals Test * Mental Health Awareness * Fire Marshall | **Professional Affiliations**   * Institute of Customer Service * CSCS Card Holder  (Computer Systems installer) * DBS Check - Enhanced |

**PERSONAL INTERESTS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Photography * Motorsport * Airsoft * Economics | * Pool * Paintball * Politics |

**REFERENCES**

References are available on request.