

THE BEACON

Beacon Technologies Quarterly Newsletter

Employee Success Story

Chris Shouts, Senior Software Engineer

Chris' first foray into programming was maintaining and optimizing the school district website during middle and high school. At the same time, Chris also started a small side business providing desktop support and custom computer builds. Chris studied Computer Science at the Barrett Honors College at Arizona State University and worked summers at a local Minnesota manufacturing company doing desktop support and software development through an internship. When Chris and his wife Kari moved to Milwaukee in 2008, Chris found himself developing an ASP.NET application for a small ERP solutions provider in the process of modernizing their systems for the web. In 2010, Chris accepted an offer from a Brookfield based consulting firm and has worked as a software development consultant ever since. To date he has worked on over a dozen different software development projects with both on-site and remote clients. Chris enjoys learning new skills and applying his previous learnings to each new project. In 2015, Chris and his family moved back to Minnesota where he was able to continue consulting in a fully remote capacity. Chris has been with Beacon since 2018 and has enjoyed working remotely for TASC and being part of a team that built a scalable microservice-based architecture with a modern and accessible Angular frontend for administering employee benefits.

Favorite Project

Back in 2013 Chris started working for a client in the steel roofing manufacturing business that was looking to migrate a homegrown CAD application from VB6 to VB.NET. Over the next few years Chris would complete the migration (working for the client part-time) and began adding new features to allow the sales team to quickly generate quotes from a rough sketch and immediately turn those quotes into orders that would be automatically submitted to the client's ERP system. Chris especially enjoyed developing an algorithm to partition a set of user-supplied vertices (based on real roof measurements) into the maximal number of polygons and estimating the slope of each polygon - an algorithm that freed up the pre-sales team to focus more on customer needs and improved quote turnaround times.



Chris Shouts,
Senior Software
Engineer

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Trivia



In our last newsletter we asked "what two charities did Beacon Technologies contribute to these holidays in lieu of our holiday parties?" and one person responded correctly with The River Food Pantry Dane County and Feeding America Eastern WI Fox Cities. The winner was Ashwini Devarapali. The trivia question this time around is "which team was the most popular pick to win the NCAA Tournament this year in our Beacon Bracket Challenge?" Respond to Keegan O'Brien at kobrien@beacontechinc.com and one person with the correct answer will win a \$25 Amazon gift card.

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Beacon Bracket Challenge

Thanks to everyone that chose to participate in this year's Beacon Bracket Challenge, where you picked the winners of the Men's NCAA Tournament games. You can check the standings [here](#). Best of luck the rest of the way!

Education Reimbursement

Don't forget to take advantage of Beacon's Education Reimbursement benefit. Details of that benefit as a refresher...

Beacon Technologies, Inc will reimburse employees up to \$2,500 per year for education related to their job at Beacon. All education and training requests must be preapproved. Beacon requires employees to payback the amount if the employee does not stay with Beacon for one full year after receipt of payment.

Education Reimbursement Process:

Requests must be pre-approved by the Human Resources Director or employees will not receive reimbursement. The Human Resource Director's signature must be on this form and the form must be submitted before the training/class/test/books etc. are purchased. It is the employee's responsibility to obtain the appropriate signatures on the form. Employees will also be required to show proof of completion before payment will be processed. See below for process:

1. Determine desired training
2. Obtain HR approval/signature on form
3. After completion of the course provide Jean Burke with proof of completion, expense report, and receipts.

The \$2500.00 does not carry over from year to year.

Things To Do



Employee Anniversaries

April

Teresa Holmes - 5 years
 Thomas Morley - 5 years
 Benedict Trinidad - 3 years
 John Lison - 3 years
 David Gauerke - 2 years
 James Baho - 2 years
 Sean Collett - 1 year

May

Kristen Suttle-Ebert - 16 years
 Kyle Colden - 4 years
 Keegan O'Brien - 3 years
 Brady Potaczek - 3 years
 David Bebeau - 2 years
 Steve Kaplon - 2 years
 Eric Oelhafen - 2 years

June

Carl Galka - 15 years
 Kelsey Kelley - 4 years
 Michael Stanescu - 3 years
 Sudheer Kumar - 1 year
 Herb Lichtenberg - 1 year
 Mukarram Mukhtar - 1 year

20 Tips for Working From Home

For most of us, we have now been working remotely for over a full year due to the pandemic. For many of us, remote work may be a permanent or partial aspect of our roles moving forward. Check out these tips for working remotely from pcmag.com and author, Jill Duffy. (full article linked)

- 1 - Maintain regular hours.
- 2 - Create a morning routine.
- 3 - Set ground rules with the people in your space.
- 4 - Schedule breaks.
- 5 - Take breaks in their entirety.
- 6 - Leave home.
- 7 - Don't hesitate to ask for what you need.
- 8 - Keep a dedicated office space.
- 9 - Maintain a separate phone number.
- 10 - Use a VPN.
- 11 - Socialize with colleagues.
- 12 - "Show up" to meetings and be heard.
- 13 - Get face time.
- 14 - Take sick days.
- 15 - Look for training opportunities.
- 16 - Overcommunicate.
- 17 - Be positive.
- 18 - Take advantage of your perks.
- 19 - Don't be too hard on yourself.
- 20 - End your day with a routine.

Chris Shouts, Senior Software Engineer (continued from Page 1)

Family and Hobbies

Chris resides in Woodbury, Minnesota with his wife and three children (10, 7, and 3). He and his children enjoy gaming together and the whole family enjoys getting outside in the warmer months and exploring local parks and trails. He and his family also appreciate taking in soccer games and cheering on the Minnesota United MLS team during the summer months and finding unique eats around the Twin Cities area. Chris and his family also enjoy traveling with their most recent trip to the North Shore of Minnesota where they enjoy spending time hiking together and viewing Lake Superior. He hopes to continue exploring the country with his kids as they grow.

Interesting Fact

Chris has recently taken an interest in Q# and dabbling with quantum computing.



Chris pictured with his family in San Antonio, TX (left)

Your Beacon team - don't hesitate to reach out to any of us - learn more about us by clicking on the graphic (right)

