

Phil Rae

Solution Architect and UX Consultant

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Overview

Highly experienced Solution Architect and UX Consultant of high-value, mission-critical IT projects within the public and private sectors.

A champion of industry-standard business processes, effective coding standards, thorough documentation, excellent usability and user experiences.

A practitioner of Agile software development methodologies with strict adherence to requirements coverage, delivery deadlines, and project budgets.

A specialist in the architecting of internet-based ideas and products, through the effective amalgamation of best-practice software development lifecycles and effective UX implementation.

Skills Solution Architect

▶ Over 14 years of experience in architecting LAMP-stack-based web projects, including: SaaS systems, content management systems, web-apps, e-commerce stores, subscription platforms, payment integrations, and APIs.

▶ Proficient in the planning and execution of the entire Software Development Lifecycle, initially working with stakeholders to define

Business Requirements, then following on with definition of Functional Requirements and Test Cases; through to Technical Architecture, Sprint Planning, Development, Testing, QA, and Deployment.

▶ Highly experienced in: Core OO PHP 5 and 7, PHP MVC frameworks, HTML5, CSS3, Sass, LESS, AJAX, Javascript, jQuery, Bootstrap, Foundation, MySQL. (no career breaks in partaking with hands-on development)

▶ Working knowledge of build pipelines, consisting of Gulp, Node, and Continuous Integration and Deployment (CI-CD).

▶ Significant experience of source control, server management, optimisation, accessibility, SEO, analytics, and cross-browser compatibility.

Skills UX Consultant

▶ Usability expert, with focus in: expert reviews, user research studies, analysing qualitative and quantitative data sets, user profiling, and information architecture.

▶ Years of experience in devising UX strategies for conversion measurement and optimisation of ecommerce and SaaS platforms.

▶ Experienced user of Adobe Creative Suite (Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, Fireworks, Muse, Experience Design), Balsamiq Mockups, InVision, Axure, and Microsoft Office products; in particular for UX prototyping, presentations and reporting.

▶ Training in Human Computer Interaction (HCI) as part of Internet Computer Science degree; and Nielsen Norman Group (NN/g)

training in Measuring Usability, Usability Testing, and UX Basic Training.

Employment History

Head of Product and UX

B2E Technologies Ltd

January 2016 - Present

London-based Fintech software development agency, operating within the pensions and benefits industry. Initially hired as the *Web Development Team Lead* and promoted to *Head of Product and UX* in September 2016.

Responsibilities over the entire development of company solutions include: conceptualising products ideas, strategising product deliveries, requirements definition, assisting with technical architecting, hands-on software development, and promoting excellent UX design and software development practices throughout the business. Senior manager of multiple delivery teams, involving HTML/CSS, .NET and PHP languages and frameworks, MSSQL and MySQL databases, SOA/Microservices and API-based architectures, and Agile, TDD and Continuous Integration methodologies.

Notable clients include: Scottish Widows, Lloyds Banking Group, Lloyds of London, Mercer, Barnett Waddingham, FirstGroup, and Husky Finance.

Digital Director / CTO

Pendulum Creative Ltd

(formerly Jepson Rae Ltd) 2009 – 2015

London-based design and development agency. Having initially founded the company in 2009, grew it to 7-man agency with additional contractor support. Responsibilities included Project Management, devising company and client marketing strategies, UX research and

analysis, information architecting, solutions/technical architecting, managing the UX and backend development team, and heavily partaking in hands-on software development using LAMP-stack technologies (PHP 5.6/7, MySQL), frameworks (Symfony, Silex, Phalcon, Laravel, CodeIgniter) and content management systems (WordPress).

Notable clients include:

Pharmaceutical/Medical: Roche, Reckitt Benckiser, Imperial College London, Verve London.

Real estate: Four Communications, Allsop, Sociable Surveyors.

SaaS: webexpenses, Sweeney Kincaid.

Retail/Ecommerce: London Sock Company, Skinnies, Genesis Wines, Cocoon.

Media/Consulting: ITV, Global Philanthropic, ISG (Nokia Project), Zappit.

Travel: CityUnscripted, Absolute Taste, Axon Aviation.

Senior Software Engineer

Accenture

2006 – 2009

Technical consultant and senior software developer, operating on the [UK Government's Rural Payments Agency](#) project.

Involved in the full software development lifecycle for several major product releases. Project responsibilities would include: requirements-gathering, functional design creation, focus-group facilitating, UX prototyping, hands-on software development, test planning, and test execution. New product life-cycles were instigated on a bi-annual basis using waterfall methodology.

Education and Certifications

Sun Certified Java Programmer (SCJP)

Sun Microsystems. 2008

Internet Computer Science B.Sc. (Hons)

2nd Class with Honours, University of St. Andrews.
2001 - 2005

Training and Awards

Measuring Usability

Usability Testing

UX Basic Training

NN/g (Nielsen Norman Group). 2016

Full UK Driving License (Motorcycle) 2005

Scottish Institute for Enterprise Business

Plan Competition (2nd place) 2004

Langholm Academy Sports Champion

2001

Langholm Academy *Proxime Accessit*

Award 2000

Full UK Driving License (Car) 2000

Notable Projects

The following pages outline some of the projects I have been involved with over the past few years as an employee, a contractor, and as Digital Director at Pendulum Creative.

FirstGroup Pension Hub

Data Processing Platform

2016 – 2017 (B2E Technologies)

Project involvement: Solution architecture · Technical architecture · LAMP-stack hands-on development

As a long-term client of B2E Technologies, the company provides FirstGroup with a bespoke, mission-critical ‘fintech’ platform for processing pension auto-enrolments, contribution adjustments and payments, and pension scheme opt-in/out requests. Using LAMP-stack server technologies, API integrations, and a multi-gigabyte-sized persistent storage database; the platform processes over 30,000 employee records daily, from over 20 distinct payroll import feeds. An RPC API and automated CSV exports in-turn transmit processed data to respective pension and employee rewards providers.

With the project originally operating at a loss, I was tasked with architecting the transition of the software platform from an unorganised software development lifecycle (SDLC), to one which was controlled and followed standardised business processes. Platform security, backup integrity, and inability to track historic code changes were a serious concern for the project, and so priority was given to correct this. Over 6 months of embedding SDLC process improvements and implementing critical code changes, the platform is no longer an expense, having increased its profitability by over 400%.

CityUnscripted

Consumer Web-app, www.cityunscripted.com

2014 – 2015 (Pendulum Creative)

Project involvement: Project management · Solution architecture · Technical architecture

UX involvement: Competition analysis · Information architecture · User profiling · Wireframing · Usability research of concepts and designs · Visual design input

Through Pendulum Creative, CityUnscripted approached us as a travel and tourism start-up who wanted to create a platform for pairing overseas travellers with knowledgeable local hosts and tour guides. As agency Director and Client Manager, I oversaw every stage of the SDLC, including a considerable role in influencing the design direction through UX techniques, and defining the technical architecture based on the project’s business requirements.

The devised platform is a LAMP-stack-based web application, utilising the Phalcon PHP framework, and a complexly designed persistent database which is searchable using sophisticated and efficient MySQL stored procedures and queries. It is fully integration with Google Maps API for in-app direction mapping and travel time calculations, and Stripe merchant facilities for transactional purposes.

The project is currently going from strength-to-strength, having secured an initial round of crowd-funding (£144k+), and is currently planning a second round as CityUnscripted look to expand to more cities worldwide.

London Sock Company

Fashion Brand and Subscription Service
www.londonsockcompany.com
2013 – 2015 (Pendulum Creative)

Project involvement: Project management · Solution architecture · Technical architecture · LAMP-stack hands-on development

UX involvement: Competition analysis · Information architecture · User profiling · Wireframing · Usability research of concepts and designs · Visual design input · Quantitative and qualitative data analysis of users

A start-up fashion brand with the proclamation that socks should be worn as a luxury fashion item; London Sock Company is combining the design and sale of stylish socks with the profitable business model of delivering products on subscription. During the conception of their business plan involving Pendulum Creative, we were tasked with not only defining their brand, but also designing and building an e-commerce platform to support their subscription business model and order processing needs. Using a mixture of unique design, off-the-shelf components, and considerable custom coding; I was principle in conceptualising and delivering the platform for their now highly successful business.

The company is experiencing year-on-year increases in both traditional ecommerce sales and subscriptions sign-ups, and has successfully accepted several investments, including one from the world-renowned fashion supermodel, David Gandy. The brand is constantly a feature in fashion publications and newspapers, and continually manages to be seen as a staple wear of British celebrities on TV chat shows and the ‘red carpet’.

Allsop

Corporate Website and Property Search
www.allsop.com
2015 – 2016 (Pendulum Creative and Four Communications)

Project involvement: Solution architecture · Technical architecture · LAMP-stack hands-on development

UX criteria: Competition analysis · Information architecture · User profiling · Wireframing input · Visual design input

Allsop are market leaders in property auctioneering, for both the commercial and residential property market throughout the UK and Ireland.

In a partnership between Pendulum Creative and Four Communications, I was tasked on working with the team at Four to architect the implementation of their new online offering. Having organically grown over the years, Allsop possessed a collection of distinct company websites which the company looked to consolidate into a single, easy to manage framework, with a single consumer interface. This was a huge undertaking due to the vast volumes of information to search through and present; and the complex mechanics around enabling Allsop admin staff the ability to maintain the website’s content and property listings themselves.

The result is a highly usable website, with an efficient and engaging property search facility, which is visited by thousands of people every day.