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INTERNAL NEWSLETTER 2022
ISSUE III

Q3 2022

"Success is best when it's shared"

INTRODUCING

In September, we started collaborating with **ThoughtRiver** - an innovator in contract acceleration and began building their new team in Bulgaria.

ThoughtRiver develops an NLP-powered AI engine which is helping busy legal teams in large corporates to do more work with fewer resources.

To further develop and improve their services, ThoughRiver needs more talented Python Engineers. Therefore, they are partnering with Questers to find and attract them.

Should you know such people, do not hesitate to recommend them at recommend@questers.com.

STEP INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

In this space, we are introducing colleagues who you might have missed talking to, and give you the opportunity to learn a little bit about them.

This time under the spotlight is Iliya Radev, Senior Technical Support Engineer at Funding Circle team at Questers.

Use one word to describe yourself.
Wanderer.

As a child, what did you want to become when you grow up?
As a kid, I was mostly driven by a curiosity about everything that surrounded me, and I couldn't help but ask myself constantly – what else is out there? I loved reading encyclopedias about the solar system and distant galaxies, dinosaurs, different ancient cultures, volcanoes, mountains, oceans and rain forests. My interests were all over the place, and my dream job constantly shifted from one thing to another. At one point, I wanted to be an astronaut, a bit later an archaeologist, then a palaeontologist.

Which was your favourite subject in school?
I really enjoyed the literature classes. My teacher was pretty open-minded, and she quickly figured out that I really enjoy reading. She'd recommend books to me quite often, and once I finished them, we'd have a nice discussion.

Another class that I liked was sports. I was really into basketball and volleyball, and I was able to participate in both school teams. I still have some quite fond memories of those times.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?
Depends on the time of the year, I guess. During the winter, I love snowboarding. I've been doing it since 8th grade, and I can safely say, that I don't think I'll ever get bored of it.

Other than that, I love travelling. Sometimes, I'll pack my backpack with supplies for about two weeks and head out with a certain plac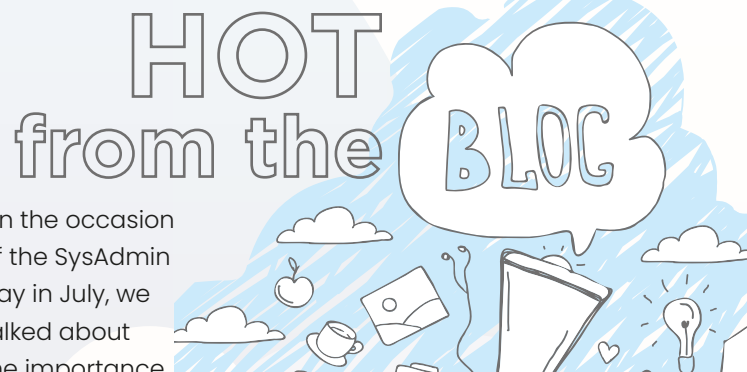e in my mind that I'd like to visit and no clear plan of how to get there. Hitchhiking, trains, buses – all are viable options. I love travelling like that. You never know what's going to happen and where the next sunrise will find you. It really becomes more about the road and all the adventures that come along with it than the destination itself.

If you had the opportunity to have dinner with a famous person (living or not) who would he/she be?
I'd pick people like Roald Amundsen, Neil Armstrong and Ernest Shackleton - all of them are people with amazing stories to tell, no doubt about that.

Share a favourite quote/ thought of yours.
"So much universe and so little time." - Terry Pratchett

Celebrating SysAdmin Day

HOT from the BLOC

On the occasion of the SysAdmin Day in July, we talked about the importance of the SysAdmin role and how it has changed over the years with our colleague Asen Bakalov from the TPXimpact team. We also discussed the necessary skills for this job and what the career opportunities in the field are. Here's part of our conversation:

What are the career development opportunities in this field?

The SysAdmin is an amazing role to start your career with. It allows you to face various challenges which the IT world can offer. It allows you to work with hardware, software and networks. Nowadays, you will also work with code, virtualization and even security regulations. The role also provides direct contact with all employees in a company. With regards to career development, there are a wide variety of opportunities for a SysAdmin. To name a few, as a SysAdmin, you can branch out into System Engineering, DevOps, DevSecOps, Virtualization, Cloud Engineering and even CyberSecurity.

What does the role of a SysOps give you personally?

It allows me to work on complex and challenging solutions, to continue learning and evolving within my position and even outside of it. That is the most important thing for me.

Within the IT industry, skills can obsolesce very quickly. Whatever is relevant today might become obsolete tomorrow, so it is particularly important to stay on top of it and keep improving yourself.

Read the rest at our blog here.

Day in the life of the Clojure Engineers @ FUNDING CIRCLE

In August and September, we presented you with not one but two stories about what a day in the life of a Clojure Engineer at the Funding Circle team looks like. It was a pleasure talking to Dimitar Yoldov and Nikolay Penchev - both very talented and passionate engineers. Here's a highlight of their answers:

What does your typical day at the Funding Circle team look like?

Nikolay: I start by preparing my to-do list, so I don't need to remember what I need to do and with what priority.
After that, I catch up with the team. We call these meetings "morning coffee". It's fun because our environment is huge and there're always plenty of tasks...

Dimitar: The integral first step in any engineer's workday is to make coffee in the morning. After that, like in most other places, I'd start with checking communication – email, slack channels – for things that might have happened during US working hours. Examine alerts if there are any, check pull requests that need review, etc. Possibly act upon urgent items...

What's your favourite part of the job?

Nikolay: So many parts are great, but I guess for me it's the implementation part.

Dimitar: Working in a productive atmosphere to bring improvement to our services. Funding Circle is the first place I've worked for that puts so much focus on real teamwork. So much, so that one of our core values is "Stand Together".

Check out the whole stories in our blog, and should you know someone who would like to join their team, do not hesitate to refer them to us at recommend@questers.com.

On July 12, we welcomed the QA community in Sofia at our qTerrace for their monthly meetup. Not surprisingly, we enjoyed a nice company and insightful talks over a couple of cold beers.

QA Beer @ qTerrace

JAVA BEER SUMMIT

During the annual Java Beer Summit in August, we had a wonderful time. It was super exciting to meet and talk to so many talented and passionate people and see how the community has evolved over the past year.

JAVA BEER @ qTERRACE

After the amazing JavaBeer Summit, we couldn't miss the chance to host the next monthly meetup of the Java community. So, on September 14, we opened our amazing qTerrace, and once again enjoyed a nice evening in the smart and pleasant company of more than 30 Java gurus.

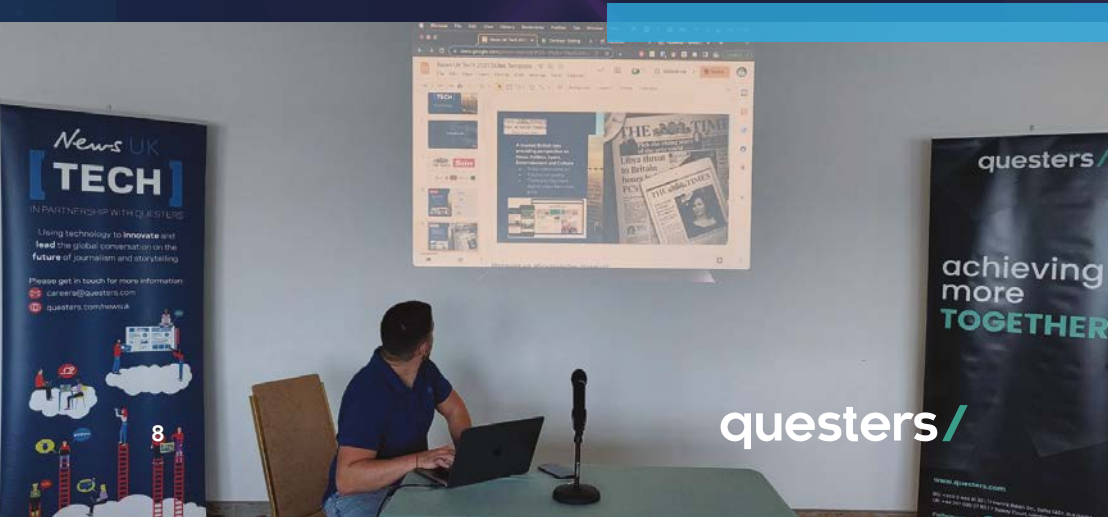EVENTS

EVENTS

Questers
TECH MeetUPS
Summer Tour

At the beginning of the summer, we announced our tour of Tech MeetUps. After Sofia and Ruse in June, we continued to Burgas in August and Plovdiv in September and then returned back to Sofia.

Burgas: Contract Tests - Source of Truth between Front-End & Back-End

On August 11, we stopped by the Black Sea and hosted an insightful tech talk about Contract Testing in Burgas.
Our speaker Vasil Vasilev, a Senior Android Engineer at the News UK team at Questers, explained what contract tests are, their benefits and how to use them during the development cycle.
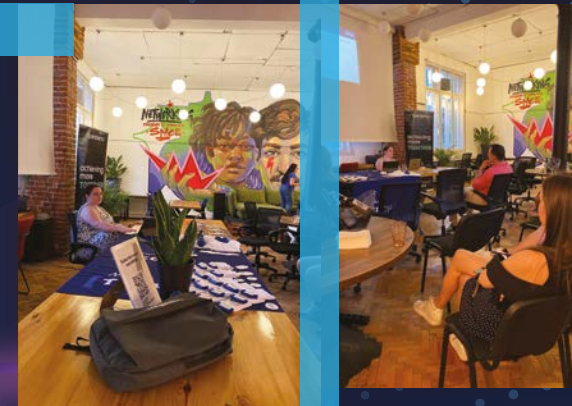After the talk, we had a networking session and enjoyed the great sea view over a couple of cold beers.

Plovdiv: Monorepos - The Good Parts

On the International Programmers' Day, we went to Plovdiv and met the local IT community.
For this tech talk, we had our colleague Gergana Dobrikova, a Tech Lead in the News UK Tech team at Questers, as a speaker.
She shared some interesting facts about Monorepos, focusing on the good and bad features that it could bring to a project.
As the tradition goes, after the presentation, we had the opportunity to meet and greet exceptional people from the local tech community and learn more about their professional interests.

Sofia: Re-Frame: Data-Oriented, Functional Design in ClojureScript

At the end of September, we went back to Sofia to host yet another Tech MeetUp at our qClub. Together with our colleagues Nikolay Penchev and Denislav Andreev from the Funding Circle team, we talked about reactive programming, functional programming and Immutable data in a language that embraces those paradigms – Re-frame.

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Summer
cocktail party

In August, we took advantage of the good summer weather and gathered our colleagues for a special party with well-crafted cocktails and chill music at our qTerrace. These types of gatherings are always a great way to spend some time with colleagues and have fun together.

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STAND-UP
Comedy
show

At the end of September, we made our Beer Thursday a bit different from the usual ones. We invited "Inside Joke Stand-up Comedy" for a privet stand-up show. They revealed to us the fun side of the office and IT life and made us laugh out loud during the whole evening.

Giving back

Supporting Telerik Academy for a second consecutive year

Thanks to your contribution to our Giving Programme, we were able to once again support Telerik School Academy. Through our mutual efforts and some additional support from our holding group TPXimpact, we were able to donate **14 000 BGN**, which will cover the educational activities for two academies for the 2022/2023 school year. These two academies will ensure the digital education of more than 40 children in the towns of Montana and Sevlievo.

Taking part in *"Clean up September"*

On September 17, we took part in the global campaign World Cleanup Day and supported the local initiatives "**Сливи за смет**" and "**Да изчистим България заедно**".
It was a fun and very productive day! We helped clean up tonnes of litter from our favourite Vitosha mountain and enjoyed breath-taking city views.

What's more, in the second half of the month we turned our office into collecting station for old laptops, tablets and smartphones. At the end of the month, we handed over the collected devices for recycling.