|  |
| --- |
| Blackberry ltd |
| Work Placement Report |
| 15/06/14 – 15/08/14 |
|  |
| **Kiran Patel** |
| **8/8/2014** |

|  |
| --- |
| This document reviews and reflects on my Internship at Blackberry Ltd through the Widening Participating Scheme at Brunel University. |

Contents

[Acknowledgements 2](#_Toc395790472)

[Introduction 2](#_Toc395790473)

[Marketing 2](#_Toc395790474)

[Main Task 2](#_Toc395790475)

[Conclusion 4](#_Toc395790476)

## Acknowledgements

## Introduction

Blackberry Ltd is a worldwide provider for secure and reliable software for industrial applications. The firm’s products are used worldwide for personal and commercial use. Blackberry provides organisations and governments alike with the Blackberry Enterprise Service; A middleware software package well known for its high end to end encryption. The firm has locations based all around the globe but was has its HQ in Waterloo, Canada.

## Marketing

BlackBerry Ltd is better known for their handsets commercially to end users however their main and larger market includes enterprise users. BlackBerry provides enterprise services to organisations and boasts about its high level end to end encryption. As a consequence of the reliability and security of the services they provide many governments and businesses have adopted the company’s services and handsets for corporate use. BlackBerry also owns QNX, a Unix-like real-time operating system used in all BlackBerry 10 Devices and also in the majority of In-Car Entertainment systems. For a few years the company dived into the consumer market with the growing popularity of BlackBerry devices at the time. However due to the increased popularity of other manufacturers in recent years the company’s market share has declined. BlackBerry stands out from its competitors with its end to end encryption and reliability.

BlackBerry will reach out to potential enterprise customers by having a dedicated sales team that gets into contact with other businesses while keeping track of business’s which may be interested in its services. The team uses a CRM called Salesfoce to track potential customers and ultimately boost sales.

## Main Task

As a Field Test Specialist, My main role was to do technical analysis on unreleased software that would eventually run on both devices which were released to the public and some which were not. Every week I was given a different task but also given some time to do some extra project work which did not always conform to my main job role.

Usually at the start of the week I would be given a request to work on something such as user-acceptance testing (UAT) on a particular device with a specific software bundle loaded onto it. As a tester, my role was to increase the stability of the software and report this to developers. I would have to manually load the bundle onto the device and retrieve a test plan which detailed what work was required to be done. Software testing would then begin and we would check an expected result against the actual result to determine if a bug was present. When I found an issue with the software I would have to collect evidence on the issue that was observed. This would often require me to extract logs, collect network information and occasionally SSH into the device to get a specific file straight from the operating system. Once everything was collected and I was confident on the issue I would submit this to developers to discuss it further and ultimately fix the issue. BlackBerry uses a bug/project tracking software called JIRA; this allows them to track issues on software in a large array of categories such as Core applications, Application Management and so on. JIRA is used by an impressive list of companies’ including Adobe, NASA, BMW etc. I would then use JIRA to communicate with developers from a variety of locations including Canada and North America.

I was part of the European Field Testing Team (FTS EMEA) which meant that I communicated and worked with both people in office, here in the UK but also in Europe. In the office the team is split into two teams, each one managed by a team lead that was further managed by a central manager. I was part of one of the sub teams but worked with everyone in the wider team. The team’s background was diverse with many of them coming from a wide range of large companies such as EA, LEGO and Panasonic. I was often given responsibility for testing that I was expected to conduct. I was expected to complete the testing all the way from initial set up of devices through too sending out final reports to the whole team as well as follow ups with developers which would often still take place well after the final report was submitted.

As part of my Internship here at BlackBerry I was given the opportunity to also do other projects related to work. As an aspiring software developer I was keen to find if I could exercise my developer skills whilst also streamlining a business process the team conducted. As part of user acceptance testing that occurs every week, team members must also do Mobility testing. This testing requires the hiring of a car from an external company to drive the tester around whilst they do cellular testing with the handset. The problem that was outlined was that at that moment in time the team had no way to sync up with each other regarding who had already booked a Carey car for the week and at what time. I therefore suggested a Web application to track, manage and store Carey Car requests; The System was to allow testers to submit a request to the system which in turn would query a database and check if another tester had set one for around the same time. On detecting that someone had already booked one, the system would suggest a merger and on detecting that the slot was free the system would store the details and send an email to the external company. There was also huge interest to make the web application mobile friendly so it could be accessed from any medium.

I set up a meeting with one of the team members and created a list of requirements for the system. This helped me create an early prototype of the system, which was then used as a basis to develop further. This technique was taught to me in my first year modules and is called Evolutionary Prototyping. For this project I had to refine existing skills I already knew and also learn some new ones. I used a wide range of different technologies such as PHP, JavaScript and Python. A significant tool I used here for the first time was a version control system (Git/GitHub); a tool first introduced to me through one of the Spanish members of the team through a web conference call. This tool is used largely in the software development industry and is very useful when building large applications.

Over the weeks I developed the system and refined the requirements until it was exactly what the team wanted. In my final week, the system was put into operation and is hosted on a server in the office. The project taught me valuable networking and programming skills which will help me later in projects both personal and professional. The system is now used by the team as a scheduling system to allow team members to sync up with each other and book appointments.

As part of my time here at BlackBerry I have contributed to testing software that will ultimately affect the launch of the BlackBerry Passport and BlackBerry Classic Devices. I have achieved to increase the overall stability of Blackberries’ next large software release (10.3.1) and was also able to provide a robust scheduling system to allow the team to sync up and manage mobility testing in a more organised fashion effectively saving costs.

## Conclusion

My experience here at BlackBerry was a very good one and it’s a time in my life that I will remember for a very long time. The placement introduced me to corporate life and showed me what working in the office is all about. It’s not only about getting the work done but also about the working with a team and making connections with people. From the very start, my manager ensured that I learnt what I wanted to learn and exceeded in ensuring I professionally developed those skills. I was expected to work on my own initiative both independently and with the team. I took every opportunity that was presented to me and I feel this only made the experience richer. I feel like I have contributed with the system I developed to a real team working in industry and have made some really good friends. Overall, the opportunity given to me from the Widening Participation Scheme was a great one and one which I learnt a variety of skills from.