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Jul 2022

A day in the life of Chris Manders

Working in software operations means you get to create systems that help business work better, faster and more efficiently, but what is involved in a typical day? Senior software consultant Chris Manders explains…

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[Chris Manders](#)

Software Team Lead

Email

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7:30am

The alarm goes off but I ignore it; I'm not a morning person so it takes a while get to wake up! Between snoozing, scrolling Instagram and doing the day's Wordle and Quordle, I manage to eventually come to life, and head to get breakfast.

It's the most important meal of the day so I always like something interesting - today it's cereal with banana and Greek yoghurt – one of the five a day ticked off first thing!

9:30am

Time to start the day! No two days are ever the same in this role so I always plan the day based on what I already know, but leave time for things to come up unexpectedly.

As part of my job I'm responsible for both clients and team members, so I make sure I'm up to date with all the relevant client projects, as well as checking in on each person to see if there's anything they need support with.

10:30am

All caught up on emails and updates, clients chased where necessary and tasks picked up, actioned or delegated and I can now look at some software.

Theo has been working with a client on an update to a system that handles incredibly sensitive data but that is no longer needed, so we need to find a way to clean it up without it leaking or being lost. The solution needs to be airtight so we work together to make sure it's perfect.

11:15am

The benefit (and detriment) of working from home is that good snacks are always on hand so quick break for elevenses before cracking back on.
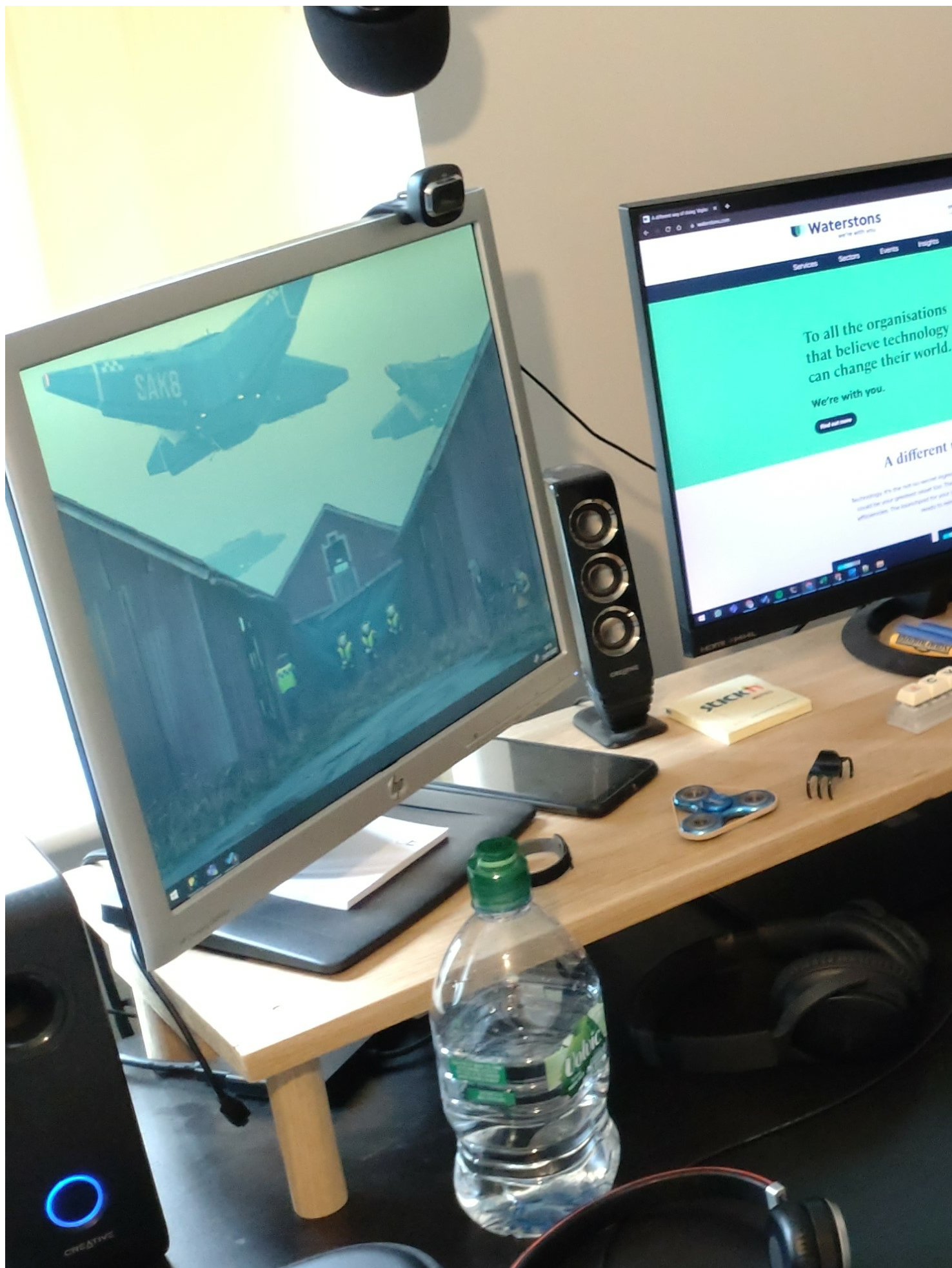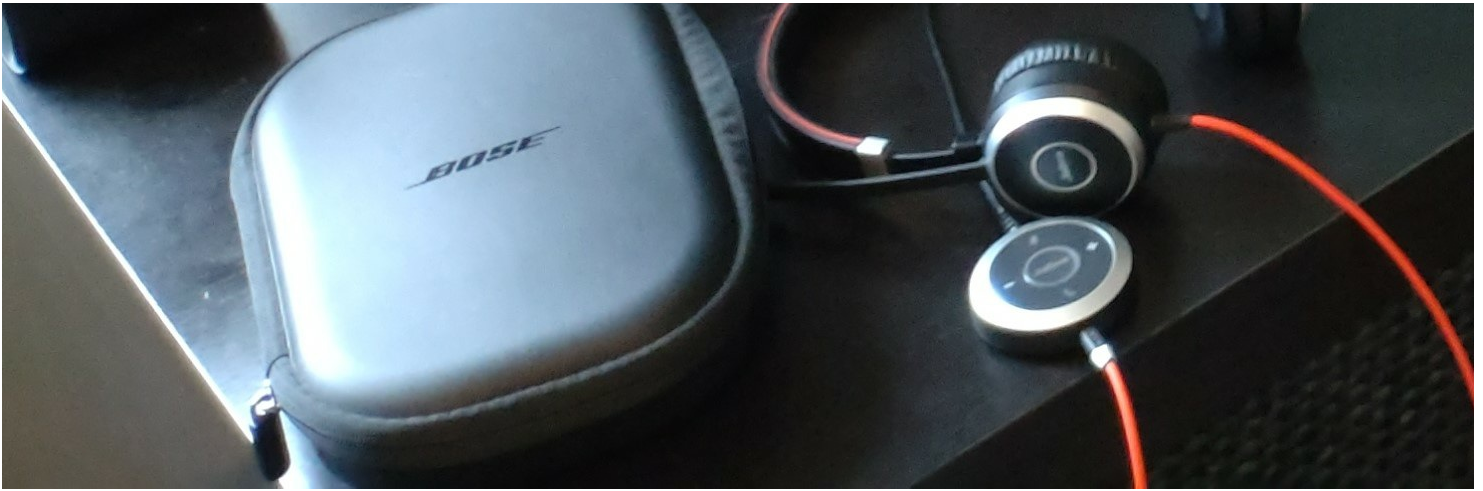
11:30am

After checking in on Theo's progress (he's doing great), I get to work on a Scope of Work for a client who wants to add a new feature into their system. I love this part of my job as I get to be creative and think of unique solutions that I know will help clients be successful – and sometimes the solution isn't what any of us thought it would be!

12:15pm

I hop onto the 'Question Time' Teams channel where developers pop up and ask questions to the wider team, using it as a sounding board, a place to get feedback on an idea, or as a way to get help on a specific problem.

Today we had some great questions around allowing users to block cookies and how to design a system that polls for vehicle location every few minutes. I always find these questions interesting, so I try to set some time aside to have a look.

This always drives innovation and creative thinking across the team as we learn from each other, the challenges we've faced and the ideas that have popped into our minds. It's also a brilliant way to talk about what we're working on!

After that it's time for lunch and after more boring toast, I check in on a personal project – a spice rack I'm building from IKEA offcuts. It was touch and go at one point as I wasn't sure if the glue would hold, but it turned out much better than expected! If I ever fancy a change from software, I may consider a career in cabinet making...

1:30pm

Back to work and spend an hour focusing on admin – for me blocking out time in my calendar to focus is vital otherwise I can get so caught up in the 'doing' that other key tasks aren't prioritised.

Today, it's resourcing and I'm looking at the projects we have ongoing and upcoming, as well as the people in the team available to deliver them. We know the impact being overstretched can have on mental health, and this exercise ensures it never happens.

2:30pm

Jason will be starting work on a client project soon so we get together to go through the solution, explore the bigger picture and ensure we both understand the scope.

After answering any questions, getting him set up and making sure we're both confident in the next steps, I catch up with Frankie on some work he's been doing for another client.

There have been some minor issues that need working out so we deal with that, and as it would happen the same client reaches out for a hand so we all jump on a call to help.

4pm

After helping the client developer, I'm in the zone on their project so I design a microservice for them to coordinate all the physical locations the business has between all their applications (in English, that means I make a system that makes sure all the systems they use across the world talk to each other).

5:45pm

I end the day doing a code review for Frankie's work which is perfect and ready to go!

6pm

All finished for the day so I switch off the laptop and make a start on tea – today it's chilli using ingredients from my newly built kitchen accessory!

After tea it's washing up, tidying up the work space and Netflix binging.

I've always had a passion for software and creating things that help businesses become more efficient, and as I've developed within Waterstons, I'm now able to work with the next generation to maintain their passion for the art.

I'm fortunate to work with a business that values progression, development and its people, and I'm proud to be part of inspiring and supporting the next generation of software experts.

If you want to be part of our team, take a look at our [careers page](#).

To find out more about our software experts, [check them out here](#).

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