



Melvin Chen

B.S. Computer Science and Design 2020

Prior Co-op:

OHO Interactive, Boston MA
UX and Visual Design Co-op
January 2018 - June 2018

Current Co-op:

BounceX, New York NY
Client Engineering Co-op
January 2019 - June 2019

What is BounceX?

The Company

BounceX is a marketing technology company that uses cloud-based behavioral marketing to help e-commerce and web publishers target their visitors.

The company uses “People-Based Marketing” to create a cohesive marketing system based on an individual consumer and their real-time behavioral data. It identifies the user over multiple devices and uses their own data to create a singular view of the consumer.

BounceX’s software and platform is used by e-commerce sites like Nike, Uniqlo, Kate Spade, Jetblue, Meredith, and many more.

The office is headquartered in One World Trade Center in New York City and has near 400 employees and growing. BounceX has its offices in New York, London, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

Company Mission & Core Values

BounceX is really committed to providing employees with benefits employees would want.

Beyond the free lunches and fancy water bottles, BounceX provides career coaching, growth and development opportunities, and

benefits that are in the 95th percentile of all technology companies.

The company bonds the community together with its commitment to its 5 Core Values:

- Come Hungry
- Carry Each Other
- Drive Undeniable Performance
- Respect People, Privacy, Ideas
- Bounce Back

BounceX allows employees to define those core values how they see fit and live them in their everyday lives.

Work Culture

Despite the large size of the engineering team, the co-ops are treated like and perform the same tasks as full-time employees, as illustrated in the Specific Responsibilities section. There is also a clear path to management and easy communication with higher level hierarchy.

Management is transparent with their work and actively makes certain they evaluate as objectively as possible. The co-ops meet with their direct managers weekly, and have mid-quarter/quarterly reviews with their direct managers and a higher level manager.

Specific Responsibilities

General Roles and Responsibilities

The role, Client Engineer in the Visual Experience (VX) Team ensures that the experiences have their expected functionality and design. The job entails incorporating the advertisements and promotions in a way that they look as native to the site as possible.

To do this task, the job has the following responsibilities:

- Build and execute marketing campaigns
- Partner with designers, account managers and product integrity analysts to oversee the visual integrity of the campaigns
- Troubleshoot and debug device specific and cross browser quirks
- Set quarterly company, career, and developmental goals to prove effectiveness and continually develop your skills

Day to Day

The VX co-op troubleshoots campaigns and ads. In other words, if the strategy manager requests a certain functionality or sees an issue with a certain campaign, they would send a ticket to the client engineering team, which would occasionally be sent to a co-op.

These issues can vary from being simple

copy or placement fixes to functional live issues with degrees of urgency.

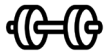
In addition, a VX co-op assists with onboarding clients to the software (called Day 0 bundles). This includes the preliminary work that would need to happen before designers or managers could start to build campaigns or experiences for the client. Work would include identifying unique site elements and integrating test campaigns to ensure correct functionality.

Quarterly Work

Furthermore, each employee in the client engineering team has to make developmental and personal goals (each with a set of Objectives and Key Results) each quarter. So in addition to the everyday tasks, each employee must have a developmental goal that better the company as a whole and a personal goal that improves the person.

At the end of the quarter, each engineer presents to the client engineering team with what their goal (Objective) was and the steps they took to reach those goals (Key Results).

Employees are given set blocks of time to work on their goals, in addition to the time they have after their normal day-to-day work is completed.



Training

Training Received

While the VX co-op position is relatively new, management has been proactive about creating and improving the training program.

Before the co-op even starts, the manager sends in information to help prepare for the first day. The training is done mostly by the manager, but is also given by other coworkers to give them experience with training new hires and managing.

The co-op also goes through a five unit training program that includes hands-on real client work and practice campaigns to sandbox in. Some might argue that it could be faster to just have co-ops go in head first, but with the scale BounceX works in, it would be more responsible in a financial sense and client relationship sense to make sure co-ops do not submit as many mistakes.

Even when onboarding ends, other coworkers are eager and happy to help students, and vice-versa.

Training Given

In another training sense, co-ops help to onboard future co-ops and new hires by adding to the ever-growing documentation. As the newest hires, co-ops are in the best position to give feedback to management about what was the most effective. All employees are encouraged to edit this documentation.



Skills

Skills Needed

A co-op could be judged on how well its able to teach and train students with new skillsets, regardless of their abilities. However, there are some baseline skills that are needed:

- A solid understanding of HTML, CSS, and Javascript (jQuery is a bonus)
- Language-agnostic best practices
- Empathy and an ability to work collaboratively with others
- A continuous interest in learning frontend development
- As for any job, good time management, an ability to write (especially technical writing), and a sense of logic

Skills Received

There would be a range of hard and soft skills gained at this co-op, but here are some of the highlights:

- Communicate more effectively with non-technical managers and with QA
- Improvement in public speaking with managers and coworkers, not just other students
- Gain confidence with building more scalable components and much more fluent with Javascript coding
- Ability to deal with live issue pressure



Advice

For Getting an Interview

As for getting an interview at BounceX, something that could help you stand out would be to show that you are actively learning. While you are most likely in school, it would be good for BounceX to know that you are doing things beyond your normal workload. That could include interesting side projects that you've built out.

For Performing in an Interview

As for the interview itself, the best advice I can give is to just relax—and that goes for any sort of interview, not just for this company.

Often times (at least in my experience with listening to new hire interview stories) a new grad or intern-seeking student becomes so engrossed with not saying anything that could be a mistake they forget that the interviewer just wants to know how you think.

For Working at the Company

Keep your eyes open for opportunities within the company. You get however much you put in for any co-op. There are opportunities to make your own projects and present to the team. There are opportunities to improve the company culture with Employee Resource Groups around the office. If you want something in the co-op, just ask for it and someone will be there to help you out.



Personal Development

Looking Back

At the start of this co-op, I had pretty limited experience with frontend development. I knew the basics of HTML, CSS, and Javascript but have not worked too intensively with them. BounceX really helped me with those technical skills.

At the beginning of the co-op, I found it difficult to understand what the other engineers were talking about in the fortnightly meetings. Over time, I found myself able to share difficult tickets and provide possible solutions for other people's issues. From a technical and social point of view, that has been a pretty significant point of growth.

Looking Forward

This co-ops given me real world experience with development. Prior to this co-op I worked in a design agency and had a lot more limited knowledge of how enterprise level code works.

I have gained a good set of hard and soft skills (as mentioned in the Skills section) that I would wish to polish in future careers.

In the future, I would also hope to be able to have a job with a similar ratio of design and coding.