Nicholas Bellerophon

Client Services Engineer at Basho Technologies, Inc

professional@nicholasbellerophon.com

Summary

Currently in full-time employment. Open to exciting opportunities.

www.nicholasbellerophon.com

My interest lies at the intersection of distributed systems, simulation, and user experience. My goal is to deliver meaningful products to people at scale. I enjoy collaborating in teams that are pursuing groundbreaking innovations in technology, while continuing to expand my own knowledge.

As an engineer with ops, design and business experience, I know that successful production requires fast feature iteration, and long-term business survival demands code-reuse and a devops approach. I believe that code should be generic, modular, and well documented. Design should focus on tight core compulsion loop, emergent social play and emotion-driven virality. I would rather code a problem solver than keep solving similar problems again and again.

My specialities are massive-concurrency server programming and cross-platform app development. I am proficient in many languages but most familiar with C#, Erlang, and Go. I am fluent in most programming paradigms, methodologies, tools and tasks.

Languages: expert: C#, Erlang; also writes: Java, Go, Objective-C, Python, Scala, PHP, C, C++
Paradigms: imperative, functional, object-oriented; actor- data-, event-driven, many more
Patterns: creational, structural, behavioral, concurrent, etc.
Methodologies: XP: Agile, Pair, TDD; Iterative Design; AT, CI; GitFlow
Design: Content, Feature, Systems, Mechanics, AI, Prototyping, UI
Business: Entrepreneur, Startup, Production Management
Tech: Unity3d, iOS, Android, AWS, NoSQL, Mongo, Riak

Experience

Client Services Engineer at Basho Technologies, Inc

September 2014 - Present

My role at Basho is a mixture of technical support, coding, onsite professional services, and team management. I work primarily around the Riak suite of database products.

On the support side, I am responsible for handling customer issues as they arise, including as part of an out-of-hours on-call rotation. Most problems we tackle are new and involve the complex interaction of sight-unseen code and operational issues. Solving these kinds of problems in a timely fashion requires strong intuition, strict logic, and fast assessment of the relevance and applicability of technical intelligence over a large body of knowledge. Moreover, the developers and operators we work with are often under stress, and the consequences of mistakes can be costly. As such, considerate communication and emotional intelligence goes a long way.

My contribution to the Riak codebase includes work on tools in support of the wider organisation, as well as bug-fixing and feature-improvements. In this respect I dip in and out of various dedicated engineering teams, learning from their work and assisting as time permits. I also assist with regular docs contributions.

The professional services work I do encompasses essentially whatever our customers need; this often includes small-group training, pre-sales support, solution architecture, data-modelling, and application programming.

Finally, as time has gone by, I have accumulated some managerial responsibilities within the EMEA client services team. These include: ensuring that SLAs are met; distributing work as needed to maintain efficiency, fairness, and morale within the team; reporting daily team status to the wider organisation; and being an advocate for the team and our customers to the executive. Here, my experience running a small company has helped me remain sympathetic to the needs of multiple levels of the organisation. Negotiating the balance of motivations, and diffusing misunderstanding, is key to the lasting success of any team.

Founder & CEO at Dreamfire Ltd

August 2011 - Present

In the first year of running a games company, my primary role was creative and managerial over our team of six developers and artists. However as time went on I reclaimed responsibility for the technical architecture and implementation of the company's intellectual property.

My focus since has been our Dreamscape product, a real-time massively multi-user server designed for theoretical maximum concurrency at 50ms ticks over Wifi and fixed-line, or 100ms over 3G. Dissatisfied with our early attempts at servers in HTTP / PHP / MongoDB / AWS, I was inspired by the potential of Erlang, learned the language, and set about building a server in it. I incorporated the most relevant ideas from a wide field of technologies, including C++ MMO architectures and in-memory NoSQL databases.

The result, now in pre-production, self-repairs like cellphone switches and runs a customer's choice of simulation in pure deterministic lockstep between servers on standard AWS Ubuntu boxes and clients on mobile, tablet, and desktop. It has the flexibility to run everything from the simplest chat service right up to and including seamless shared 3D worlds.

Senior Software Engineer at Yummi Media Group

June 2013 - September 2014 (1 year 3 months)

At Yummi I was the lead client engineer, responsible for the company's flagship product, Cinime, which deployed to both iOS and Android. I worked with several other programmers on the team, plus a software architect, line manager, and CTO. Linguistically, the code included C#, Objective-C, Java, C, C++ and some Python in our automation pipeline, all of which I touched on a continual basis.

When I started at Yummi, the client-side codebase was struggling under its own weight; the majority of development time was spent fixing bugs arising from the interaction of new features and existing code, and there were no unit tests. I made it my mission to break the back of the true problem, making the case and instilling in the team the virtue and necessity of adopting best-practices of object-oriented and functional development. Using the familiar iOS MVC APIs as a guide, I wrote a C# implementation of the view controller classes; then together with the team I successfully re-implemented the entire user interface in this library.

The result was a suite of testable, self-describing controllers with common functionality abstracted out into generic modules that can be dropped into a fresh project at any time with zero errors/warnings; and perhaps more importantly, every team member (even the server-side guys) thereafter had the capability to implement new front-end features with ease and confidence.

Game Developer at Jirbo, Inc.

July 2009 - June 2011 (1 year 11 months)

Jirbo was a startup in the wild-west days when the iPhone began. When I got there we were a team of six putting out an app a week, mostly on iOS via Unity3D. Over time the company grew, and the scope of the projects grew with it. My first apps were a puzzle game called Emblem and the first Starcraft II companion on mobile, listing units, build-orders, and strats. Next I lead development on a few sports apps: ToppsFlipp, Paper Football 3D and ESPN Shootout, which gave me a taste of physics programming.

Next, the company began two major entertainment products simultaneously: Tap Reef, a fish-farming game, and Sovereign: Kingdoms, an async multiplayer role-playing adventure game. I lead the C# programming team on Tap Reef, taking design direction from the head of product; simultaneously I was the design director and second programmer on Sovereign, which was an iOS native title: Objective-C and OpenGL on the front and a PHP / SQL backend. Sovereign was my first attempt at dealing with scalability issues arising from trying to run a hosted multiplayer experience on a client-server architecture.

Freelance Designer at Gameshastra

March 2009 - June 2009 (3 months)

Designed a couple of PSP Go games for Gameshashtra. One is a laser-puzzle game with a musical twist called "LaserRunner". The other is a tetris-style chemistry game called "Valence".

Content Designer at Turbine

July 2008 - December 2008 (5 months)

Here my role was to design and implement content into the massively-multiplayer online role-playing game, Dungeons and Dragons Online. I worked closely with the design, systems, and core teams, using Turbine's (undocumented) in-house scripting language to creating engaging quest, story and situation content for subscribers. It was also my first exposure to Agile, Scrum, and development environments and tools (in a professional context).

During my time there, Turbine brought the game from subscription-only to free-to-play, and I was responsible for revamping the new player experience (Korthos Island), including progression, tutorials, quests, characters, and the main quest hub. This was considered vitally important from a design perspective, because most of the influx of new players trying the game when it went free would experience that content first, and decide based upon that whether to keep playing and, presumably, eventually also paying.

When the free version went live, the game's player-base quickly grew by a factor of ten, and has been going strong since, with several reviews mentioning the new opening as one of the key factors in retaining new users. I also designed the end-game quest hub in Shavarath, and accompanying end-game raid dungeon (The Tower of Despair), which became popular with the existing player-base.

Design Contractor at Sierra Online

March 2008 - June 2008 (3 months)

Leader, special projects student design team.

Customer Assistant

August 2005 - December 2005 (4 months)

I assisted customers in finding books, shelved go-backs and new arrivals, and searched and modified the store and internet databases.

Office Manager, Personal Assistant at Chelsea Film Productions Ltd

July 2004 - July 2005 (1 year)

I worked as a secretary, office administrator, runner, and technical assistant.

Office Assistant, Runner

July 2000 - September 2001 (1 year 2 months)

Education

University of Southern California
Master of Fine Arts, Production, 2005 - 2008
Activities and Societies: Sigma Phi Delta (Guest)
UCL
BA, English, 2001 - 2004
Activities and Societies: Bloomsbury Literary Society (President), Debating Society (Lifetime Member)

Nicholas Bellerophon

Client Services Engineer at Basho Technologies, Inc

professional@nicholasbellerophon.com

Linked in.

Contact Nicholas on LinkedIn