

Junior Developers | Red56 Ltd

23.12.2014 | Job outline

What we do:

We help companies who have custom software they rely on, to maintain and manage their software, acting as external CTO, product manager, development, ops and support team.

We take on three kinds of work:

1) Ongoing product management, maintenance and development

(90% of our work is for two clients under this banner)

We work for a company and plan product features for weeks and months in advance. Our engagement is always rate-limited: we work for a particular number of days per month, and aim to stay within that for months at a time. This gives an ability for ourselves and the clients to plan the work

2) MVP development

We are occasionally engaged to create the initial “Minimum viable product” to help kick start a startup or piece of technology. This is typically of 2-6 weeks work duration, and has to fit around ongoing product management.

3) Consultancy, training, coaching

Consultancy to help re-energize a startup with a problematic software situation. This is typically 1-5days of consultancy work -- obviously it can lead to one of the engagements above, but it usually doesn't.

Plus:

We are not averse to creating our own software and start-up ideas. So far we haven't hit the jackpot, but watch this space. Some of our work is open-source, but not particularly finished as yet...

Technologies

- Ruby, rails, postgres, heroku
- Sinatra/rack for small things
- Frontend JS frameworks (jQuery (obviously), angular (sometimes) -- currently looking for the right component framework (react? flux?)
- iOS and android maintenance/development

We talk about and love other technologies/platforms but Red56 are not actually deploying on them right now (python, go, chef, docker...)

Who we are

It's small -- one full-time employee/founder/principal -- Tim Diggins, and 3 regular contractual contributors -- Garry Hill, Paul Harter, Jamie Higgins.

Our specialisms/interests

We all have our personal technological interests.

My interests, and the work specialism of Red56, is "workflow" in an industrial sense. That is, software that helps the flow of work between different people and teams and organizing structures. [In the past this has involved the flow of marketing communications around HP, the flow of files in video production houses.] Currently software we manage organizes flow of market research media and the flow of industrial work. This kind of work has been called "Unsexy". This may be an understatement, but there are lots of technical complexities and challenging UI requirements.

Where we are

Back Building, Top Floor, 148 - 150 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3AT (it's a dark gateway, next to "Tramontana" restaurant, down to a courtyard. The Back Building is, well, at the back)

We currently rent desk space with an architectural practice (and co-habit with graphic designers, software developers, and architecture-related professionals). If space becomes tight we will look at other locations in Shoreditch or possibly London Fields E8. Our clients (for meetings, and very occasional on-site work/training) are in West and Southeast London.

PS: Yes, we need a new website (red56.co.uk is still how it was c.2007 and most parts date from much earlier). Apologies, cobblers shoes and all that. Maybe you can help us out when you get onboard.

What we're looking for

Talking as the manager of a small company I'd like to take on two contractors/employees to work in an entry level role. In the ideal you might be coming second-job

You really need to be already competent with ruby, rails, html, css, javascript and if you're a recent convert to software development you'll need to be on a fast learning curve. In the ideal world you're familiar with postgres (or at least sql), heroku (or some other PaaS/IaaS, or maybe linux/ops, at least familiar with the command line)

It's important you know how to work in a development team. Not just technical issues (git) but more how to write good commit messages. However all this stuff is negotiable: we're all learning.

We're aiming to employ two junior developers before March 2015.

How we will work

I predict us pairing a lot but not all of the time. If you think you can never pair-program, don't apply, or if you need the structure of a larger company where you can always pair, don't apply.

We will be test-first, test-driven programming (using rspec and jasmine primarily). Occasionally we commit a change with no tests, but we try to feel bad about that.

I expect you to come with an open mind, ready to learn, ready to challenge. I expect to learn a lot too.

However if what you want to do is learn a lot of new technologies that aren't on our list, this probably isn't the job for you.

Part of our job is dealing with customer support requests — and working out which are bugs, which are really about missing documentation or bad design, or perhaps feature requests.

What next?

If you're interested in the role, please email me at tim@red56.co.uk saying why you are interested, what you aim to get out of this role, and let me know where your skill levels are (from “heard of” to “expert”) with our key technologies/methodologies* as well as how you acquired those skills, and a CV (or link to detailed linked-in profile). Any code samples / commits you can point to online are great, or if you want to include a code attachment in your email that's great too.

* (ruby, ruby-on-rails, javascript, html+css, git, postgres / sql, heroku, osx/unix/linux command line, TDD)