Interviewer: Well to be honest, I thought at first when I could see your background, I was like is that I don’t know, some screen that you created? But I guess like you said for a special weekend so.

Jon Beets: Yea, it’s a screenshot I took 2 or 3 years ago actually cause I’ve just sized up to fit. I generally have a background I do teams with my customer a lot, so I have pictures of flowers or things/places I’ve been and it's just a conversation starter. It’s really good.

Interviewer: So obviously for this interview the first question that we’ve got just as a guide to go over is could you just give us an overview of your job and what exactly it is that you do in that position?

Jon Beets: I have my own business and I consult or contract customers, my customer at the moment I have a Queenslander a New South Wales customer and a very specialized area of legislation drafting and I provide both coding services so software development services and as well as support for the New South Wales customer so they’re using \_\_\_\_\_\_ maker which is very specialized and a bit of a beast and I’ve got a lot of experience in so that’s \_\_\_\_\_ what I’m doing.

Interviewer: So, what sort of programming languages and technology is it that you specialize in?

Jon Beets: it’s C++ and as well as a version of JavaScript called Extend Script and there’s also some C# in there and infrastructure side of things, PowerShell, scripts and really that’s pretty much it there’s no database or anything like that. Oh of course Excel, Excel is a wonderful took for so many things.

Interviewer: So, keep it basic at times, yea well that’s good. So, you’ve mentioned that you have a consultancy, so the next question is what type of people is it that you’re interacting with, so I guess everything from the client to anybody that you work with to actually give that advice and deliver

Jon Beets: I’m working with my \_\_\_\_\_\_ employees so generally it's just me interacting with the customer or I’m working with the CEO usually from via down day to day I’m interacting with the project team internally so project manager for that team any members of the project team typically they will be tested they would be knowledge \_\_\_\_\_\_ experts who understand the environment and what’s required. With support it’s the IT anyone who’s in IT I’m assisting them kind of like they can’t fix it they come talk to me. Really in my role and I’ve been working in \_\_\_ for some time now you do build relationships it’s important to have relationships to talk to people and better to ask questions and even more importantly, listen to the answer because is so important to us.

Interviewer: So obviously I know you’re coming into these different businesses and like you say you could be working with anyone literally from the sea or down to the project teams to actually deliver. Is it the projects that you work on is it kind of like full end to end or are you just like specialized parts of creating like a greater concept?

Jon Beets: end to end mostly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ requirements of scoping, the requirements of what needs to be done then providing the quote quite often and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ business yourself. You pay attention to estimations realistically though the best estimation was to do it because it was very hard \_\_\_\_ usually things you aren’t aware of unexpecting things come up all the time and any project particularly around computing software you need to have some allowance. Am I really \_\_\_ it? Well, you know 50/50 but you try \_\_\_ out. So, end to end and actually delivering it and being involved in testing I find it’s very useful to help the test development test script that said I’m the world's worst tester because I always do things the same way and actually you need. I’m sure you’re familiar with the edge-cases? Or are you hearing about the edge-cases?

Interviewer: not just yet

Jon Beets: you’ll understand them a lot of cause that’s where most of the time goes in and where all the problem occurs so, you know a user will say we’ll do it this way then you find out later actually \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that way and so forth and so on. So that one part there’s multiple, and that’s trying to understand those at the start but then dealing with them when they rise if you don’t expect them so the test scripts and then you know being involved with the final signpost but yea end to end and it’s very creative, what we’re doing, writing software, solving a problem and it’s really satisfying to see it working.

Interviewer: well yea, I know that from my few weeks and when it actually worked, it’s like oh! Amazing. So that’s good and how long do these projects usually take? Because I can imagine if you were like creating some things and then testing, scoping it, it can be quite a long task

Jon Beets: Current project I’m working on started January last year, I expected it to finish June last year but for one reason for another it's still going so that’s not typical for software projects in a commercial organization it might be different as in they have tighter controls but they put in more resources to achieve it so, yea it’s a variable. It’s a mixture of short projects that fantastic start here and there and it’s finished there and its job done but mostly it seems to take a lot longer.

Interviewer: Do you find sometimes mid project requirements change?

Job Beets: Absolutely, we have to have a mechanism built in to cater for that so a change request type mechanism and most customers I’ve dealt with are very good about going well actually yes, we changed our mind, or we didn’t realise we needed to do that so therefore it’s a change requested. That’s coded separately from the main task and this customer in New South Wales is really good about this as well.

Interviewer: So obviously, you work with many multiple different clients and your base is at sunshine of course so is it that you got client sites, or do you work remotely, how does that split work?

Jon Beets: I was already working remotely before the pandemic actually and I find it you still need to go onsite like run some training, and training is well with \_\_\_\_\_(delivered?) online. You do your study online. Interacting with people in the classroom is the really better experience because they get the opportunity to ask a question and someone asking a question prompts someone else to ask another question and as the presenter to suddenly go oh actually, I might have not explained that completely/properly/clearly enough, so you get your chance to go over it again. Whereas delivering it online its limited feedback to cover that. I mean they usually have a question they ask at the session in the end I'm attending conferences that are online so there is the possibility to ask the question. So mostly online, when you’re writing code actually one of the best thing about writing code is not getting interrupted because quite often getting interrupted means you could get sore in the head, you’ve written it down and you’ve got an algorithm and you know you’re classmates all understand a lot more about this in the future so you know what you need to do but in your head you got I’m going to do a, b and c but you’ve done a and b, get interrupted and forget to do c when you come back and bang you’ve got a \_\_\_\_. So, coding in a quiet environment is wonderful, I did used to work in customer environments and quite often they put the contractors in the noisiest place and my solution was to put earphones on honestly \_\_\_\_\_ white noise for me. So, it’s a mixture of both at the moment it looks like I’ll be going down sometime in November for a few days. But before that, before the pandemic, mostly I would work in customer premises, particularly the contractors they like to see you and so \_\_\_\_\_\_ deal with people as well and so it’s better to be there. Nowadays there seems to be less of that you know, teams, zoom and all of this conference capability and prepping for going online \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I remember in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I ran some training for the remote staff for the customer I was working at and we used a video conferencing software from that point it was nothing like what it's got now and I think back it was hard to share screen, it was hard to interact with \_\_\_ team you’ve got that chat capability, you know it really is so much better now with the online stuff so\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (I’d be interesting in?) your position I mean you’d probably need to be in the office but I think this mixture of going back into the office will stay, working from home, being in the office will always be there.

Interviewer: I think it completely depends on the culture so obviously you know me I’m in recruitment it’s kind come into the office and we can all chit-chat all day and share ideas about candidates and you can collaborate a lot more whereas like you say when you just need to focus and think ok I’m doing this bit of code, this is what I’m thinking about if somebody was then sat across you and asking what you’re having for tea every day, it kind of interrupts you so you can’t focus exactly on what you're doing. So, I think it's about having that mix isn’t it of being in the office and seeing people face to face as in when it's required to build those relationships and like you said doing training and stuff like that, that’s more collaborative whereas now, it's such an easy world to do things remote.

Jon Beets: Look I agree and that’s the thing, you got the balance almost perfect there but theres some stuff that’s just better-done face to face and when you want to collaborate and throw ideas around and it’s interesting that we \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ flexible working environment \_\_\_\_\_\_ factory floor or we were retail \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: It’s a luxury to most people to have that flexibility that other industries don’t necessarily offer and what would you say is the most challenging aspect of your role ? but I guess challenging could also mean motivating?

Jon Beets: Look there’s lots of challenges and some of the stuff I deal with is quite technical, getting back to just looking at software projects it's just having the client make sure they understand their requirements. Usually, they don’t and it’s quite hard to make them sit down and go well actually we need to do x, y and z but there are actually sometimes where we need to do a, b and c too and get that discussed. The technical side of things working with products, you’ve got to keep on top of changes and what’s happening and that’s a never-ending story because things change from year to year, month to month constantly. It’s also fun, if you got to be challenging your brain to learn new things and to learn to do things differently so those are kind of two points, I would say that challenge me is getting the client to understand the requirements and managing those requirements and change process that we’ve talked about and the other thing is changes and the tools and the environment, the windows version, the versions of the software all that stuff and that’s generally that’s working for yourself, you don’t pay to do that.

Interviewer: Exactly, you’ve got to keep on top of things, in your own time essentially.

Jon Beets: So, if I attend to a week's training for myself, that’s a week no income. But that said, the benefit is later on you’ll get is have knowledge about something. What I do now for example is a new version of FrameMaker in release I’ll have a look at it, I’ll test it in one customer’s environment, show them, I’m going to show the other customer in a little while, they then might bring me in to get it working for them. So, you generate work \_\_\_. Other challenging aspects, if you work for yourself, one of the big challenging things is getting paid.

Interviewer: yea I can imagine, chasing people up and.

Jon Beets: and if you’re working as an employee that’s not an issue for you, you get paid every month, or two weeks or whatever, but when you work for yourself first of all you got to put an \_\_\_\_\_(advertisement?) for your works and then you get paid for them etc and following them up and doing it in a nice way so I’ve \_\_\_\_\_ (done it in the past?), establishing a relationship with the accounts \_\_\_\_\_ it's very \_\_\_\_.

Interviewer: Just take them some cakes in, sweeten them up.

Jon Beets: one of the things I know where we’re getting close to the end that we talked about \_\_\_\_\_\_ interacting with peer staff is very important, going to conferences or being in groups where you can talk to people doing the same thing as you. Nowadays there’s communities and or various \_\_\_\_\_ everywhere and its really easy to ask a question and get a response or have a conversation, it doesn’t need to be faced to face but every conference I've been to in person, I get far more out of talking to other people than I've had out of presentations. But getting ideas, talking about problems you’re having.

Interviewer: So I guess that’s one thing when you are getting back to working remotely, although it's good to get the work done and focusing what you need to do it’s still important to be part of a wider community just so then you can have these points just so you can see what other people in similar roles and similar positions are doing, how they are getting on and I guess as well it's nice to understand what type of work is out there and what other people are doing, what types of projects people are going on with.

Jon Beets: Oh, look exactly, when I was started working for myself that was so important \_\_\_\_\_ that’s how I first met Renay and he had a networking \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the aim was to make contacts and potentially get work down the track.

Interviewer: And I just have one final question, it might be quite a big question so just try and obviously answer as best as you can but it's just what experience has led you to where you are today so just a bit of history of a background so obviously, we know what you are doing now, but how did you get there?

Jon Beets: I think i started out because I like fixing things. I liked being helpful and I started off working in computers when they were like office equipment adding machines and mechanical accounting machines and so I enjoyed resolving problems, doing that and everything you think about a software program to perform a task is actually solving a problem and there's a lot of creativity about that so that’s what I like. Some of the roles I've had have been really challenging back in history I don’t \_\_\_\_ supercomputers to separate does that mean anything to you? The origins of supercomputers and supercomputers were used in those days I mean in a lot of military aspects they were used in cars, designed for chemicals, so modelling and weather modelling and of course now, they’ve come on and there's lots of them around there, but they were complex and to fix them was very complex, so you needed the high technical skill, that ability, that problem solving ability. I’d have a scientist come to me and he’d have a print out \_\_\_\_\_ a computer printout and it’d say this calculation here is out by blah so you’d have to go out there and write a bit of code so let's say it’s a divide problem, to exercise that, and go up to an oscilloscope and an oscilloscope would basically be looking at an electrical signal \_\_\_\_\_ and work out where the problem was. So, it was quite challenging, a lot of fun too so I think that’s whats motivated me is that that feeling of fixing, solving problems, helping someone out and its always challenging.

Interviewer: Sounds like fun cause it’s a bit more like you’re not just coming to work and do this it's like oh what's the challenge and there might be multiple solutions to get there so it's like you say, exercising your brain and getting on with things to solve the solution.

Jon Beets: you and your fellow students will learn that the path to the task you’ve got to solve, the problems you got to solve but the software is multiple you can go multiple ways \_\_\_\_\_\_ not necessarily better than the other some, might be more efficient and so on and so on I find that again and again that you start out thinking the part is going to be like this (does stuff with hands here) and that’s the \_\_\_\_ solving problems on the way, outside of what I do day to day, I'm working with Audinos and containers and writing software, I've got a weather station and stuff and I'm loving doing that and that’s still the same kind of thing but it's different

Interviewer: well, I guess it’s the same sort of thing with different concepts as to what it is you are trying to achieve because that’s one thing I think about now where obviously I’m learning all this stuff but then it's actually like what does this all mean? What's the bigger picture? what's the program? What it’s actually going to look like and think when you start to think about that then it's kind of think oh that’s interesting and you start to think about stuff you do just over applications and then you actually think about what's happening behind the scenes to achieve that.

Jon Beets: That’s wonderful but it’s lifetime you will never stop because there's always new things to learn and I think that’s wonderful. I feel sorry for someone who’s in a job and they’re doing the same thing again and again. I wouldn't last that.

Interviewer: It’s good that you enjoy it and that’s and that’s what keeps you going essentially

Jon Beets: Yep, it does

Interviewer: Well, that’s the end of my question