

Simon Elliston Ball – Big Data Strategist

I am a strategic thinker, and active developer, with a range of experience of designing, building and managing data applications across a range of industries, both start up and established. I have a broad technology base across proprietary and open source stacks which I have applied to a wide variety of business requirements.

Red Gate Software (2012-), Product Manager and Head of Big Data

I work in Red Gate's new Ventures division, which specializes in uncovering new markets, building new products and acquisitions. Through participation in the company's strategic portfolio reviews and building business cases, I persuaded Red Gate to create the Big Data team I became leader of, and to pursue the Hadoop tooling market, in partnership with several vendors, including Microsoft and HortonWorks.

- Extensive customer contact, and research work, including training team members on getting real requirements, and true information out of customer calls and visits.
- Also managed analyst relations and ran vendor briefings with Gartner and Forrester.
- Ran data science projects within Red Gate to improve data-driven product decisions, and created a data-driven culture in product teams. (Hadoop, Hive, R, Pig, Python, SQL)
- Determined product strategy in the Big Data market, and some minor markets.
- Managed external investments and took on corporate director duties. Involvement in a range of due-diligence processes, both market and technology for early stage investments.
- Speaking at conferences and establishing Red Gate as a credible brand in the Big Data market, taking the business from zero to recognition from major partners.

Metage Capital (2008-2012) hedge fund, Head of IT

- Controlled budget and supplier contracts, identifying duplication of data suppliers and saving nearly 30% of the data spend. Through strategic virtualisation of servers, extended lifespan of applications and reduced replacement costs and introduced more robust architecture.
- Moved the company's infrastructure, both hardware and software to a hybrid cloud based reducing long-term support and development risk. Also project managed two office moves.
- Introduced standards to development and documentation, including Agile inspired pair-programming.
- Through development and use of web based intranets and reports, improved access to company data, and simplified trading processes, reducing operational risk. Created core research tools developed in collaboration with key front office staff, and assisted in developing models for pre- and post- trade analytics.
- Developed and maintained third-party integration systems creating more robust links to data suppliers and counterparties, reducing the need for manual intervention and reconciliation.

Carbon 350 (2009-)

Provided startup consultancy, infrastructure and web presence using cloud services to allow the business to take control of their data and public image.

Cromwell Business Systems (2005-2008), Head of Infrastructure, Developer

- Rebuilt the entire company data and networking infrastructure following the destruction of our data-centres in the Buncefield oil disaster. Designed and implemented multiple location resilient architecture following this in three separate cities, handling terabyte scale databases.
- Headed research and development team, creating and evaluating new products and technologies, reducing costs through use of open source and in-house developed technologies and improving customer retention.

- Developed a hosted VoIP telephony solution for internal use, and then packaged it into a product which was sold out to a number of customers as part of an ISP solution.
- Managed web development team to create and maintain household name high-traffic transactional e-commerce websites including richersounds.co.uk, hughesdirect.co.uk and apollo2000.co.uk. Introduced good practice into development teams, including source control, unit testing and continuous integration.
- Added release control and approval processes, increasing developer accountability and release quality and on-going monitoring solutions to maintain SLAs.
- Modernised service offering on top of legacy platform. Revamped the web framework to improve scalability, reduce development and training costs.

RefHost

Designed an efficient limited tree algorithm for management of a multi-level marketing programme, replacing a long running over-night process with a real-time system. Also added a high performance dynamic graphic display of the tree. Implemented fraud detection and numerous payment system integrations. Co-developed and supported a management control panel for thousands of hosting clients. Company exited in 2008 in part thanks to the tree technology I developed.

Occasional Photography - Co-Founder, e-Commerce, photography and image processing

- Founded a seasonal photography business, and created an e-Commerce platform to market individual photographs. Handled all elements of marketing, image processing and payments.
- Successfully handled a throughput of over 35,000 photographs taken by six photographers, curated, edited and processed in a two week season, through development of a grid-computing image processing engine and efficient caching. Handled thousands of web hits and print orders on very limited budget.

Education

Cambridge – MA History 2:1 (1998-2001)

Open University – BA Mathematics and Statistics (current)

Haileybury College: S-level; English (1), History (1). A-level; Maths (A), English (A), French (A), History (B), General Studies (A). AO-levels; Maths (A), French (A). GCSE; 7A* 3A.

Speaking at local and international conferences on Big Data and NoSQL

I have spoken on Big Data and NoSQL at a wide range of events including:

- SQL Saturday Cambridge 2013 precon, *Introduction to HDInsight*
- DDD North 2013, NDC London 2013 and South Florida Code Camp 2014, *MongoDB for the C# Developer*
- CodePaLOUsa 2014, *Finding and Using Big Data in your Business*
- NoSQL Matters (Cologne) 2014, CodePaLOUsa 2014, Scotch-on-the-Rocks 2014, and NoSQL East, *When to NoSQL and When to Know SQL*
- Bigconf (Washington) 2014, *Riding the Elephant: New Opportunities with Hadoop 2.0*

Other interests, side projects and writing

- Consultant developer on numerous websites for small businesses, charity events, and friends, as well as for marketing agencies. This includes <http://www.badenochandclark.com>.
- My screencast Mastering ExtJS will be published shortly by Packt.
- For a collection of technical articles, links to my LinkedIn, StackOverflow, Github and other relevant online profiles, check my web site at <http://www.simonellistonball.com/>