Imperial College
London

Case Study: Internship

Yangfan Zhang, Third Year Computing Student

Which company did you undertake work experience with?

The Hut Group - it is an online retailer in the health and beauty sector

How did you go about finding the internship?

I took part in the Hut Challenge, a machine learning competition organised by the Hut Group. At the end of the competition, I applied for a six month placement with the company.

What was the timescale for your application?

I started applying for my placement between Oct 2013 and Jan 2014. I applied to more than 10 companies. The interviews took place during the same period.

What was the application and interview process like?

The application to the Hut Group involves sending a CV to the recruiter, and arranging for a half day on-site interview.The interviews involve chatting with different groups of software engineers from the Growth Team. The interview questions ranged from software development practices to technical/algorithmic questions

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>
> - Yangfan Zhang

How big was your team and where did it sit in the organisation?

I worked in the Growth Team. It consists of about twenty engineers and is still expanding. The team focuses on tackling existing technical problems in an innovative manner.

What was your role and what did it involve?

I was mainly a front-end developer. I built user interfaces for internal applications developed by our team. My work makes the internal apps more user friendly and easily accessible to other teams within the company.

What was the most valuable thing about your work experience?

I really treasure the friendship with my colleagues and the technical skills learned. I appreciated the freedom to choose any projects I liked and the support given by my manager and colleagues.

Do you have any tips for future Imperial students looking to make the most of their summer?

Apply for internships early. Seek help from the Career Service to improve your CV. When deciding offers to accept, choose to work with people you like and work on things you are interested in.