


# Billy Smithers

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## Summary

I am a Software engineer with 18 years experience.

I have a passion for system design / architecture and bringing those designs to life using agile processes, test / behaviour driven development to produce customer focused solutions.

I have experience of leading teams and mentoring team members in best practices and approaches. I work well as a member of a team or individually, communicating with both my peers, managers and stakeholders

My career highlights include:

- \* Working as part of a great team to create the Wren kitchen planner which is still used in the Wren showrooms today, being a key part of the sales cycle.
- \* Helping VictoriaPlum.com become a household name and a company that shows year on year profit and growth
- \* Building the VictoriaPlum.com engineering and devops teams and establishing the methodologies behind the systems, infrastructure and approaches

## Experience

### Senior Technical Lead

VictoriaPlum.com

Feb 2018 - Present (3 years 1 month +)

Again a change in title to reflect my current role as we had a Tech Lead per team so to bring the title in line with being responsible for the whole team.

Introduced microservices for interacting with Marketplaces(Amazon, ManoMano) and Delivery carriers (Parcelforce, DX). Moving them away from the site and a monolithic approach.

VictoriaPlum.com wins the 2019 FTA (Freight Transport Association) Logistics awards. For the systems that enable the delivery offering I am the main developer.

<https://victoriaplum.com/blog/posts/victoriaplum.com-delivery-wins-award>

<https://www.commercialfleet.org/news/latest-news/2019/10/28/fta-logistics-awards-2019-winners-announced>

### Technical Lead

VictoriaPlum.com

Jun 2015 - Feb 2018 (2 years 9 months)

A change of titles to reward the fact I was technically leading the team already. Continuing in the same vein. Introduced queue messaging for applications to communicate and remove the heavy

lifting operations from the synchronised HTTP request. One to ones with my team and mentoring my colleagues. Leading the team in following Agile Methodologies.

With my colleague Patrick Dobbs introduced Varnish HTTP caching to aid performance of the customer facing site.

Built a rules / rewards discount system so it was flexible enough to add rules and rewards easily and also meant the marketing / commercial team could create flexible and different kinds of promotions. (It was a standard 10% hard coded into the site previously). This boosted Average Order Value by £100 per order and helped conversion rise by 2%.

I also produced a delivery price system in the same vein, meaning different days of the week, couriers, timeslots and also accounting for warehouse pick capacity - each delivery date had different prices, again with the same flexibility as the discount system. This led to carriage income rising by 3% per order.



## **Lead Web Developer**

VictoriaPlum.com

Sep 2012 - Jun 2015 (2 years 10 months)

Responsible for building a development team and introducing industry standard practices and tooling such as git for version control, Object Oriented and Event Driven design, unit testing, peer to peer code reviews and separation of concerns between applications. Helped grow the team from two including myself to twenty.

The growth of the development team was a major part of VictoriaPlum.com becoming a household name and saw profit grow year on year to the point the company was invested in by TPG, who also invest in Uber and Spotify.



## **Applications Developer**

Wren Kitchens

Mar 2011 - Sep 2012 (1 year 7 months)

Wren Kitchens is a leading manufacturer / supplier of kitchens and bedrooms to the public and trade. I was responsible, as part of a team, for the development of the room planning tool used by the showroom design consultants. I was also responsible for the development of the stock warehouse system.

Languages / technologies used include PHP, MySQL, Javascript, XML, Solr.



## **Web Developer**

Spark (The new name for Sound Solutions Internet)

Dec 2009 - Mar 2011 (1 year 4 months)

Sound Solutions Internet is a Hull based company specialising in e-commerce.

As part of a team, I was responsible for the development of websites and web based systems using PHP, MySQL, CSS and JavaScript.



## Senior Web Developer

BestFrontSeat Ltd

Nov 2007 - Dec 2009 (2 years 2 months)

Bestfrontseat specialised in delivering internet video, especially the broadcasting of live events over the internet. They were one of the pioneers of HTTP based video streaming.

As a senior member of the team, I was responsible for the design and development of websites and web based systems using PHP, MySQL, XML and JavaScript.



## Web Developer

Hull College Group

Nov 2003 - Nov 2007 (4 years 1 month)

At the time of me working there Hull College had over 1,500 members of staff and up to 40,000 students enrolled at one time. As part of a team, I was responsible for the production, maintenance and administration of the college's internal websites.

\* I introduced to the college the moodle Virtual Learning Environment - moodle and elgg E-Portfolio system .

\* Re-design of the college's intranet, from static html web site to dynamic content management system/ portal with user authentication, over 1000 fully searchable documents, different views depending on level and type of user and integration with the college's VLE. The new system followed W3C guidelines (XHTML and CSS), to ensure accessibility and compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act.

\* Development of elgg modules for part of JISC funded project named HELPP.

\* Development of an application using MVC architecture (CakePHP) for the Learn Direct branch of the college.



## Office Manager

Nottinghamshire County Council

Apr 2003 - Nov 2003 (8 months)

Responsible for implementation of database systems for use with a Youth Workers team for storing information regarding events and library materials.

## Education



### University of Hull

BSc (Hons) Computer Science with Information Engineering, Computer Programming, Information Engineering, Computer Science

1999 - 2002

Winning several football trophies including the University of Hull Intra Mural League.

Member of a production team for a University of Hull Radio show.



## Zend

Zend Certified Engineer for PHP 5

2007 - 2007



## **The University of Salford**

BTEC HND, Professional Sound and Video Technology

1997 - 1999



## **Clarendon College, Nottingham**

BTEC ND, Leisure Studies

1991 - 1993

FA Leaders Coaching Badge

## **Skills**

PHP • HTML • JavaScript • Object-Oriented Programming (OOP) • SQL • Laravel • Vue.js •  
Docker Products • RabbitMQ