



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF DAVID SPEIGHT, APPLICATION ARCHITECT

WHAT EXACTLY IS AN APPLICATION ARCHITECT?

My job is to make decisions about how applications should be built in an efficient way. I work on the Connected Systems team and have input on all of Benefitfocus' applications except icyou. I don't get too hung up on titles. Application architect is my formal title but I usually just refer to myself as a software engineer.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED AT BENEFITFOCUS?

Two years.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS DONE WHAT YOU ARE CURRENTLY DOING WHILE EMPLOYED HERE?

I started out working with SSO, which I still do some. During my time here I've moved around in several groups but basically done the same type of work.

WHO DO YOU REPORT TO?

Jack Lunn.

WHAT'S A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORLD LOOK LIKE?

I spend a lot of my time coding and working on engineering tasks. I also address any issues that arise throughout the day, including SSO and ESB problems. Two to three times per week I attend a carrier meeting regard-

ing transferring data to and from Benefitfocus or SSOs to Benefitfocus, where I act as a technical resource to verify that we are qualified to do what we say.

WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING PROJECT YOU HAVE EXECUTED TO DATE WHILE WORKING AT BENEFITFOCUS?

It would have to be the ESB because once it's completed it will allow Benefitfocus to react to carriers' needs quickly. It has been great working with a team to build a product that ties everything together.

WHAT BOOKS DO YOU READ?

The last book I read was Lance Armstrong's "It's not About the Bike: My Journey Back to Life." I also read some exercise books, though I'm not that big into books. I like to read on the Internet about technology topics, like trends and new developments.

WHAT KEEPS YOUR WHEELS TURNING? (WHAT INTERESTS YOU MOST ABOUT SOFTWARE ENGINEERING?)

Solving business problems. It's exciting for me to make a difference – to find a problem and fix it.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT PROBLEM SOLVING?

It is immediate (if you do a good job). You get quick gratification, whereas if you're in development it can take two to three weeks to see rewards.

DO YOU PREFER TO REVIEW OR WRITE CODE OR BOTH?

Write, definitely. There are so many ways to write code correctly, so it's a lot harder to review.

HOW DO YOU DEFINE SUCCESS IN YOUR ROLE?

If the carrier is happy, I'm happy.

WHAT MAKES YOU FEEL CHALLENGED ON A DAILY BASIS?

Remaining organized and keeping things on track. It's difficult because I'm involved in a lot of different efforts, which is probably an issue most software engineers have.

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU ARE PARTICULARLY PROUD OF FROM YOUR WORK HERE?

I'm really proud of what the ESB team has been able to accomplish in a short amount of time. Once completed, the ESB will be a great asset for Benefitfocus.

WHAT IS SOMETHING MOST OF YOUR COLLEAGUES DO NOT KNOW ABOUT YOU?

I do triathlons – six to eight per year. One of the last big ones I did was in New York earlier this year. I started competing about four years ago and have been increasing my distance every year. In August I trained for my longest, a half Ironman, which I completed at the end of September.