Steven Waterman
Senior Developer at NHS BSA

I'm a track-proven generalist, able to quickly learn new tech or languages and work across many domains.

I can follow best practices, but know I'll need to think outside the box to build reliable solutions when 'best practice' is impossible.

I'm always happy to spend my time helping others, because in the end it's the users that win — that's what matters.

I'm really ambitious and need to be challenged, flourishing in small teams of brilliant people who will push me to be a better developer.

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Experience

Senior Developer @ NHS BSA   Nov 2020 — Present

I'm a full stack developer working on the new NHS Jobs, a public-facing Government service. That means accessibility is paramount, meeting WCAG AAA and supporting progressive enhancement for users without Javascript. We can't release an update with known a11y issues.

I perform a wide range of work, from fixing accessibility in CSS to improving performance by tweaking SQL. Everything I do is focussed on adding value for users, either directly through my own work or indirectly by helping others. A day could involve observing user research, working with designers and POs to effectively meet user needs, or mentoring junior developers.

Between tickets, I have a personal focus on developer experience and tooling. Shortly after joining, I set up Docker Compose for local development and onboarded the team, meaning nobody is running 15 microservices manually any more. I also refactored our frontend integration tests, creating a custom DSL that makes it easier to do things right.

I constantly push for more communication between functions, talking to everyone involved and bridging the gaps between them. I ran retrospectives with a focus on action, making them something more than a place to vent and giving the team ownership over our ways of working.

Developer @ Scott Logic   Aug 2019 — Oct 2020

As a consultant I worked on a number of demanding projects, often expected to pick up new languages, technologies, or business domains, and be able to contribute within a few days.

As the COVID-19 pandemic set in, I worked in a 2/3 person team advising NHS Digital on how to modernise the data pipeline feeding the Shielding Patients List. We architected and oversaw the in-place migration from complex SQL queries to a Databricks cluster, ran detailed knowledge transfer sessions, and advised senior leadership on best practices for Data and DevOps.

Other projects saw me create inter-service authentication and data auditing functionality, transition our ways of working to the new all-remote reality, run the first remote retro, and set up continuous deployment with AWS CDK, including data storage bridging both SQL and NoSQL.

Junior Software Engineer @ Codeco   Jul 2018 — Oct 2018

As an intern working on the backend API, the microservice architecture used at Condeco was completely new to me. I spent a few months learning and getting up to speed, culminating in me conceiving, architecting, and pitching a new licencing microservice to technical leadership.

Education ─────────────

BSc Computer Science @ Durham University (1st Class Hons.)   **2016 — 2019**
Dissertation title: *Tailoring horror games with biosignals*

MEng General Engineering @ Durham University   **2015 — 2016**
I always wanted to work in tech, but an elective CS module convinced me to change course

Other Work ─────────────

Thought Leadership   **Constantly!**

I'm a seasoned speaker at local tech talks, including that time I threw chocolates at NE:Tech and the time I live-coded an underwhelming website with Svelte at NE-RPC. I've written many blogs, including my descent into ergo-keyboard madness that went viral and ended up on the HN front page. I've also made regular appearances in Java Weekly with technical blogs like Rethinking the Java DTO.
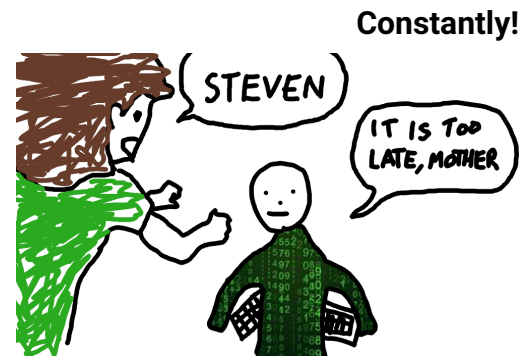
**Narration.studio** (Live) (GitHub)   **Oct 2020**

When I narrated my ergo-keyboard blog post, it was a really tedious manual process. That was no good, so I made Narration.studio: an in-browser narration editing tool using the web speech recognition API to be completely hands-free. Read the lines of your script as they appear on screen, and redo a line by simply saying it again. Narration.studio will detect it and overwrite the previous recording for that line. Highlighted in the Dec 2020 Svelte Community Showcase.
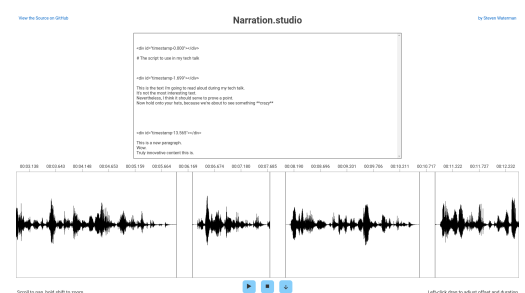
MuseTree (Live) (GitHub)   **Jan 2020**

After falling in love with MuseNet, OpenAI's MIDI generator, I decided to make a custom front-end for it. While the official tool is a simple toy demo, MuseTree is used by creators in real-world scenarios to create songs and jingles. As a successful open-source project, it sees frequent contributions from the FOSS community. Latest update adds integration with the Web Audio API to perform real-time audio synthesis in-browser.
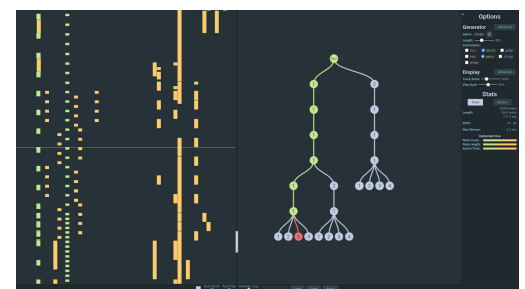
Sharpshot (GitHub)   **Dec 2018**

I created the initial version of Sharpshot in 24 hours for Durhack 2018, winning the 'GitHub Prize for Best Dev Tool' & overall runner-up. It's an esoteric visual programming language where nodes are placed on a grid. Each node represents a function, and parameters move around the screen annihilating each other when they collide. An addictive Zachlike puzzle game.