

Alan Faller

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I am a QA analyst with over 25 years' experience in the IT industry, currently working for a successful provider of notifications solutions to the travel industry. I enjoy the challenge of helping advance stable 'big data' processes, friendly tools for clients and accurate content for target notification recipients.

Previous positions in IT helpdesk, hardware support, infrastructure and software support have given me a broad foundation of knowledge that I have constantly built on to add value to my roles. My experience in customer facing support has given me a deep understanding of the needs and expectations of end users.

I wish to continue applying my IT skills to new and exciting opportunities in future.

Employment

15below, Brighton

QA Analyst

November 2011 to Present

15below are a leading provider of 3rd party notification systems to the travel industry, dealing with a range of Airlines, Rail networks and Travel agencies worldwide. Their core hosted service provides scheduled and ad-hoc automated communications with travellers via email, SMS, print and voice covering pre-departure communications, cancellations and disruptions, itinerary and ticketing, and survey and marketing.

As part of a versatile QA team I am required to work on a wide variety of projects which can have a range of different focuses, for example:

- Non functional testing of interactions with 3rd party data providers, data hosting performance and notification throughput over a range of channels
- UI and functional testing of web-based client tools and hosted public-facing services
- All aspects of the eventual notification – content accuracy across many potential languages, layout across many potential client applications and non-functional considerations such as timing and deliverability.

Achievements

- During a recent customer conference 15below held in Brighton, I was responsible for hosting several sessions with client representatives demonstrating new products, discussing customer needs and training them in new processes and technologies.
- As a senior team member, I have an active role in training new staff in our systems and processes, and I am involved in interviewing during recruitment drives for new QA staff.
- I was selected as lead tester for the project to overhaul our flagship 'PASNGR' product as well as the recent radical improvements to the public 15below website.

Core Skills

- Agile and SCRUM methodologies employed across all projects
- Cross browser testing in all versions of Firefox, Chrome, IE/Edge and Safari
- Testing across multiple devices and OS, from desktops to popular tablets and mobile phones
- MS SQL Server Management Studio, Redgate SQL Compare.
- Test planning, documentation, reporting and review.
- Test environment and data management including sensitive data security and data sanitisation
- Creating automated tests within Selenium and Specflow frameworks
- GIT, Team City and Octopus code management and deployment processes
- Jira and Confluence

The Digital Property Group, Brighton

QA Analyst:

July 2009 to November 2011

A change of role within the Digital Property Group took me to a small QA team with a very broad remit. The team were responsible for all code warehousing, version control, build and repository management, testing, and live deployment. I became experienced at not only handling website testing, but also managing and testing all ancillary supporting web applications, data processing systems for 3rd party data feeds, bespoke accounts and data CRM systems and a range of bespoke applications for both internal and customer use.

The varied nature of the role demanded an appreciation of the value of flexibility whilst still focussing on the accuracy and precision needed to ensure that processes and products were fault free.

Achievements

- The development of an extensive suite of Selenium automated tests using C#. The tests replicated and extended the manual regression test process which was applied to website production builds. This resulted in a considerable time saving in the test schedule with only the review of results and test artefacts requiring manual intervention.
- Assisting with the successful integration of an offshore test team. This team brought a much needed depth of test coverage, but to do so they required extensive training both remotely and on-site to achieve the necessary broad base of knowledge.
- Learning and understanding the infrastructure. This was a considerable achievement considering the range and breadth of systems that are core to the smooth operation of an ever-changing data intensive environment. I rapidly took responsibility for the test and deployment of key websites and demonstrated that I can hit the ground running.

Core Skills

- Selenium RC test development within a Team City / MS Test / C# environment.
- The creation of test environments, test data management and IIS configuration.
- MS SQL Server Management Studio, Redgate SQL & Data Compare.
- Jira and Assembla work management systems.
- Build Management and version control in both SourceSafe and Subversion.
- Business critical website and application deployments to live systems.
- Liaising with, and reporting on, 3rd party performance and load testing systems.
- All versions of MS Windows in native and VM managed environments.
- Internet Browsers: IE6 to IE9, Firefox 3 to 7, Chrome, Safari, Opera.
- Mobile environments: iPhone/iPad, Android, Windows 7, Blackberry, Nokia.

The Digital Property Group / FindaProperty.com, Brighton

Technical Helpdesk Team Leader:

May 2006 - July 2009

This was a promotion into a challenging role managing the Technical Customer Support Helpdesk, initially at FindaProperty.com. My team of 8 Technical Analysts were responsible for all IT related interactions with our customers – Estate Agents. These included managing a range of data feeds, our own bespoke customer software, maintaining geographical location models and website problems.

Achievements

- Managing the team through the merger of FindaProperty.com with Primelocation – and the formation of The Digital Property Group. This produced an influx of new staff and competition for limited positions, which required understanding and delicate management. The training requirements for all the newly integrated systems were considerable and knowledge gaps needed to be quickly identified and filled. Through it all the team stayed positive and the customers remained satisfied.

- Being part of the team responsible for the successful deployment of the Salesforce CRM system. I designed and implemented helpdesk related workflows and administered the system.
- Setting up a dedicated knowledge base for helpdesk staff and organising the managed addition of technical solutions to the system. This improved the reliability and consistency of solutions.
- The introduction of remote desktop session tools which enabled interventions on customer's PCs and rapid solutions. This directly reduced call time on longer calls and increased productivity.

Skills

- Salesforce and LogMeIn 3rd party tools
- Change management, both at personnel and system levels.
- Staff management, training and motivation

FindaProperty.com, Brighton

Technical Helpdesk Analyst / Internal Helpdesk: March 2003 - May 2006

Although I was employed primarily for the customer helpdesk I quickly took on the additional role covering internal support for over a year until the company grew to a stage where the role required a dedicated resource.

The customer support role was primarily focussed on resolving technical issues faced by our estate agency customers. The majority of work involved remotely installing and maintaining the "Editor" property management tool which we developed for customers to supply property data to the website.

Achievements

- The standardisation of company desktop builds and the introduction of forced anti-virus updates over the network. This rapidly was seen to reduce down-time when individual problems arose and increased security and reliability across the company.

Skills

- An excellent telephone manner when dealing with often difficult or demanding customers
- The ability to convey complex technical processes in easy to understand instructions.
- Network infrastructure management
- User account/email management and security in active directory on MS Exchange

Seeboard Energy, Hove

Customer Services, 'Keynet' Team:

April 2002 - March 2003

The Keynet team were responsible for identifying faulty electricity key meters based on unusual drops in energy consumption. Any significant shortfall in payments required us to calculate the lost revenue, negotiate a fair repayment schedule with the customers and organise the replacement of the meter. Whilst at Seeboard I identified that the existing processes were manual, time consuming and prone to errors. I independently developed a complex spreadsheet to replace this process with a very configurable, but highly automatic tool. The documents produced matched existing document standards, automatically tracked case numbers and tariffs, were error free and produced in a fraction of the time. This standard was adopted across the department.

GE Capital IT Solutions, Burgess Hill

Technical Vetter:

April 2000 - February 2002

As part of a team maintaining hardware service contracts, I was responsible for the technical analysis of faults and managing parts logistics required to resolve problems. This role demanded a high degree of understanding of desktop, laptop and printer faults across a large range of manufacturers. The logistics of identifying and sourcing the correct parts and ensuring that they were available for collection by field engineers was often demanding, however we were able to consistently beat 85% targets on 8 hour SLAs by at least 5%.

Computer Experts, Brighton

Technical Helpdesk:

August 1998 - March 2000

This was a customer support role for users of "The Millennium Bug Toolkit". The product was available in both stand alone and network variants. I provided training and technical support to customers either on-site or, more usually, via phone and email.

Future Micros, Brighton

Computer Hardware Sales and Build/Repair:

August 1996 - August 1998

This customer service role was with a popular and respected PC component retailer. The role required excellent product and technical knowledge, accurate pre-sales advice and after-sales care. A practical ability with PC builds, configuration and repair was also essential.

Qualifications

ISTQB-ISEB Foundation qualification in Software Testing

November 2011

Brighton College of Technology

HNC in Personal Computer Engineering

A multidisciplinary qualification covering PC hardware, Digital Electronics, C and Visual Basic programming, networking and common applications.

The University Of Sussex

2.2 BSc Honours Degree in Experimental Psychology

Final year specialisation in Artificial Intelligence

A' Levels Pure and Applied Maths, Physics, Chemistry

O' Levels 9 including English

Additional Information

As part of the commitment shown by 15below to Agile development methodologies I have been privileged to attend many courses and seminars organised by The Centre For Testing and Ministry Of Testing in Brighton and London, including "Testbash", "Testfest" and "Tester Gatherings". I have also completed the "Rapid Software Testing" course hosted by James Bach.

Testbash has also proved lucrative for me having won "bug hunt" competitions at the event on two occasions.

I have been an active member of the social committee at 15below for many years and have produced numerous activities for the fortnightly company "wind down" event. My annual Halloween adventure has run for 6 years and is regarded as a highlight in the social calendar.

In my spare time I enjoy outdoor pursuits with my family – weekend walks and summer camping are a regular activity. I am an avid reader, particularly enjoying books from sci-fi's "golden age" and I collect board games which I bring out for friends and family whenever the opportunity arises. I am also fascinated by puzzles, codes and conundrums.