

curriculum vitæ

Objectives

I am passionate about working in teams of talented, motivated people. I treat my work as a craft and seek opportunities to learn, develop and share skills with others. I believe in the value of open source software and aim to make significant contributions to such projects.

I am fascinated with the concept of communicative programming and as such am interested in the aesthetics of programming languages, domain specific languages and language oriented programming techniques.

I see software primarily as a form of communication that is not just limited to a conversation between a programmer and the computer but between many participants all of whom have an interest in understanding parts of the software.

I am inspired to improve our ability to communicate, helping people gain a greater freedom to express themselves in order to collaborate and share their ideas together. I therefore love to share and explore these ideas with as many people as possible.

Relevant Work Experience

Innovation Factory, Amsterdam 2008-

Designer and developer of Web projects using Ruby on Rails with both standard deployment stacks and also creating appliances capable of being deployed in large secure internal enterprise virtual machine clusters. Involved with the development of online tools to increase the potential for collaborative innovation within large companies in areas such as idea management and community collaboration development and growth.

My most recent client, a large pharmaceutical company, commissioned a bespoke web shop to initiate and drive their online sales within The Netherlands. In addition to managing the development of the consumer-facing elements of the site I designed and developed an innovative data importing technology used to continuously populate the site's database. Accuracy of this technology was such a key concern that I manipulated the pertinent parts of the software to be readable and therefore verifiable by the client directly. I managed the project with an iterative agile development method to optimise communication, thereby keeping it relevant and accurate, allowing the the project to be both on time and within budget and, perhaps more importantly, resulting in a very happy client. The project has been so successful that in 2009 it has driven 40 million Euros worth of sales and the company is deploying my importing technology across wider Europe.

InfoQ Ruby News Reporter 2007-

Commissioned by InfoQ to write news articles surveying current Ruby news and to write topical articles.

School of Transport, Newcastle University 2006-2007

Built a decision support tool to aid the creation of new transport services. Used agile development practices and the Ruby on Rails framework. Represented business logic with a client-readable domain specific language.

The Amazing Group, Newcastle 2005-2006

Worked as a researcher, designer and developer. Built conceptual designs and working prototypes for a variety of projects. Initiated testing, version control and ticketing techniques for in-house development. Communicated directly with development teams, management and clients.

School of Transport, Newcastle University 2003-2004

Worked with a team of developers on a European funded project which combined a variety of SOAP-based web-services using a database-driven web application. The resulting product matched available jobs with available transport routes for a given person and location.

Skills

I am a proficient programmer with a high level expertise in Ruby and also the web framework Rails. I therefore have highly transferrable skills in concepts such as object-oriented programming, web development, meta-programming, scripting, modular development, software patterns and language manipulation. I am a very strong advocate of the practice of Test Driven Development and believe that a robust set of executable specifications are as, if not more, important than the executing software itself. I'm also highly adept with Mac OS X, command line terminals, GNU Emacs, Git, GNU/Linux, MySQL, Sphinx and in addition am capable of learning new languages and tools quickly.

I am highly communicative and capable of choosing the best medium to convey complicated information to a wide variety of audiences in a simple manner. This makes me highly suited for client interaction acting as a communication bridge between people with varied backgrounds, literacies and trajectories. I love bringing people together and helping them to share their ideas and knowledge.

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Education & Awards

- Newcastle University, Ph.D. Computing Science: “*A Domain Specific Language for Dynamic Interest Management within Virtual Environments*”
- Newcastle University, Software Engineering BSc, First Class Honours, graduated with prizes for academic excellence and best dissertation
- Awarded a European ERASMUS summer scholarship
- Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award

Speaking & Teaching

I enjoy speaking at, helping organise and attending conferences. I am attracted by the concentration of interesting, interested and enthusiastic people and the energy that produces.

I love participating in communities. In Newcastle I founded ncl.rb, the local Ruby and Rails user group and I also co-founded our local open-coffee meet. In Amsterdam I co-founded amsterdam.rb. All of these groups have grown to become remarkably successful and enjoyed and appreciated by members from many backgrounds.

I have presented my ideas on themes such as *Aesthetic & Communicative Programming* at local events as well as highly prestigious and international conferences including JA00. In addition, I have enjoyed giving tutorials at these major events which have enabled me to share my passion and knowledge in a teaching environment. Highlights of these presentations and tutorials are as follows:

- Keynote speaker at **RubyFoo**, London, 2009
- Tutorials on Advanced Ruby and Principles of Aesthetic Programming at **JA00**, Århus, 2009, 2008; **QCon**, London, 2009
- Speaker at **Amsterdam Ruby BarCamp**, Amsterdam, 2009; **JA00 Geek Night**, Copenhagen and Århus, 2009; **RubyFools**, Copenhagen and Oslo, 2008; **RubyEnRails**, Amsterdam, 2008; **RailsConf Europe**, Berlin, 2007

Reading & Writing

I continually keep up to date with the latest practices and techniques in my field primarily by reading technical articles online and also by maintaining my own library of technical books. I'm also a full member of the ACM's Digital Library and subscribe to the MIT Computer Music Journal.

In addition to writing Ruby news articles for InfoQ, I am currently in discussion with Wiley with respect to writing and publishing a book on Communicative Programming. I have also performed the following contributory roles: Contributor and Technical Reviewer for *The Rails Way*, Addison-Wesley Professional Ruby Series, Technical Reviewer for *Beginning Google Maps Applications with Rails and Ajax*, Apress and acknowledged in *The Rails Cookbook*, O'Reilly.

Interests

I am very interested in the combination of tactile interfaces and programming languages in order to build new kinds of musical instruments. I also enjoy exploring the potential for creation and improvisation of electronic music. In pursuit of these interests I am currently experimenting with a combination of a monome two fifty six as the primary interface, Ruby and Clojure as process implementation languages, SuperCollider as the audio framework and Open Sound Control as the plumbing protocol.

I am interested in exploring the scary inner-workings of programming languages and am a contributor to the emerging JVM language loke, a folding language focussed on expressiveness. I also love cycling, walking, camping, cooking and, of course, table football.

Referrals

- Professor Han Gerrits, CEO, Innovation Factory,
- Professor Paul Watson, School of Computing Science, Newcastle University.