

An experienced, hands-on test lead and automation specialist, working with agile software development teams to improve testing practices, increase delivery speeds and improve product quality.

Seeking opportunities to deliver improvements to testing and engineering practices within a fast-paced and forward-thinking technology organisation.

Employment

Lead QA Engineer - ASOS.com

July 2015 – present

Team Management

- Scaled the testing practice from 40 to 100+, through a combination of hiring permanent staff, contractors and through strategic partnerships.
- Improved hiring standards by introducing a new interview process and assessment criteria, covering both technical and behavioural assessments.
- Mentored individuals to help them develop their testing skills, improve their technical understanding and manage personal challenges.
- Redefined the QA Engineer role by developing a competency framework. This was aligned with the move to cross-functional, DevOps teams.
- Organised “Get into tech” bootcamps, in collaboration with the Prince’s Trust charity.

Test Automation

- Reduced automated test execution times by rearchitecting automated test frameworks to run in parallel.
- Delivered a new automated UI test framework to replace an existing fragile and bloated framework, reducing execution times from 45 minutes to 3 minutes. Framework was built in C# using BDDfy, NUnit, Selenium WebDriver and SauceLabs.
- Improved maintainability of automated tests by refactoring to using DRY and SOLID development principles.
- Integrated automated tests into Continuous Integration pipeline, using TeamCity, OctopusDeploy and Azure DevOps, to execute after each code deployment
- Rationalised automated test frameworks to align to the automation test pyramid by migrating high-level UI and API test to unit tests.
- Accelerated creation of automated tests and reduced maintenance costs by developing an Inner Source account management library for the creation, modification and removal of test user accounts.
- Simplified performance test frameworks by building ASP.NET Web API with Docker, hosted in Azure, to provide a platform agnostic tool for generating access tokens.
- Provided earlier visibility of performance degradations by integrating performance tests into CI pipeline to provide a performance comparison between builds.
- Improved stakeholder engagement by adopting BDD and leveraging Gherkin/GWT syntax to document automated tests using tools such as BDDfy and SpecFlow.

Testing Leadership

- Aligned tooling and processes across development teams by introducing an internal Tech Radar.
- Championed “Testing in Production” initiatives, such as Synthetic Transactions and Canary Deployments by creating a maturity model and collaborating with teams to drive adoption.
- Formed a member Community of Practice, bringing together the 100+ QA Engineers in ASOS Tech to share knowledge.
- Shared knowledge across teams by hosting regular community events, training workshops and debates.
- Arranged for prominent members of the software testing community such as James Bach and James Lyndsay to run seminars and workshops.
- Performed engineering and testing maturity assessments across multiple development teams and presented to senior leadership, highlighting areas of strength and areas for improvement.
- Simplified stakeholder management and traceability between business requirements and test results by introducing a new lightweight and repeatable test planning process with automated reporting.
- Increased awareness of high attrition rates and cost implications by presenting to the Tech Leadership Team, following a spate of resignations.

Test Lead - Regus**March 2013 – July 2015**

- Coordinated and oversaw all testing activities on various IT projects including a distributed Asterisk PBX VoIP telephony platform, boasting 200,000+ users across 1000+ locations worldwide; an Interactive Intelligence i3 call centre project; an IBM Lombardi Teamworks ticketing dashboard; a Pivotal CRM implementation and various R&D projects.
- Transformed multiple projects by focusing testing and development teams on testing practices, introducing QA governance and increasing project oversight.
- Defined test strategy, created test plans, estimated test effort, coordinating UAT and OAT and chaired bug prioritisation meetings.
- Developed a UI test automation framework in C# using NUnit, SpecFlow and Selenium WebDriver.
- Automated testing of REST APIs using SoapUI.
- Implemented Continuous Integration and Continuous Delivery workflows using Jenkins CI and configured nightly automated test runs.
- Built various test tools and harnesses to enhance and accelerate exploratory testing.
- Advocated agile practices, leveraging Jira and TFS for work item and bug management.
- Assumed the role of Project Manager, overseeing and coordinating project activity and facilitating agile ceremonies.
- Line managed a team of 4 software testers.

Technical Analyst (Contract) - Aqua Global Solutions**January 2011 – March 2013**

- Designed and developed high-volume financial transaction software in RPG LE on IBM AS/400 and in C#.
- Integrated systems with financial messaging platforms including SWIFT, BACS, CHAPS and FPS.
- Delivered software projects to numerous banking industry clients including Wells Fargo, Tesco Bank and ING.
- Provided on-site and remote technical support to clients.

Quality Assurance Engineer - Symantec**June 2010 – January 2011**

- Documented test plans and submitted detailed bug reports.
- Performed bug-fix testing, regression testing and testing of third-party engineered solutions.
- Reviewed code changes and unit tests with developers.
- Created and maintained virtualised test environments using VMWare, SQL Server and MS Exchange.
- Provided one-to-one training and tutoring for new employees.

Intern Quality Assurance Engineer (Industrial Placement) - Symantec**July 2007 – August 2008**

- Performed exploratory, smoke and regression testing on enterprise email archiving software.
- Awarded an A++ award for “Outstanding Performance” and a Diploma in Industrial Studies.

Stock Team Leader - Argos**October 2002 – May 2010**

- Managing stockroom staff and daily activities. Working during and between studies.

Education**MEng Computer Engineering (IET Accredited) - *Distinction (1:1 equivalent)***
University of Portsmouth**2005 – 2010**

Main subjects: programming in Assembler, C, Java & VHDL; digital electronics; microprocessors; programmable logic; real-time embedded systems; distributed web systems; operating system design; system security; networking and data communications.

Yearly averages (first to fourth): 70%, 79%, 76% and 82%

Masters final year project grade: 90%

During the four years studying at the University of Portsmouth Neil was elected as Course Representative by his fellow students and was selected by the faculty staff to assist with the University's IET Accreditation process. Neil was also presented with several awards to recognise his academic achievements, including:

Fullbrook School & Sixth Form**1997 – 2004**

3 A-levels, 1 AS-level and 11 GCSEs

References available upon request