HI THERE!

I've been working in open-source community building full-time since 2015. I'm currently heading up the Community Education team at Automattic with a focus on the global WordPress project - building community, creating content, leading a team, and engaging contributors are all in a day's work!

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HUGH
LASHBROOKE

COMMUNITY PROFESSIONAL

EDUCATION

Jan, 2005 – Dec, 2007

Bachelor of Arts
Theology & Pastoral Ministry
STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

SKILLS

- Strategic planning
- Team leadership
- Program management
- Project planning
- Remote collaboration
- Writing
- Coaching
- Empathy
- Communication
- Open-source

WORK EXPERIENCE

Jun, 2021 - Present

Automattic
HEAD OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION

- Engaging contributors in creating community educational experiences
- Working cross-functionally with Product and Marketing to build a world-class platform
- Planning learning pathways and establishing a curriculum
- Managing a team of Instructional Designers to build training content
- Maintaining and growing a global education platform
- Establishing a community-focused social learning program
- Coaching and developing team members in their own growth

TALKS

- Building Open-Source Communities
- Defining a Community Membership Identity
- Building Hybrid Communities Beyond Events
- Finding Your Place in the WordPress Community

Mar, 2020 - Jun, 2021

Automattic
COMMUNITY TEAM LEAD

- Leading a team of 8 community managers
- Engaging a global community of developers, users and contributors
- Establishing new community programs to drive engagement and growth
- Maintaining existing community programs, particularly around contributions and events
- Working cross-functionally with Marketing, Product and Content to engage new and existing users
- Coaching and developing individual contributors in their own growth
- Tracking a reporting on team progress
- Managing relationships and mediating conflicts

May, 2016 - Mar, 2020

Automattic
COMMUNITY PROGRAM MANAGER

- Working with and engaging a diverse community of WordPress professionals from all over the world
- Maintaining community programs
- Supporting local event organisers in over 700 cities
- Collaborating with contributor teams
- Mentoring community members in leadership roles
- Mediating conflicts of all types

Jan, 2015 - May, 2016

WooCommerce / Automattic
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

- Working internally with staff to encourage and foster their engagement with the broader WordPress community
- Advocating for community mindfulness across the organisation
- Actively engaging staff to contribute outside of the scope of their core work
- Bridging the gap between community contributors and the core product team

Apr, 2012 - Jan, 2015

WooCommerce
PRODUCT DEVELOPER

- Developing and maintaining WordPress plugins and themes
- Maintaining company website and membership portal
- Engaging community members to contribute to products
- Planning new product development

POSTS

- Building Community in a Post-COVID World
- Pastoral Leadership and Community Management
- The Three S's of Creating Community Connections
- Creating Equitable Hybrid Communities
- When Good People Go Bad: Mediating Community Conflict
- Empathy and the Feelings Box
- Becoming a Good Open-Source Citizen

PROJECTS

CREATED & LAUNCHED A GLOBAL CHARITY EVENT SERIES

I conceptualised, organised & managed an annual community event to build websites for non-profit organisations. Dubbed 'do_action', It started off locally in Cape Town and has grown to be organised independently by WordPress communities all over the world. I wrote the event documentation and built the tooling that local organisers use to make these events happen. Part of my work on the WordPress Community Team was to continue to support and enable these events around the world.

SPEARHEADED A TRANSITION FROM IN-PERSON EVENTS TO ONLINE LEARNING

With in-person events being put on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic, we were forced to make rapid changes to the WordPress community program. Under my leadership, we birthed Learn WordPress – an online learning platform for WordPress users, builders, and contributors. The platform hosts asynchronous courses and workshops along with live social learning spaces facilitated by members of my team as well as community volunteers.

Oct, 2011 - Mar, 2012

Quick Online
WEB DEVELOPER

- Building and maintaining client websites on various platforms
- Working with WordPress, BigCommerce, and Elgg, as well as custom frameworks
- Planning and scoping out new development

Mar, 2011 - Oct, 2011

Naspers
SCRUM MASTER / PROJECT MANAGER

- Promoted to Scrum Master after 6 months as a product developer
- Managed sprint planning for multiple products
- Managed ongoing projects using agile methodologies
- Bridged the gap between executive management and the development team

Oct, 2010 - Mar, 2011

Naspers
PRODUCT DEVELOPER

- Built and maintained multiple in-house web properties using Solr, Drupal, PHP, WordPress, and MediaWiki
- Worked in an agile development environment

Jul, 2008 - Sep, 2010

White Wall Web
WEB DEVELOPER

- Maintained and developed new features for client websites using PHP, WordPress, and an in-house CMS
- Worked in a team to plan and develop new projects for clients

Dec, 2007 - Jun, 2008

St. Martin's Anglican Church
ASSISTANT YOUNG ADULTS PASTOR

- Managing the young adults ministry program
- Regular sermon preparation and preaching
- Planning outreach activities

PROJECTS

INITIATED AND MANAGED A DEDICATED COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

I grew, nurtured and managed a team of over 50 active volunteer contributors from all over the world. This team in the 'deputy program' continues to thrive today and it forms an integral part of the overall WordPress community program. My work included recruitment, documentation, training, onboarding and collaboration with team members to achieve success.