The Ring

Ring news

The Ring surveyed this year's graduates about their career plans. The Editor sums up the results.

As another academic year ends and a new one approaches, I thought I'd ask the latest cohort of graduates about their plans post graduation.

It was interesting, though not unexpected, to hear that the vast majority (88%) had taken steps to enhance their CV and career prospects by taking a summer internship while at Cambridge. Indeed, 36% had done so at the end of both their first and second years.

Higher salaries overseas make it hard for UK SMEs to recruit Cambridge's computer scientists

Economic malaise may have contributed to the high percentage of students (40%) continuing with academic study. Of the 60% entering the graduate job market, 70% are entering the IT sector — up sharply on previous years. Given the demand the Computer Laboratory sees from IT companies, this comes as no surprise. Indeed, the Lab's experience suggests that demand exceeds supply, and this perhaps explains starting salary expectations. 42% of respondents expected to earn a starting salary of £30k, while over 30% expected £35k or more. According to the Association of Graduate Recruiters, this compares with an average graduate salary of £25k.

Some respondents, having received substantially higher job offers from overseas, were of the opinion that jobs in the UK were poorly paid. Such views, combined with the general expectation of a higher-than-average UK starting salary, may serve to explain why some SMEs have found it difficult to recruit Cambridge's computer scientists this year.

Those looking to recruit in 2012 should also be aware that students start making job applications early in the academic year. 85% began before or during Michaelmas Term, while no-one left it later than Lent Term.

The vast majority of the Lab's graduates (84%) were happy with the careers support they received while at Cambridge. Most praised the CV clinics run by the University Careers Service, while the Lab's recruitment fair was seen as the first (and often last) stop in the search for a job.

In the interests of fairness and objectivity I should mention that while 80% of respondents thought their time at Cambridge had helped them develop the right skills for employment, 20% did not. Criticism came not from those following the more conventional well trodden employment path, but rather those seeking employment with start-ups. They complained that they would have benefitted from learning programming languages used by start-ups. Though as one graduate put it "I hope the course has given me enough breadth to allow me to stay up-to-date and learn new things by myself in the future."

Graduate survey data

Are you entering the graduate job market?
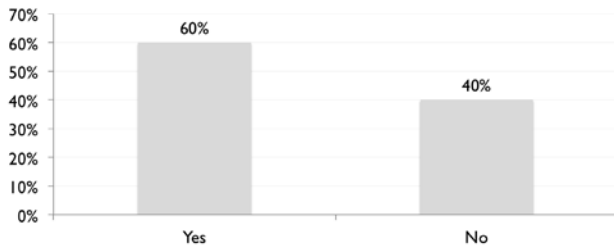
Did you do any voluntary work during your time at Cambridge?
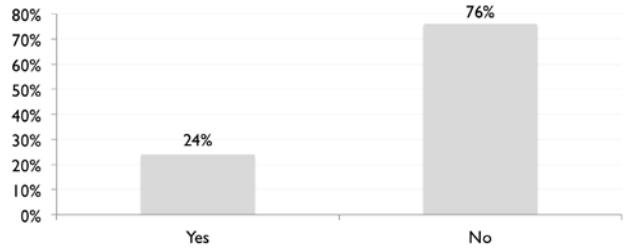
Did you undertake an internship?
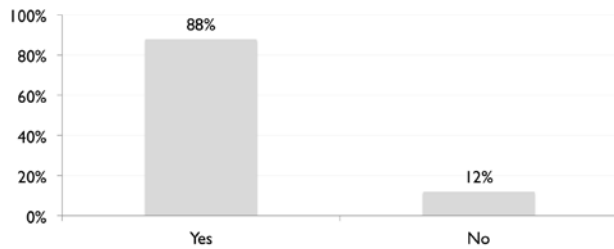
When did you do an internship?
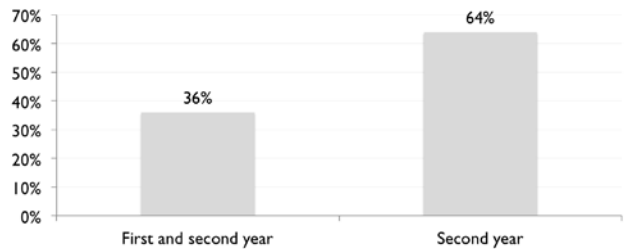
Do you think your time at Cambridge helped you to develop the right skills for employment?
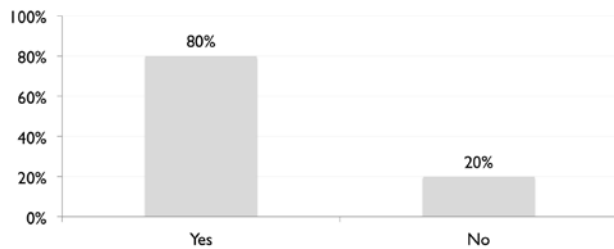
Did you receive any careers support during your time at Cambridge?
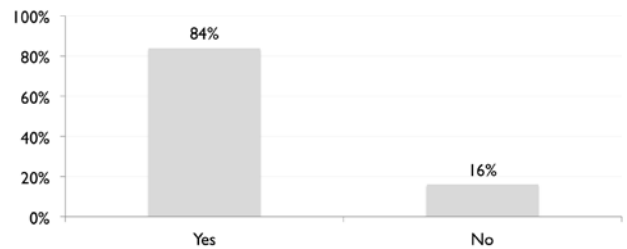
When did you start making graduate job applications?
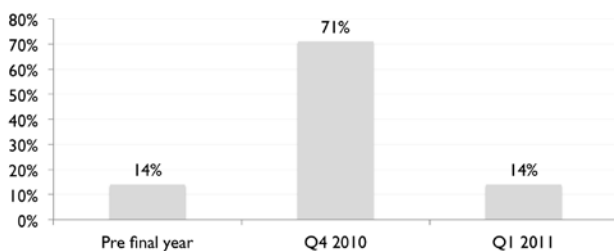
What was your preferred location for employment?
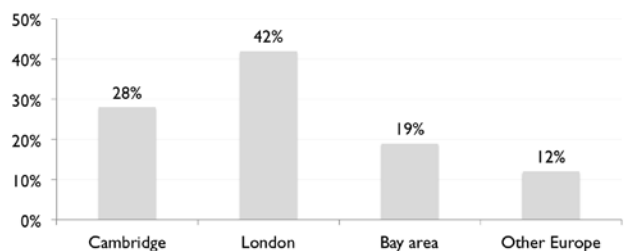
What starting salary do you expect?

Nights at Round Tables

The Ring's Round Table events are uniquely stimulating, writes **Sean Moran**.

How do I describe what happens at an event when bound by a rule that prohibits any indication of who was there, whom they represent or what they said? The Chatham House Rule (yes, there is just the one) is unequivocal:

> "When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the **Chatham House Rule**, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed."
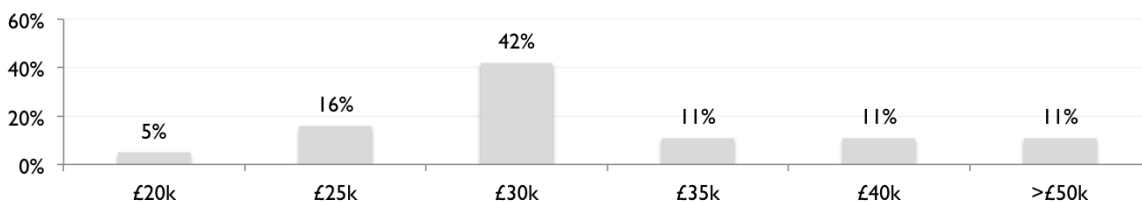
So I cannot tell you the people I was fortunate enough to meet at two of the Round Table dinners organised by the Ring, which I (for my own entirely selfish reasons) decided were worth attending: the first order of business at each of these dinners is to set out clearly that certain aspects of the conversation are entirely private.

My personal interest is in the Law of Property, particularly in what property rights might be created when computer software is written, so what better place to explore the attitudes of creative people who have made impressive contributions to this technology than at Ring dinners? The Rule allows me to say what I get out of these occasions, but I must remain imprecise in saying that, although one of these dinners had invited Multimap founder Sean Phelan as speaker and another had invited Dr Andy Harter CEO of RealVNC, I can neither confirm nor deny that they were actually present, although I think I am allowed to say I was not disappointed.

I have enjoyed dining in College many times. One agreeable plus of my Cambridge degree is a right to dine at Trinity High Table. Add to this the Annual Gathering each decade (or perhaps, as the years go on, that should be "decayed") and the occasional Donors' Dinner at my wife's College, and I have formed a good idea what to expect when I sing for my supper at a college table. But rather than quietly listening to eminent academics rightly agreeing that so-and-so's Nobel prize (recently awarded) was for work he or she completed thirty years earlier, taking part in the active exchange at a Round Table delivers quite a different experience.

For one thing the venues are more intimate. We have met in private dining rooms — the Master's Lodge Dining Room at Catz, or the Old Combination Room. After an informal drinks reception we take our places for a pleasant three-course dinner served discreetly, where conversation can take place in complete confidence. A moderator (I cannot say who!) guides the proceedings. The Chatham House Rule is put in play, the guest speaker is introduced, and during the first course gets an opportunity to steal a march on the other diners by eating while those around the table are given a chance to say as much or as

At the core is the shared interest in the technology, but it is its use for innovation, and the creation and exploitation of new visions that is exciting.

little as they wish about themselves and their reasons for being there. Then the speaker has our ears while we the other diners eat, but there is no set format and the exchanges of questions, comments and interjections can go anywhere at all. With anonymity shields up and other defenses down the conversation can cover any topic. At the core is the shared interest in the technology, but it is its use for innovation, and the creation and exploitation of new visions that is exciting.

Like: Why does a major corporation pay substantial licensing for a product they can have for free? How can the Web invigorate the Third Sector? Where can you talk to sources of finance that already understand your world? What are the worst mistakes you can make when growing your fledgling startup to an enterprise that can survive and prosper without you? When you have done it once, how do you do it again? And again? (I mean how do you grow an enterprise from scratch, not make more mistakes.) How do you cashflow a software company if you never charge for the software, and why is it important to know where the biggest postboxes in Cambridge are located? How come a

'Net service highly regarded in one jurisdiction can have you facing a prison sentence for fraud in another? What is the strategy when your software product is suddenly faced with a give-away substitute from an industry behemoth? Can knowledge of a natural phenomenon be exploited simultaneously to increase a system's capacity and reduce costly waste? How did the principal protagonists really react to their portrayal in BBC's MicroMen? And what do you honestly think about lawyers?

The demographic attending is broad: the youngest a PhD student and the oldest? Well, me, probably, also a PhD student — but that covers a forty-year spread. The dialogue is erudite, entertaining, informed, occasionally quite animated (though only one wineglass has been upset). I particularly like to see a CEO's reaction to a question on patent infringement, which raises the temperature quite a bit. (That is the main reason why I am there: considering whether patents drive innovation or drag it down.) Discussion can touch on some original idea for a product, but the discretion imposed by the Charter House Rule is supplemented by an agreement on confidential disclosure, so any future patent application is not prejudiced. Proceedings are very informal; you can linger over coffee or dash for a train, as you like. Any dietary requirements can be accommodated, so I am told, and actually the table isn't round.

Then a little later I get an email from [X]:

> "You may remember that we met last week in St Catharine's College. I had a most enjoyable and stimulating evening! You mentioned that …"

which is the welcome result I wanted!

So the next time the Ring secretariat flags an upcoming Round Table, fish out your diary, iPhone, Blackberry, whatever. You never know whom you will meet, and of course you won't be able to tell.

Sean Moran (Trinity 1967) is an Associate Member of the Ring because he failed to get onto the Dip Comp in 1970 [his words not mine —Ed], so spent two years as an Assistant Mathematician with Plessey before taking an MSc in Computer Science at Birmingham. After 35 years writing software he decided to switch to legal studies. He is quite concerned that in some jurisdictions it is now illegal to use certain numbers. If Intellectual Property issues have given you problems, or if you have never even given the matter a second thought, he would like to hear from you. Please e-mail t.s.moran@open.ac.uk.

Who's who

Gavin Andrews (M BA86) is a senior consultant at SplotMark, where he develops high performance low latency systems for the investment banking industry. Previously he was an executive director at Morgan Stanley.

Pradipta Biswas (TH PhD10) has been appointed coordinator of the working group of a UN agency which aims to make audiovisual media accessible to people with disabilities. His role is to scope the terms which the working group will cover. He will contact experts in the field to get their views, talk to them about what they can do to improve accessibility and how. Pradipta was appointed as a result of work he has been doing with the European Union Task Force on Standardisation of User Models.

Pradipta is a research associate in the Engineering Design Centre at the University of Cambridge, where he is researching ways of making modern digital devices, particularly interactive systems, accessible to elderly users and people with different ranges of abilities.

Simon Bone (CC BA99) is a managing director at Byte Art, a leading new media and on-line development agency.

John Brimacombe (T Dip91) is a non-executive director at True Knowledge Ltd.

Will Collins (G MA97) is a business development director at Microsoft, where he drives the company's world-wide mobile services distribution deals.

Patrick Corr (Q MET97) works in Hong Kong where he is co-founder and director of Decision Fuel, a market research company.

David Cleevely (PhD) has joined Neul, a new mobile wireless data service provider, as a non–executive director.

Peter Cowley (F MA77) is an investor and board director at WorkSnug Limited. WorkSnug is a website and augmented reality iPhone application which connects mobile workers to the nearest and best places to work in the world's major cities.

Both Peter and **Jack Lang** (EM Dip71) recently visited China as part of the CHECKUK 2011 judging panel.

CHECUK is the only business competition currently supported by the Education Section of the Chinese Embassy. It provides a platform for transferring innovative ideas into commercial entities and acts as a bridge between participants, investor groups and high–tech incubators from more than 15 Chinese cities.

Chris Craddock (CHR BA82) lives in Switzerland where he is COO of Symfact, the leading provider of Contract Lifecycle Management solutions.

Sean Crampton (Q BA06) is still at Metaswitch, but is now working for its Thrutu division.

After working at Facebook for a couple of years, Nathan Dimmock (JE BA01 PhD05) has been lured back to Morgan Stanley, where he is VP UNIX Engineering.

Marco Donzelli (HH MBA11) is VP sales, strategy and business development at Guestaurant. For the uninitiated, a guestaurant is like a dinner party or any other food related event, held in a special venue where paying guests turn up. The venue could be the chef's living room, the kitchen of a cooking school, a gallery, a park, or wherever you can gather people for a meal.

David Franklin (CTH PhD95) is a senior software engineer at IBM in London.

Alastair Gourlay (SE MPhil02) not only arranges the Ring's London Ringlet Bar events but is also Secretary of the Cambridge Society of London.

Wee Teng (Will) Hoon (T PhD89) has been CEO of Sateri Holdings Limited since June 2010 and CEO of Sateri International since 2009. He is responsible for overall management and performance. He served as Executive Vice President of Transpac Capital Pte Ltd from 2000 to 2007 and was responsible for its overall portfolio of investments. Will has more than 16 years of experience in the private equity and management consulting industries.

After a career in the City and as an academic economist, **Dr Rupert Macey-Dare** (DAR MA Dip86) was called to The Bar in 2005 and currently works at Freshfields.

Dr Phebe Mann (HH BA01) has received the Tomorrow's Leader Award at the UKRC Women of Outstanding Achievement awards at the Royal Academy of Engineering. Phebe is a senior lecturer in civil engineering, highway and transportation at the Univer-

sity of East London. Previously she was a consultant and associate lecturer of the Open University in business courses including the MBA, and engineering design courses.

Neil McClements (JBS10) is CEO at Merchenta. Merchenta helps retailers maximise their on-line revenues, increase their conversion rates and reduce merchandising costs by engaging consumers with branded, interactive behavioural merchandising solutions.

Andrew Medworth (SE BA05) is a software engineer at Goldman Sachs.

Timothy Mills (CAI BA, PhD94) works at Clinical & Biomedical Computing Ltd, an established commercial spin–off from the University of Cambridge. CBCL is responsible for developing and supporting the electronic versions of the British National Formulary, which aims to provide prescribers, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals with authoritative, up–to–date information about the use of medicines.

Sean Mullaney (CC BA00) now works for Google where he is a sales operations manager.

When not providing business analysis for investment banks and financial institutions, **Kim Powell** (F BA06) is a volunteer at IIBA, the independent non–profit professional association serving the growing field of Business Analysis. Kim arranges networking events across the Midlands.

Ian Pratt (K BA92 PhD97), co–founder of XenSource (which was acquired by Citrix for $500m in 2007), has left Citrix where he was VP of Advanced Products and a member of the CTO committee. He has started a new company, Bromium, working in the intersection of security and virtualisation. He remains Chairman of Xen.org.

Umar Saif (T PhD02), Associate Professor at the School of Engineering, Lahore University, has been recognised by MIT Technology Review as one of the top 35 innovators (TR35) in the world.

Dr Umar Saif

According to MIT Technology Review, "The TR35 recognises the world's top 35 young innovators that are radically transforming technology as we know it. Their work — spanning medicine, computing, communications, energy, electronics and nanotechnology — is changing our world."

Dr Saif joins an elite group of researchers and entrepreneurs selected over the decade. Previous winners include: Larry Page and Sergey Brin, co-founders of Google; Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook; Jonathan Ive, the chief designer at Apple; and Professor Alan Aspuru-Guzik for his work on Quantum computers.

Nick Telford-Reed (C Dip00) works for WorldPay where he is CTO Worldwide Payment Gateway.

Dr Gordon Woo's (CHR Dip80) latest book, *Calculating Catastrophe*, has recently been published by Imperial College Press. The book has been written to explain to a general readership the underlying philosophical ideas and scientific principles that govern catastrophic events both natural and man–made. The book will be of interest to anyone aspiring to understand catastrophes better, but will be of particular value to those engaged in public and corporate policy, and the financial markets.

George Wright (CC BA09) is a software developer at Research in Motion in Toronto.

Brian Yang (JE MBA11) is co-founder and chairman of cacafly.com, Facebook's partner in Taiwan.

Aurelie Herbelot

Hamsters, umbrellas and cannibalism.

On July 21, 2011, Peer Press was featured in the German daily newspaper *Die Tageszeitung*. The subtitle of the article, expertly crafted by journalist Margarete Stokowski, read as follows:

"A conversation about Internet search, hamsters in cars, umbrellas and cannibalism."

I was immediately taken by the description, or rather the imagery. It seemed to convey adequately the spirit of our company, referring quite directly to its output so far and more indirectly to the conceptual uncertainty surrounding its structure, and the way we all worked for it (I am a bit unhappy about the use of the words "work" and "company", but I will come back to this later).

Peer Press (http://www.peerpress.de/) was founded in 2010 as a micro-publishing house in Berlin. Its first publication, entitled *discourse.cpp*, came not from the literary world, but from some routine research at the Computer Laboratory.

The root of it all can in fact be traced back to 2006 — the year I was writing my MPhil thesis on the topic of ontology extraction. The goal of the project was to produce automatically the type of taxonomical trees that biologists work with by analysing the on-line encyclopaedia Wikipedia. The software, having processed the couple of million articles that then comprised the resource, was supposed to return hierarchical relations of the type "the cat is a feline". I reproduce here a few typical lines from the output:

african stonechat is-a saxicola

aspidogastrea is-a fluke

batagur baska is-a turtle

bombinatoridae is-a fire-bellied toad

It is still a matter of debate who first recognised the artistic potential of what I simply saw as an evaluation nightmare: my partner, Eva von Redecker, who ended up founding Peer Press with me; or the American poet Avery Slater, who was then my neighbour in Trinity Hall. Regardless, the idea caught on and, as I worked on my PhD in the Natural Language Group, I learned to look at the output of my programs in a different light. By then, my work focused on distributional semantics: the notion that the meaning of words can be approximated by the linguistic contexts in which they appear. Following that hypothesis, it is possible to formulate general rules about semantic relationships between words: for example, we can say that two words have similar meanings if they appear in the same kind of contexts. Computing what is known as "distributional similarity" is an eye–opener on how people in the 21st Century use and understand concepts. It should come to no surprise that, to a computer using Wikipedia as background linguistic knowledge, the concepts of "nation" and "state" are closely related. Results take a more sociological and psychological dimension, however, when the pairs "pride/clothes", "politics/shootout" or "homosexuality/cannibalism" are derived as similar.

Good poetry is often associative in a complicated, unexpected way. So was the output of the distributional similarity experiments. Eva and I took the leap and decided to publish the results. Not as a scientific paper, but as literature. The amount of editing that went into the final product, *discourse.cpp*, varies according to the poem. Some pieces were left in their rough state of computer output; some of them received some attention: punctuation, coordination and prepositions were added; content was sometimes deleted when the output was too lengthy. In rare cases, content words were inserted to provide a narrative. The short poem *Umbrella* demonstrates the use of such insertions (the verbs "want" and "have" were added at editing stage):

The Umbrella
You want an umbrella and all you have is
a flannel handkerchief and a sponge.

Whatever minor editing took place, however, the result remains true snapshot of how the contemporary English speaker uses concepts such as "love", "family", "strength" and "whisky".

We could have submitted the final book to an established publisher. But personal beliefs and advice from friends made us rather wary of the traditional use of copyright, where the author transfers all her rights to a company, and the public gets limited access to the author's work. We thought of self-publishing and slowly came to the realisation that creating a platform where copyright is no infringement of the right of the author to be read, disseminated and "re-used" may be of great benefit to others. We founded Peer Press.

Peer Press is officially a company but it is very loosely structured. People have been coming in and out, helping with certain aspects of the publishing process, throwing in ideas for the future, or just drinking

generically. I believe that the author of *discourse.cpp*, O.S. Le Si (an anagram on the name of my actual computer in Cambridge) is no longer with us. This fact keeps being a great source of disappointment to Berlinian journalists who first request an interview with the author of *discourse.cpp*, or at least a photograph, and eventually realise that they will have to make do with a couple of editors.

Talking of journalists, I note that I have omitted some due explanations in this article. Hamsters in cars. Not quite "in", actually — the preposition is a matter of journalistic licence. But O.S. le Si would tell you that the concepts of "hamster" and "car" are related. This is, again, about the deep significance of poetry. Or possibly about five-

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Whisky

some fubar song with a wawa... the phoneme p... the backwash starts... liquor,
turpentine... the broth: marijuana beverage with expressionism... with honey... it
curds and clogs and mashes its own debris with a snobbery of naturalist...
- - - banker with his - - - leather... - - - banker...

I chill.
I age.
I darken.
I blend.

Like an old punk, sulphide in her veins.

Reproduced from discourse.cpp, *p37*

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vodka in our crowded office. Apart from the actual printing, we (this loose community) have done everything ourselves (copy editing, layout, illustration, down to the production of the camera–ready PDF), using open source software. Here I should pay a tribute to the very good "Scribus" publishing software, which our printer expressed many reservations about, but which helped us produce our book cover exactly as we wanted it, and to professional standards. We like to think that the way we work, or rather come together, is very inspired by the open source community. The text of our first book is available under a Creative Commons License; the next ones will be too.

Our future programme includes books written by humans (a novel and a comic are on their way), but we are very keen on keeping the machine on our authors list. Regrettably, I use the term "machine"

year-old humour. Or about the fact that this is research after all, and that *discourse.cpp* is definitely reading material for computer scientists who like to laugh about their own trade.

Hamsters and cars? That's right. Both have wheels.

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discourse.cpp can be ordered from *http://peerpress.de. It is also available from Dialogue Books, Schönleinstraße 31, 10967 Berlin, Germany.*

Anna Griffiths

Would moving from a large company to become the first employee of a new start-up make you nervous? **Anna Griffiths** (DAR MPhil03) did just that, and she hasn't looked back.

TR: Anna, can you tell me what you did after graduating from the MPhil in Computer Speech, Text and Internet Technology in 2003? When did you start working at ElasticHosts?

AG: After the MPhil, I moved to London and started working for tech start-up Forbidden Technologies, doing pre-sales, training and tech support for their Web-based video editing application, FORscene. I stayed there for four years and then left to sell video cards for Matrox, where I dealt with the distribution channel in France, Germany and Eastern Europe. In 2008 I joined TechExcel and worked on sales, support and professional services for their ticketing software solutions. I met Richard Davies at Forbidden when I first started there and we became good friends. At the end of 2009 he approached me to become the first employee of ElasticHosts and I accepted.

You certainly see a different side to your friends when you start working with them

TR: What prompted you to leave the relative safety of a large company to work for a start-up?

AG: Well, it was a big risk, as they could only guarantee to pay me for the first three months — beyond that it would depend on how everything worked out. However, the opportunity to work with friends and being involved at the early stages of a company with such big promise outweighed the relative safety of sticking with TechExcel.

TR: Can you tell me about ElasticHosts? What is its business?

AG: ElasticHosts Ltd is a private UK company, founded in March 2008 by Cambridge Maths alumni Richard Davies and Chris Webb, building on the traditional hosting business, Arachsys, which they started together as undergraduates in 1998.

ElasticHosts is a leading public cloud hosting provider based in London, with capacity in multiple data centres in the UK and North America. We provide ultra-flexible and easy-to-use cloud server capacity for scalable Web hosting and on-demand burst computing such as batch processing, development and test, backup and disaster recovery and cloud bursting.

Our service is self-managed and our customers have the freedom to run the OS and applications of their choice, as well as having free choice of CPU and RAM allocation. You can pay by the month or by the hour. We offer a free trial on our website: www.elastichosts.com.

As well as selling cloud servers to end users, we also license our technology as ElasticStack, to enable other hosting providers and IT resellers to offer a cloud hosting service to their customers on their own hardware under their own brand: www.elasticstack.com.

TR: What is your role within the company?

AG: I am in charge of global sales and technical support for ElasticHosts, originally handling all customer-facing enquiries myself and now heading up a team of five, located all around the world in London, California and Thailand.

TR: Why should companies looking for cloud hosting choose ElasticHosts rather than its competitors such as Amazon (through AWS EC2) and Rackspace (through Rackspace cloud servers)?

AG: We aim to differentiate ourselves in the market through technology, ease of use and service. We give our customers more technical control of their servers, a simpler user interface and we offer continuous instance sizing rather than forcing certain configurations. We have also built up a very good reputation for customer service.

TR: ElasticHosts is strongly targeted at the SME market. What pricing plans are available?

AG: Our pricing is very flexible — you can select exactly the resources that you need, rather than having to select a certain plan. Pricing starts from just £30 for a subscription with no commitment beyond the first month. We offer two months free if you pay for a year in advance. We also have reseller/referral schemes. Find out more here: www.elastichosts.com/cloud-hosting/pricing.

TR: ElasticHosts' founders are both Cambridge graduates. Has that created a distinctive organisational culture?

AG: I don't know whether this is strictly a Cambridge thing or whether it's that we are all mathematically minded, but one of the things I love about ElasticHosts that is different from some other companies I've worked for is that logical arguments are respected more than personal opinions. We definitely work hard but we have a lot of fun too!

> *You have more opportunity to make an impact on the overall success of the business when working for a small company, as you can talk directly to and influence the people who created the product and who are running the business.*

TR: You've now been able to compare and contrast working for large and, comparatively, small companies. What are the main differences, and would you consider working for a large company again?

AG: You have more opportunity to make an impact on the overall success of the business when working for a small company, as you can talk directly to and influence the people who created the product and who are running the business. You can shape the processes. Larger companies have more established processes in place that you have to fit into, and you are further away from the heart of the business. Hopefully I will be there to see ElasticHosts grow into a large corporation!

TR: Your friendship with Richard Davies lured you to a job at ElasticHosts. According to a number of studies, working with friends can enhance job performance. However, have you found any difficulties balancing the chemistry of friendship on and off the job?

AG: It's actually worked out extremely well. I have a lot of respect for what Richard and Chris have created and it's very exciting to be involved in a company producing such cutting-edge technology. The trick is to hire people who complement your skillset rather than clash with it. Everybody has their own strengths. You certainly see a different side to your friends when you start working with them but I wouldn't say it has been difficult to keep our friendship balanced. Richard says he always knew I was endlessly enthusiastic, but the most surprising thing for him is how dedicated I am to my work on top of that.

You can find out more about ElasticHosts at http://www.elastichosts.com

Shima Barakat

From idea to commercialisation: a journey through the year at the Cambridge University Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning with **Shima Barakat**.

I met Matt at the beginning of October in our common room. A smiling, charming young man who had taken an excellent redundancy package from a very large software company and had come to Cambridge to study for an MBA and create his big opportunity. By January he was sitting in my office with another smart, keen MBA student who had moved to Cambridge with his family. Together they had two business ideas that they wanted to talk about. Both involved a virtual forum and both were potentially very lucrative. They also both shared a passion for helping and supporting young ventures, so their ideas were in that space even though they were very different. When Matt and his partner took an MBA elective with me, they discovered that one of their ideas did indeed have significant value. But they also realised that what they needed to do to make their vision a reality no longer aligned with Matt's own values. Therefore, still the best of friends, Matt and his partner split up. Matt in turn went to register for the MBA Entrepreneurship Concentration where he met up with a fellow student who had another software-based business idea, and together they now seek a software developer to partner with as they set up their company.

Every year we work with scores of MBA students, PhDs, post-docs and undergraduates with entrepreneurial aspirations and inclinations.

Matt's story is not unique. Every year we work with scores of MBA students, PhDs, post-docs and undergraduates with entrepreneurial aspirations and inclinations. Almost all the students who get involved with the entrepreneurship courses through the Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (CfEL) are looking for a great idea that they could contribute to, or have a great idea for which they need help or support. From October to July, the entrepreneurial journey with CfEL is vibrant and adaptive to the different needs and requirements of our diverse community of stakeholders. Our motto is "spreading the spirit of enterprise" and we take it very seriously. Our programmes not only impart knowledge and develop skills, but aim to inspire a vision and deliver on that vision through entrepreneurial endeavours and continuous learning. We see ourselves at the heart of the University, igniting sparks of entrepreneurialism and connecting the academic and practice communities. We value our regular contributors (all 300+ of them) and continuously aspire to build new relationships between different members of our community as well as ourselves. Primarily we connect entrepreneurs who are interested in working with capable, driven, management–savvy students (usually MBAs) on projects, as business partners, in mentoring/advisory/investment capacities or for recruitment of talented MBAs.

We work regularly with MBA students working on ideas with a strong computing element, like Emmanuel Charraud (MagicSolver.com). These students need to be introduced to people who know about these things. The more committed students will work with us through a set of different programmes and courses, culminating in the MBA Entrepreneurship Concentration where students work explicitly and intensively on their business ideas. This year, Ring members Peter Cowley and Jack Lang were involved in providing valuable support to the students as did members from ARM, Groupon, Cambridge Angels, Mills and Reeves and many others. Almost all the budding businesses that the students were working on had some software and/or hardware element to them. Their final presentations to a panel from the Cambridge community were sufficiently impressive that one group received an invitation to pitch to Cambridge Angels and two others to submit business plans to a venture capital firm in London.

Connecting with our students and the CfEL community at large can be done in several ways but the most significant is through programmes that run at different times over the year. ETECH Projects is such a programme where students and inventors/entrepreneurs are brought together through a project. ETECH Projects is a course offered to undergraduate students, MBAs, Executive MBAs and PhD/Postdoc researchers every Lent term. The students provide an opportunity evaluation service for any member of the university community. These projects are supported by the teaching team, CfEL Entrepreneurs in Residence and members of the Cambridge entrepreneurial community — including many members of the Ring over the years.

To date we have worked with a wide range of opportunities and inventions from Carbon nano-tubes to plastic electronics to non-invasive limb fixation. In the last year alone, 206 students have participated and evaluated 27 inventions for the benefit of 17 inventors and their teams. Each project differs slightly to match the stage of the idea/ invention and the needs of the client, but essentially the projects offer all the elements of a market feasibility study, including valuations of possible application areas, estimations of market size, surveys of market requirements, recommendations for routes to market and identification of potential commercial partners.

Enterprise Tuesdays also provide another excellent opportunity to connect with entrepreneurial people, many of whom are seeking computer connections. There should be more than a few heads nodding as they read this, having attended and been inspired at these evenings. These evening events attract inspirational speakers like Herman Hauser (Amadeus Capital Partners), Neil Davidson (Redgate), Mark Gerhard (Jagex) and Billy Boyle (Owlstone), all of whom have spoken on a variety of topics that together take you through the entrepreneurial journey from idea to realisation. In the coming season you can look forward to your very own Professor Andy Hopper and Mattias Ljun-

gman (Atomico). The evenings always end with a vibrant networking event. For those of you who have not been, this is not a quaint affair, but one attended by 2,000 people over the series, almost half of whom are from the local business community and other non-Cambridge University groups.

We are always striving to make the right connections between students, entrepreneurs, investors, mentors and others to contribute to sustaining, revitalising and growing the vibrant entrepreneurial community in Cambridge. Please do get in touch if you'd like to get involved in any of our programmes.

For more details about CfEL and general information about all its programmes please visit www.cfel.jbs.cam.ac.uk. It provides video links and podcasts on many aspects of entrepreneurship.

For more details about how you can get involved with CEfL programmes please contact Shima directly: at s.barakat@jbs.cam.ac.uk

Hall of fame news

Azuro

Azuro has been acquired by Cadence Design Systems.

blinkx

blinkx has announced a partnership with Future Publishing, one of the UK's largest special interest publishers.

blinkx has indexed more than 35 million hours of audio, video, viral and TV content, and made it fully searchable and available on demand.

Bromium

Bromium has closed $9.2m series A funding from Andreessen Horowitz, Ignition Partners and Lightspeed Venture Partners.

Bromium's technology promises to bring a more trustworthy computing infrastructure to enterprises that want to move to the cloud.

Its product is expected to debut in the second half of 2011.

Cronto

Cronto has launched CrontoSign, the world's first stand-alone hardware device for security on-line banking transactions against Trojan malware attacks. It allows on-line banking customers to verify transaction details in a fraction of a second.

DisplayLink

DisplayLink, the leading provider of networked display technology for multi–monitor and USB–connected computing, will receive $8m of new financing in a fourth-round investment with an option for an addition $6m if needed. The company has raised a total of $68m.

Equisys

Zetadocs for Microsoft Dynamics NAV has been shortlisted for a 2011 Software Satisfaction Award, in the "Paperless Office and Document Management" category.

The winners will be announced at the SSA11 awards ceremony on October 18th 2011.

Governor Technology

A team of Governor Technology developers has won the 2011 Microsoft Cloud Hack Challenge.

The aim of Cloud Hack 2011 was to "hack" an application using data from popular APIs such as Bing Maps, National Rail Enquiries, PayPal and Huddle. Once created, the competitors had to deploy the app to the Azure cloud platform — and all in only four hours.

Jagex

Jagex, the UK's largest independent games studio, has received a Queen's Award for Enterprise: Innovation. Jagex won the prestigious award in the innovation category for the continuous development of RuneScape.com, the popular and successful on-line multi–player game and the technology that underpins it.

Netronome

Netronome has won VIBriefing's 2011 Emerging Technology Excellence Award in the Networking category.

RealVNC Executive Vice-President Lily Bacon, CEO Andy Harter and Chairman Andy Hopper receive the awards from the Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, Hugh Duberly

ObjectSecurity

ObjectSecurity, the leader for model-driven security policy automation, has been awarded a joint air traffic management study by EUROCONTROL that supports Single European Sky ATM Research WP14.

EUROCONTROL, the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation, is an intergovernmental civil-military organisation made up of 39 Member States and the European Community which is committed to building a Single European Sky that will deliver air traffic management performance required for the 21st century and beyond.

The study will ensure that the system-wide information management technical design being developed in WP14 addresses the military requirements including civil-military interoperability, interconnection of military systems, architecture, and middleware.

RealVNC

Crowning an amazing year so far, RealVNC has won two Queen's Awards for Enterprise — the only company in the country to do so. The awards recognize outstanding achievement sustained over a number of years in innovation and international trade.

Sophos

Sophos has completed its acquisition of network security vendor Astaro. Through the acquisition, Sophos addresses the need for security solutions that provide threat and policy protection no matter where the user or company data resides.

Ubisense

Ubisense, which listed on AIM in June, has announced that its Series 7000 real–time location system industrial tags and sensors have been certified for use in China.

Ubisense's UWB–based RTLS is the first to gain official authorisation for deployment and use within China, and opens up enormous commercial opportunities to the business.

Zeus

Zeus Technology has been acquired by Riverbed Technology.

Under the terms of the acquisition, Riverbed will pay approximately $110m in cash for the securities of Zeus and up to an additional $30m in cash based on the achievement of certain bookings targets in a defined twelve month period following the closing.

Zeus will become a new business unit of Riverbed.

Job Bulletin Board

August

State
- *Big data and machine learning engineer*

Acumu
- *Software engineer*

Red Gate Software
- *Trainee information systems support engineer*
- *First-line product support engineer*
- *Recruitment advisor — technical*
- *Product manager*

Linguamatics
- *NLP resource specialist*

July

True Knowledge
- *Systems administrator (Linux)*
- *Platform engineering developer (C++)*

Taptu
- *Systems engineer*

Guestaurant Ltd
- *Software developer*

Visit the Job Bulletin Board in the Business and Professional section of the Ring Web site.