
Hatstand Green Beret
Case Studies



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Hatstand Green Beret – Cash Equities Application Support

The Hatstand Green Beret Programme has given me the opportunity to start a career in Investment Banking and to learn about cash equities. I would definitely recommend the scheme.

I was one of a team of four providing application support in EMEA to the cash equity business of a Tier One Investment Bank. My team supported everything to do with cash equities; this includes the two main trading applications (one used for client and prop flow and the other for prop flow), the systems for monitoring and reporting P&L, and the order flow both from the clients and traders to the point of execution. Our orders were routed to a variety of destinations (primary market and dark pools); either through an algorithmic trading engine, a smart order router.

Most of my time was spent investigating and resolving functional issues with the application or the order flow – it's about identifying where in the order flow the issue has occurred and trying to resolve it or escalate to the appropriate development team. I then moved to the trading floor to give more of a personal service to the traders. This was much better and helped me to understand the severity of the particular issue, although it could be distracting while I am investigating a particular problem! Most of the issues were raised to us via an on-line chat channel, although we did also get some issues emailed to us.

We had two shifts, one starting at 7am and on at 9am, and we operated on a two weeks on/ off rota basis. Trading started at about 7.50am, so on the early shift the first things we needed to do were system checks and static data checks (for example checking that rights issues have been correctly applied to an equity). We also had to do any 'pipecleaning' for any overnight system changes to ensure that the trade flow was still integral, which required the traders to put sample trades through.

The system normally restarted at about midnight, and was fully started up in 3 stages by 6:40 am. I started being on-call overnight in the event of any issues during the 3 stages of start-up, which was monitored by the Singapore team. In the event of any issue, I sometimes needed to dial in to help resolve or co-ordinate with the developers.

I also got involved in project work. We were asked to take on support for a new application, and I was given the responsibility to learn about the application, document it in the support manual and then train the rest of the team on it. I also became involved in testing the next generation of our trading application which took over from our two current main systems.

Prior to joining the Hatstand Green Beret Programme I had two years work experience doing programming work on the Ab Initio ETL tool, and one year's experience working as a credit analyst for the Carphone Warehouse. I have a First Class BSc Honours degree in Engineering (Electronics and Instrumentation) from Madras University and an MSc in Computer Networks from Middlesex University.

Hatstand were pretty good (no complaints!). I had four appraisals, which gave me a clear understanding of my progress in the bank and any areas of improvement.

Hatstand Green Beret – C# GUI Developer

I am a C# developer with 3 years programming experience. I joined the Hatstand Green Beret Programme nearly 6 months ago and have been working for a leading European investment bank in Fixed Income Currency and Commodities Business. I am very pleased with the challenging opportunity that this programme provides me and it has enlightened my career path.

My current role involves maintaining and developing C# GUI applications for a real-time risk reporting system, to provide a growing user base of 200+ people with pricing and risk management information using real time trade and market data. Much of the work is in WinForms on the Composite UI Application Block (CAB) framework and moving towards WPF.

I am working with a small team of 3 senior developers and reporting directly to the project manager, who also manages over 10 other applications. In less than 6 months time, I have been given responsibilities to develop new features for the main Risk Report application and ownership to one brand new GUI application. It has been a steep learning curve for me to work with the existing system and deliver constant results to meet strict deadlines, given that even I have software development experience, I have not got much background knowledge in the Banking sector. I found the experience challenging yet enjoyable, and I was able to make rapid progress with a team of helpful colleagues and many hands-on practices.

In the most recent project, I was developing and improving a security console application for managing trade book - user permissions. One major challenge was that there are over 1 million user permissions (>80mb) to be communicated with the backend Database over the network and it is required to be able to manage this high volume of data with smaller delay as possible. Implemented with multi-threaded and optimized algorithms, I was able to improve the overall performance by over 80%.

Prior to joining Hatstand, I have worked in 2 software houses for 3 years after graduation from a UK top-10 university. The degree provided me with the basic knowledge and understanding of computing and languages (C, C++ and Java); my previous roles gave me good exposure to 2 computing industries – mobile and PC, where I polished my skills in C++ and learned C#. All my previous experience facilitated me to move on smoothly with my current role.

It has been a pleasant experience with Hatstand. I have received full support from day one, and been kept updated and well informed with quarterly Green Beret events. High standard financial training arranged by Hatstand was another highlight, which helped my understanding of the whole Banking industry and naturally improved the efficiency of my work.

The Hatstand Green Beret programme has given me a great opportunity to work for one of the world leading banks. The fast-moving, dynamic environment, the talented people in the team and the competitive risk management system I am working with, have all provided me with

exciting challenges, as well as opportunities, to continue develop myself professionally and technically.

Hatstand Green Beret – Database Developer

Hatstand's Green Beret (HGB) programme is my first role after graduation and has been a valued break into the UK investment banking domain. The sourcing team at Hatstand have been very skilled in analysing my CV and suggesting suitable projects during the interview process, which helped enhance my existing skills. My prior experience has been with data warehousing, mainly focussing on ETL processes, which has been well tapped and my profile was matched for two different roles with an investment banking client.

Currently I work as a database developer in a client project, on a data warehousing project. My role primarily involves 'Continuous Integration and development of loads and reporting databases'. Apart from the regular development work, I have completed two migration projects, and provide Level 3 support to escalated production issues. Everyday tasks also include performance tuning and technical improvement work across more than one technologies, including, Sybase, Oracle and Unix.

Working alongside 5 senior developers and cross technology consultants has created lots of learning scope and made it possible to pick up the complicated process knowledge and new technologies quickly.

Project dependencies within the banking system are complex and huge; day to day work requires interaction with new teams and technologies and a constant effort to improvise on the current resources. Handling production support issues has been one such challenge. Cascading effects of failure, due to very large levels of dependencies and break downs in production environment, affect several teams and systems simultaneously and demand immediate resolutions. I particularly enjoy my responsibility as a production support co-ordinator. This role has also given me opportunities to be involved in Project management and planning; adapting the agile method of working. I interact with Business Analysts regularly to gather requirements, estimate and allocate resources to manage 'business requirements and production support issues.

HR and administrative staff at Hat-stand are approachable and have always been available through phone or email. My HR manager is very helpful in arranging holiday requests and dealing with every day issues such as work sheets, sick leaves and providing regular feedbacks on my performance. As a HGB, I follow a 'personal development program(PDP)' with the help of my HR manager, this allows me to choose training programs when required and chart out the technology route, which I wish to learn.

I aim to develop expertise in my current area of work and interested in growing technically by working in different projects across, several technologies. The personal development plan is outlined to help achieve this target. Armed with the technical knowledge, I'm intending to improve my skills in people management and looking towards heading a team technically.

Hatstand Green Beret – Treasury Confirmation Matching – Test Analyst

Throughout my time as a test analyst in my current role I have been able to improve my skill set, increase my domain knowledge in Investment Banking and grow into a mature senior tester. Currently I have over 18 months experience working in Investment Banking and can only see myself staying in this area as I believe it is a very good fit for me.

The Treasury Confirmation Matching (TCM) project is a global rollout of the TCM application to replace an existing system. TCM is used by back office teams to confirm trades which are then passed on to be settled. This application roll out supports different asset classes such as FX, MM, Metals and Precious Metals.

My activities include creating and executing test cases for our project in conjunction with offshore resources on my team. I am also heavily involved in UAT support through front office booking of test trades during UAT cycles using applications such as NFOS (Murex), OTP (Calypso) and TREATS. In addition to this I have also been keen to develop my skills in automation and have been an important member in our test team in constructing our suite of automation tests that are run on QTP. I have always been keen to showcase as many of my skills as possible, one way I achieved this was assessed where my team could make improvements to our process. One improvement I was able to implement was the creation of an in house data generation tool for which I generated the requirements document based on the needs of the team. My ability to carry out IT testing tasks as well as performing business related testing tasks has given me excellent exposure of the application and made me a valuable member of the test team.

Before my current role I did not have any professional experience in Investment Banking and can come from a background in pharmaceutical IT. However I did have the technical testing skills, an aptitude to learn and a desire to move into Financial Services IT, which made the Hatstand Green Beret programme an excellent choice. I was given the opportunity to hone my technical skills inside a domain that I knew I wanted to challenge myself in. Supplementary to the learning that I have gained at the work place Hatstand have provided training for me. Introduction to Finance gave me a ground level overview of the new domain I had entered and then later on into my programme I was sent on the ISTQB Advanced Test Manager course. Both my technical and domain skills have been enhanced through the training provided by Hatstand.

The Green Beret programme has allowed me to gain the financial experience that I desired as well as move along my career in testing at a rapid pace. I have been supported greatly by my client who has encouraged me to achieve more and develop myself to become a key component of my team.

Hatstand Green Beret – Business Intelligence Analyst/PM

The Hatstand Green Beret programme has given me a great opportunity to achieve my goal in establishing a successful career within investment banking.

I am currently 10 months into my term as a Business Intelligence Analyst / Project Manager, for a Worldwide Tier One investment bank. My role focuses on managing Business Intelligence projects for users across the globe, the relationships they entail and overseeing development work from our teams in the UK and India, including external third-party vendors. My knowledge of the different banking business functions have developed significantly, as I've been exposed to numerous divisions including Bullions, Equities, Fixed Income, Compliance, Customer Relations, etc. The scope of projects has proved to be challenging, with steep learning curves, but thoroughly exciting and enjoyable to have ownership of.

One of my main assignments after joining required the full analysis of the current state of an ongoing IT project. A crucial part of this work was to assess the need for the project, and to judge what exactly the business users needed. Gathering requirements and tailoring them to match our systems capabilities formed the next part of the process. There was a lot to learn, but by having a great team to work within, I felt supported and was able to add real value from quite an early stage. As my role is heavily weighted towards project management, I had to frequently assign work to our internal Development teams, third party vendors in Russia, and closely manage their delivery. This particular project had me involved in the full life cycle, from requirements and development, to change management, delivery and support. Learning on the job provided me with some essential lessons and techniques, which have significantly bolstered my confidence in handling project accountability.

There have been a lot of challenges in my stint so far, including problematic development team members, demanding business users, tight deadlines, poor quality outputs and even driver/server issues which were impacting the business. Ensuring high quality development while keeping to user deadline expectations can sometimes be a fine balance, but developing good relationships with both parties can help immeasurably. I've learnt the importance of managing expectations and keeping up relations; both key techniques that I use on a daily basis.

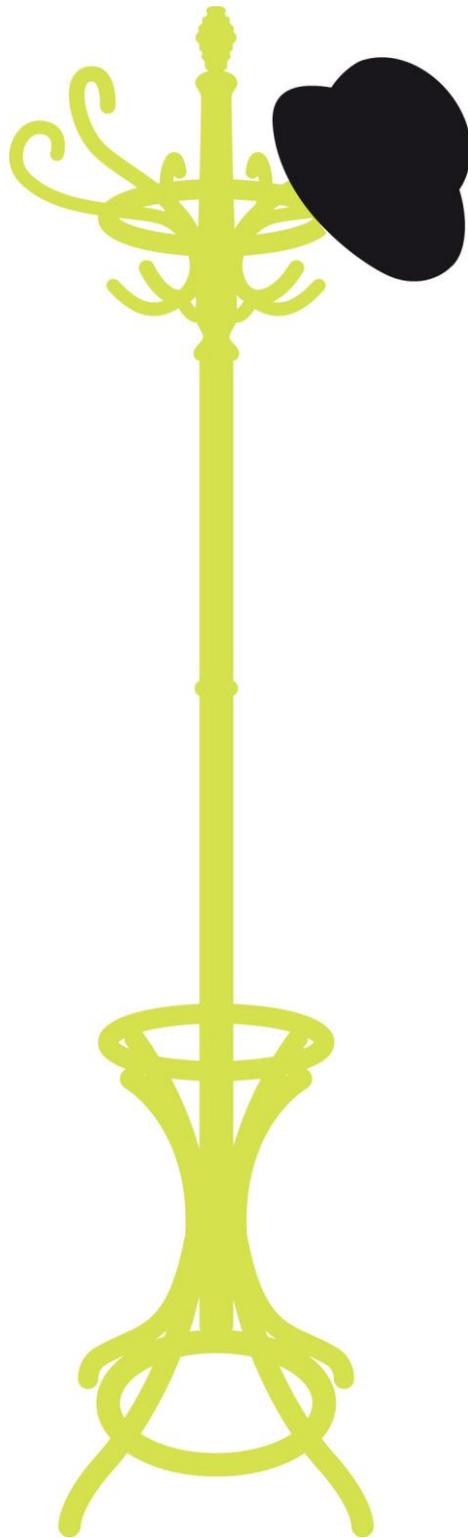
I also had the opportunity to get involved in development and testing to help push projects along and my overall efforts were rewarded with a lot more responsibility, which I greatly appreciated. I started with one, then two, and currently manage six projects! The Green Beret programme provides a unique platform for real job responsibility and progression within each role, which is one of its great benefits.

Prior to joining the Hatstand Green Beret programme, I attained a First Class Bachelor of Science (Hons) degree from Brunel University. The four year sandwich course was completed in 2010, where I majored in Multimedia, Computing and Electronic Business. The degree provided me with deep knowledge and understanding on the importance of IT, as well as practical skills to tailor and apply in industry. As part of the degree, I spent 13 months on placement at one of the largest technology multinationals as a Business Development Specialist. It was here that I first got to test myself, and experience excelling within the corporate world.

My experience with Hatstand has always been pleasurable, with the company having a professional, but fun vibe. I've had regular contact with the HR team, which is essential as I've felt supported at each step. Another great feature of the programme is the generous training budget that has given me the chance to

develop new skills, as well as enhancing existing ones. I've learnt and developed a great deal in a relatively short space of time, including becoming a PRINCE2 Certified Practitioner, which was a goal I achieved on the programme.

Being a Hatstand Green Beret has given me the opportunity to work for one of the leading firms in the fascinating and dynamic investment banking sector. The pressure of meeting strict deadlines and the fast-paced environment have already challenged me to achieve and develop. My aim is to grow even further within my role as a Business Analyst/Project Manager and become a real asset within this profession. I've always wanted to be given a chance at building a career in this industry, and thanks to Hatstand, I'm currently experiencing the opportunity.



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