



The Shumaker Technology Group

To Whom It May Concern:

I began working for the Shumaker Technology Group during the summer of 2016 and continued to do so until December, 2017 when I graduated from MSU with my degree in Computer Science & Engineering. Hired in as a Technical Sales and Web Development Intern, my job duties ranged from lead prospecting to front-end web development. I was put in a unique position where I could bring new clients to the company and also contribute to the development of their websites. Around January of 2017 I transitioned to a Web Developer position. On-the-job training in conjunction with my MSU coursework helped prepare me for this role, which allowed me to take on added responsibility. While I had previously been limited to front-end web development, this new position was more focused on back-end web development and database implementation. During my time at STG I became proficient in a variety of web development languages, developed invaluable professional skills, and gained significant experience by working on meaningful projects.

When I first started working for STG, my web development experience was admittedly limited. I had some knowledge about HTML and CSS, but only what I had taught myself in my free time. Over the course of my employment with STG, I was consistently presented with opportunities to learn new languages and improve my skills. The STG staff was always willing to provide on-the-spot training, help troubleshoot an issue, or provide constructive criticism. STG leadership is also very proactive about gaining feedback from employees and gauging their interest in various types of projects. This was particularly beneficial to me because it allowed me to branch out and explore new areas. I was always facing new challenges and was never worried about getting bored from redundancy. During my employment I was able to work on a wide variety of projects using numerous technologies. Most notably, I built websites, web applications, database systems, and mobile apps. Largely in part to the experience I gained at STG, I now consider myself proficient in HTML, CSS, PHP, JavaScript/JQuery, MySQL, and have working knowledge in a handful of other languages.

In addition to developing coding skills, working for STG provided me ample opportunities to develop invaluable professional skills. It's very common for developers to have little to no interaction with clients and rely on an intermediary to relay information between the two parties. At STG, I was in constant communication directly with clients, frequently attending meetings and participating in webinars. While some people might not believe this type of experience is meaningful, I would potentially argue that my experience interfacing with clients was more beneficial to me than my development experience. I was able to experience first-hand all facets of product development, from initial meetings to launching final products. Being involved in these processes helped me see things from a "big picture" perspective which allowed me to make more informed decisions throughout the development stages. I'm incredibly grateful to have been given the opportunity to acquire these skills so early in my career, as I know that they will continue to be a valuable asset to me.

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Perhaps the most unique aspect of working for STG was the fact that I was able to work on such meaningful projects. While every company is different, it's relatively common for interns and new hires to be tucked away in the background and have limited exposure to clients. As eluded to above, I frequently found myself face-to-face with clients. This type of exposure allowed me to play key roles in big projects and build up an impressive work portfolio of websites and web applications. Being able to obtain real-world experience while still in college is not easy to come by, but working at STG allowed me to get ahead of the game and make myself more desirable to future employers.

Through my experiences at STG, I have developed a wide variety of skills that I'm certain will translate well to future positions. STG allowed me to take on as much responsibility as I was ready for and helped me establish myself as a professional. While there's no definitive best company to start a career at, STG is among industry leaders with time and effort invested into employee development and I will be forever grateful that I was given the opportunity to be a part of the STG family.

Sincerely,

Brandon Burt

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