Simon F. Worgan

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Education

University of Southampton - PhD *2005–2008*

Ph.D. in 'Information: Signals, Images, Systems': Through strong self-motivation I was able to complete my PhD in under three years, while based in a world-leading machine learning group I developed a model investigating the evolution of speech. This lead to published innovations in speech recognition, data mining, multi-agent systems and physiological modelling.

University of Birmingham - MSc *2004–2005*

Masters Degree in Natural Computation with Distinction (MSc): Graduating first in my year, notable highlights of this Masters course include passing with 100% in Machine Learning.

University of Birmingham - BSc *2001–2004*

First Class Degree in Computer Science & Artificial Intelligence with Honours (BSc): While at Birmingham I funded my education with a number of industrial (e.g., working at Nat West) and academic jobs. This gave me a practical grounding in both communication skills and industrial working practices.

Employment

Research Associate *2008*

I'm currently working on a short term contract as a Research Associate on an EU funded project that aims to develop a virtual conversational 'Companion'. Working within a consortium of 14 partners on this £30 Million project key responsibilities include developing a unified 'persona' for the system by collaborating closely with Telefonica, Loquendo, Polar Rose and Napier Universities HCI department. Pushing the state of the art in user interaction I developed components of the Companion that were capable of exploiting information from social networking websites and responding to the users emotional state, which was ascertained from changes in their speech and behaviour. Further information can be found at http://www.companions-project.org.

Software Developer *2004*

At Aston University I designed and deployed a Neural Network to perform advanced data analysis of their UCAS database. This data mining allowed them to identify potentially successful 'experience based' applicants, broadening their range of acceptable qualifications without compromising quality, a key requirement of current government policy.

Database Developer *2004*

Initially I was employed by Aston to construct a comprehensive database of UCAS applicants and current students in their School of Business. By completing this job to a high standard, on time and under budget I was able to generate further business by proposing a number of solutions to their current admissions problems. By taking the initiative I was able to fund my Masters by working as a software developer specialising in data mining solutions (see above).

Research Assistant *2003*

As an undergraduate I conducted research into Cartesian Genetic Programming and this was funded by a Birmingham University Research Scholarship. This resulted in a complex Java program, that would grow and display an adaptive self repairing system.

Web Designer/Programmer *1999–2001*

After leaving school I set up my own Web Design business and won contracts from various companies, for example New World Music (500 CD on-line secure shopping site, website turnover £40,000 c. 2001) and Sure Group Marketing. As well as the programming and design this job required self-motivation, an understanding of the business, and excellent communication skills.

Technical Skills

Programming: Java, Matlab, C++, Python, Prolog, HTML, iC.

Machine Learning: Self-organising Maps, Neural Networks, Support Vector Machines, Hidden Markov Models.

Operating systems: Linux (current setup Kubuntu 8.10), Mac, Windows.

Media: Latex, Keynote, MS Office, GIMP, Final Cut Express, Dreamweaver (some).

Communication Skills

Management: By supervising the Sheffield University 'persona' team and coordinating with numerous European partners I acquired essential management skills. These have been developed further by my work on the organisation committee of a number of international conferences, e.g., ALife XI and Interspeech 2009.

Publications: Over the course of my PhD my work has been widely published in a range of peer reviewed international journals and conferences and since joining the Companions project I have worked successfully with my team to publish further collaborative work. Further details can be found at `www.ecs.soton.ac.uk/people/sw205r/publications`

Presentations: I have given a wide number of presentations to academics, students, business partners and the wider public. This has given me the skills to tailor my message appropriately and means that I am comfortable in front of a wide range of audiences.

Teaching: I have been teaching since I was a second year undergraduate. This included supervising workshops, programming labs, and giving lectures in AI programming, Object Oriented design, Software Engineering and Discrete Mathematics.

Public Engagement: By volunteering for the Walking With Robots group (`www.walkingwithrobots.org`) I have given a number of demonstrations and presentations to the general public, conveying the fundamentals and future potential of Artificial Intelligence.

Interests

As the captain of an adventure racing team, enthusiastic climber and mountain biker, I pursue my passion for the great outdoors

At university I participated in a number of sports and was elected to the position of vice-captain of the Birmingham University triathlon team. This involved organising teams, running training sessions and collaborating with the Athletic Union. After significantly increasing membership we were awarded university team of the year.

In all of these University sports clubs I have kept my Web Developer skills up to date by always being elected to the position of media officer. This allowed me to successfully promote the respective club through on-line and off-line marketing. I was also able to use a number of innovations, calendars, blogs, message boards etc.., to keep club members up to date and to promote a greater level of team spirit.

References

I am happy to supply these on request.