

Brilliant Careers for STEM students in the South West: Cold Banana

Employees:

50

Location:

Bournemouth

Industry:

Software design

What does Cold Banana do?

Cold Banana is a specialist software design agency, focusing on building software and designing software architecture. They aren't like other software agencies – they focus specifically on what's called the .Net framework, a unique programming framework that gives them their edge.

Three key questions:

- What is 'software architecture'?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks of being a specialist software agency?
- How do you manage learning several different programming languages?

Employee profile: Ollie Storey, Head of Technology

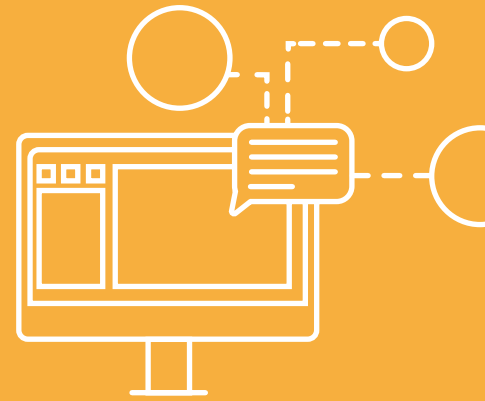
What is your favourite part of your job?

The constant problem solving – it's a dopamine hit every time you solve something. You might be stuck working on something for three or four hours, getting frustrated, and then you finally solve it and it's an amazing rush.

Where does Cold Banana's name come from?

It's a funny story – when the owner started the company he couldn't think of a name, so just kept pressing refresh on a random word generator until he found two that he liked!





How did you get to where you are today?

Computing was the only subject I enjoyed at school. I liked creating things, but I was not good at the classic creative subjects, so the combination of creativity and logical, maths-based structure in computing was perfect for me.

I did my A-Levels, including computing and IT, and applied for an apprenticeship at Cold Banana. The plan was for me to take qualifications as part of the apprenticeship, but I was learning so much at Cold Banana they pulled me out of the apprenticeship scheme and I just learnt on the job. It might be a bit of an unusual route—most people go to uni—but that just wasn't for me.



What does your job involve?

Firstly, I still write code! I started out as a developer, which was 80-90% writing code, and now as Head of Technology I probably do 40-50% coding. The difference is that now I also get involved in the higher-level software design, with a lot of server allocation and scaling. I do a lot of work on client strategy too, understanding their problems and coming up with solutions.

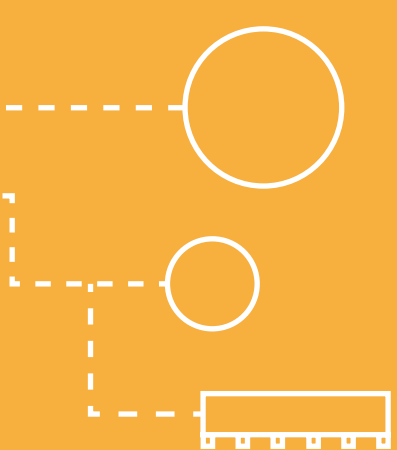
Why did you decide to live in Dorset?

I live in Bournemouth and it's lovely, you have the beach, Lulworth Cove down the road, and lots of really nice places nearby. Plus the town centre has a bit of a nightlife and city vibe, so it's a good mix.

Bournemouth is a growing digital hub too, with demand for tech rising. A lot of our clients are local, and then we've also worked with clients like the National Grid, who manage electricity across the UK, as well as businesses abroad.

What do you enjoy most in your job?

My job is constant problem-solving, so it's a huge dopamine rush every time you solve something. I might be working on one thing for three, four hours, so then



I get a lot of satisfaction out of making a big impact on a client's business. It's really rewarding helping people!