

Computer Service Company Internship

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ABSTRACT

This poster describes my recent internship at Herbert Harrison and Associates. It shows an overview of the company, my role within the company, and what I have learned from working there.

Keywords

IT, Hardware, Software, EIT, PC Repair, PHP

1. INTRODUCTION

I have been working as a part-time employee for Herbert Harrison and Associates since February 2012, and will continue being an employee after this internship. I am also an EIT student finishing a Bachelor in Computing Systems at the time this is written. HH&A is a small IT business operating in Havelock North. They deal with computer and printer repair, CakePHP applications, commercial on-site repairs, computer and component sales, and IT consultancy. This internship has been a good way for me to structure my workplace training, and to realise what I have learned and still need to learn over the course of my career.



2. COMPANY POLICY

Herbert Harrison and Associates operate on a mainly 'Open Source' policy [1]. As a result most of the computer systems we use in the shop and for the internet café are Linux-based, and the applications that we develop use open-source plug-ins and platforms. We also operate on a 'We specialise in everything' policy, which means my work colleagues are experts in very

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diverse fields. As a result, HH&A operates as three separate businesses running out of the same premises, providing the partners in the business with social contact and different approaches to problem solving. Test bench repairs, sales, and the internet café are the only truly shared responsibilities.

3. AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

Over the course of the internship, my role has been to identify business practices of HH&A and also identify areas of improvement for the company.

The CakePHP ERP system that I am working on currently is a major upgrade for our invoicing and customer/job database that will result in a more usable, faster, and upgradable system. We also have a POS (Point of Sale) system for in-shop sales but it does not require upgrading at this stage.

Another area of improvement that I have identified is a lack of cross-training on specialised jobs. In other words, if a specialised job is required and the specialist is away on holiday, the customer normally has to wait for them to get back. I am attempting to get training on as many specialised jobs as possible so that I can cover for them if need be, which also allows us to do more jobs.

The final area that I have identified for improvement is that for our business to grow we need more customers. The problem is that with the current downturn younger clients tend to be strapped for cash, and since we are not in a prominent position in the shopping centre of Havelock North, we rely on traditional forms of advertisement. We are growing slowly and in specialised areas.

4. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

My role in HH&A is to cover the shop as needed, help grow the company, train to be a better employee, and improve the systems to be more user-friendly. The experience I gain from upgrading our ERP system will also go towards me doing more work for Justin (our programmer) doing CakePHP for major clients.

The internship is a way for EIT to gain feedback on the initial experience of BCS graduates in the workplace as well as a way for interns to solidify their learning and gain industry experience.

I have been very lucky to get a job in a business that deals with a wide variety of IT issues, and I think this has been a very good internship for any EIT final year BCS student to do.

From the perspective of HH&A they will get an improved ERP system and other employees will also be able to take on more work, while having more time for their families.

5. REFERENCES

- 1 Harrison, J. (2006). *Consultancy*. Retrieved October 27, 2012, from <http://www.hha.co.nz/consultancy.php>