

SalesAgility

Case Study: Apprentice Software Developer

For over a decade the SalesAgility team have been providing enterprise-class CRM consultancy services. SalesAgility is the home of SuiteCRM, the world's most preferred open source CRM solution. We are deeply committed to the processes that enable us to deliver consistently high quality outcomes for our clients. We are proud of our people and the work they do for our clients.

Apprenticeships are an integral part of SalesAgility growth plans for the future. The whole process of bringing in young talented individuals benefits the company, the apprentice and the apprentice mentors.

Ashley, our Head of Product, tells us how she felt about taking on the apprentice mentor role:

"I felt excited that I could share my knowledge with an apprentice in hopes that what they learned from their experiences here could potentially shape their future career and work ethics. Mentoring Dillon allowed me to re-focus what was important and how others would perceive the once mundane tasks with a new passion and then perhaps re-invent them to achieve more/better results.

I believe Dillon settled into the team really quickly. He appears to be a quiet person but with the close knit team we have he has opened up more and since then has encouraged some interesting discussions internally which I feel the team have embraced and enjoy thoroughly.

Dillon excels in finding the most efficient way to achieve his tasks and this has trickled down into other members of the teams way of working as well.

I look forward to mentoring another apprentice in the future."

Dillon started with SalesAgility March 2017 as Apprentice Software Developer as part of the

Product Team. He tells the story of his apprenticeship journey so far:

"Before I started my apprenticeship I was self studying object oriented programming fundamentals and other related technologies while I was working through certifications at YouTrain (European Computer Driving Licence, Microsoft Office Specialist Outlook/Excel/Word, Customer care) and improving my soft skills.

My first few weeks working at SalesAgility were incredibly enjoyable if not a little overwhelming at first. I'm very grateful to be immediately thrown straight into software development work where I was

given the opportunity to develop an ECommerce website from scratch and then present this website to the rest of my team. This helped me to pick up any skills I was missing and prepared me to quickly start to contribute to the rest of the development team. I was also given a parallel task to triage any incoming bug reports from our community by testing, confirming and assigning a priority and fixing low/medium priorities where possible.

I was also testing the code that my team members had completed and was involved in all the planning meetings and reviews. This helped me to quickly grasp agile development methodologies and gave me the product knowledge I needed along with practical experience dealing with customers. I was also quickly trained to create software packages where I assisted with creation, publishing and testing of new releases.



I was given plenty of support with my assigned tasks and had two senior developers that I could consult when I came across any difficulties.

Working towards the IT qualification was quite enjoyable as I was able to learn a few things that I might not have known about working in my current role. John my assessor, was extremely helpful in giving me the support I needed to finish the qualification and was always willing to help further my knowledge even when going past the scope of the qualification.



The apprenticeship route enabled me to get the practical experience I desired while also working towards relevant qualifications. I think going this route was beneficial for me in allowing me to use my hands on experience to solidify my future plans and maintain motivation that I might not have been able to accomplish through other routes. The practical experience I have gained will much better prepare me for the Graduate Level Apprenticeship at Napier University. I feel that with the knowledge I have gained I am well prepared for any tasks I might be assigned and my teamwork and agile

development skills will greatly assist with any group projects.

Students should consider apprenticeships as a good alternative. The practical experience you gain is invaluable and will help you to remove any doubts you might have about your chosen career path.

SalesAgility is a great place to learn on the job and has only improved since I started. The documentation and training courses continuously grow in size and the ability to immediately work in a large open source project helps to develop many critical skills that you might have missed through traditional training.”

John Docherty, IT Manager and Assessor at Youtrain had these wonderful words to say about Dillon:

“Dillon is a quiet young man who just seems to absorb everything he learns and uses this knowledge to improve the skills he already has. He always produces evidence of a very high and at times outstanding standard in his portfolio. I have had technical discussions with him that demonstrates a solid understanding of IT systems and the application development lifecycle and supports this with visual evidence that showcase his knowledge and skills.

I have enjoyed working with Dillon. He is quite quiet but when he starts to talk about the work he does it is clear he has a passion for this.”

Dillon is SalesAgility first apprentice to continue on to further study through the Graduate Level Apprenticeship (GLA). By completing his Modern Apprenticeship he has gained entry to 2nd year of the GLA in Software Development at Napier University and will start working towards his degree in September. With the wealth of knowledge and work experience Dillon has already gained we're sure he will enjoy the opportunity and experience of being a student 1 day a week to gain another qualification. **We will re-visit the story once Dillon has started his new “working student” journey to see how it unfolds. #tobecontinued**

For any further information on **apprenticeship/junior developer opportunities** within SalesAgility, or to organise a career insights session for a group of students, please **contact** Jenni McDonald on +44 01786 585499 or jenni.mcdonald@salesagility.com.