http://www.darendavidtaylor.com
hello@darendavidtaylor.com

07590 216276

Daren David Taylor
Native iOS + React Native Developer

I started developing for iOS in 2008, releasing a handful of my own apps in that year. In 2009 I joined the TomTom team over in Amsterdam to create one of the largest grossing apps for the iPhone.

I have worked exclusively in mobile since the era of Palm / Windows CE / Symbian in the year 2000.

My clients include Expedia, Samsung, O2, Sony, Huawei, JPMorgan, working with them we have created some of the most awesome apps in the App Store.

In addition to enjoying working with corporates, I often work with Startups from the inception of a product, working with the end client to hone a concept into something that fits into budget, creating wireframes and then developing and deploying an app into the App Store.

I am fully subscribed to lean methodologies and apply them to the development of apps, realising that not every client has a large budget and getting the most from my time is of the utmost importance.

I love to meet like minded developers and product people in a never ending quest to learn from others.

Commercial iOS apps

REVL: Jul 2017 - Oct 2017

The UK's Ultimate What's On Guide

Taking on an large existing codebase can be challenging, however, initially, the main struggle here was that there no process from design to development, after speaking with the founder, we created a number of procedures which helped myself and another developer focus on the actual development and allowed the founder to know exactly where we were on each feature. In addition we became more engaged in the design phase which allowed us to suggest best practice and often quicker and more intuitive solutions.

Helix: Apr 2017 - Jul 2017

We believe Health & Healthcare can be made better by design

Working directly with clinicians and designers we created an in house (St Mary's Hospital) app for facilitating the clinicians and patients with Asthma communicate via an engaging and fun to use app. I was absolutely fundamental in the UX for this app and as this was initially an MVP I took every step possible to get a first version in users hands as quickly as possible, iterating on that feedback we refined the UX and I went further into the development process refining and refactoring.
This was an especially enjoyable role, as the client was getting massive value from me as I was able to guide the team into easy win solutions, rather than have a fragmented design and development situation.

Buddi: Mar 2016 - Apr 2017

The go anywhere, anytime personal response service

It was literally an honour to work with Sara Murray (OBE) on this suite of apps!
The requirement was to create an app, called Nudge, that interfaced with a wearable bluetooth wristband that has an emergency button that can enact certain actions within the app.
There was a rough UX for this but I went ahead and created a full set of wireframes that showed all action paths through the app, we were then able to iron out any problems at this early stage.
The development of this app was really enjoyable as other than the bluetooth and communications to a server, the app was quite simple, but we made up for it with a beautiful interface to entice users back into the app.
In addition to the Nudge app, I created two other apps which worked together to create a Contact and Connect combination for monitoring elderly relatives.

HUAWEI: Sep 2014 - Mar 2016

Building a better connected world

Working in the Research and Development office in Cork, Ireland and in conjunction with Vodafone and Bloomberg creating an indoor location solution, wow this contract ticked all the boxes!
Id worked on location services on TomTom and the Miltrack apps, but this solution was to track users through airports, buildings and shops using bluetooth beacons using proprietary algorithms.
I was the sole MVP developer here, the goal was to create and innovate solutions for the tracking of the users creating a 'unique algorithm' and, as importantly create a toolset for technicians to be able to deploy the beacons in site.
I was in my element here completely overseeing the entire software effort.

IMMERSE LEARNING : Aug 2014 - Sep 2014

VR solutions for industries

The purpose of the app when I arrived was to help teachers teach to students that were in a remote location, but to be able to cooperate in a virtual world, such as an oil rig to give guided tours and to give safety meetings in other languages etc

As I entered service here there was already a unity app that housed the 3d environment, I created an iOS app that housed and communicated with the unity component, for the iOS app I also created a chat client and other periphery displays that sat around and interacted with the main unity component to create a cohesive solution.

Chant : Jul 2014 - Aug 2014

You're in the band

Id known about Dan Morell through his work on climate change initiative, again with this app, saving the world was the end goal. Using pitch detection using auto correlation and a rich user interface where I also used cocos2d for effects and interaction feedback users are encouraged to record audio at a given pitch. These samples can then be distributed to artists to use in commercial recordings, creating a viral loop.The app has gone on to be used by artists at festivals such as Glastonbury and the Notting Hill Carnival.

Hotels.com : (Expedia) Nov 2013 - Jul 2014

The world's largest travel agent

A recruiter approached me with trepidation suggesting that I apply for what is considered by many as the most difficult job interview in town!
I could not possibly decline this challenge, I really enjoyed the technical challenges and talking about my strategies and success stories I bonded immediately with this team of the utmost geeky yet fun people. Rather like myself.
My first concern here was that although they believed they had been implementing TDD, in reality the team had just been creating unit tests after writing code, this is not TDD and doesn't really help create more reliable or refactorable code so I took my TDD experience and suggested practices whereby we spec tests at the ticket level, and develop the test prior to creating the feature code.
Another concern that I had was that we had no user interaction testing.
Within a week I had integrated and automated the KIF testing framework to do a simple sweep over the app, most importantly to test the user interface for every territory / language. We found that in many configurations the app wasn't displaying any hotels and crashing in certain situations.
As well as the test work I spent the rest of my extended contract developing new features for the app, a fantastic team to work with and I learned a lot.

NFL Connect : (OneUp Sports) Sep 2013 - Nov 2013

Your sports, amplified

I have worked on many polished apps but the NFL Connect app beats all other hands down in terms of design and finish, an absolutely beautiful app. It is a game to play along while watching an NFL game whereby you try and predict certain events happening within a game.

A series of interesting solutions to standard problems including using Cocoa Pods to manage internal dependencies (I would have preferred git submodules) and a very distributed uncommunicative team over many time zones really made this a challenging app to work on, however we got the app out ready for the superbowl!

A fantastic achievement for all the team given that the codebase was also used over many SKUs to support different sports.

Sparx : Aug 2013 - Sep 2013

Scientifically driven and research based education

The founder of the company contacted me directly to work on two MVPs for a side project that they wanted to keep separate from the main business activities.

The first was an app that helps music teachers and students read a music score together on one to many iPads kept in sync with gamekit. This was a really simple app, taking a week or so to develop.

The latter project was similar in technology to the Chant app that I later worked on which used auto correlation to detect musical pitch and guide the student through a musical score. I worked with a Phd student on this who helped iron out bugs with the octave detection, detecting notes is actually quite simple, notes with octave information not so easy due to harmonies in the waveform from higher octaves.

UBS : (Nice Agency) Jul 2013- - Aug 2013

Swiss global financial services

The app was already half functioning as is often the case when brought into a digital agency. iPad support was required by UBS with a new set of designs, given that the code design was rather non modular this required quite large scale refactoring, by first preparing a set of UI tests and expected results, the job was made easier and a whole more confident when handing over to UBS.

CAN : (LShift) Jan 2013 - Jul 2013

A closed social network for information sharing

Used by investment bankers paying a very high subscription fee this app was built to the utterly highest standards using strict TDD and UI testing.

It is quite rare to have such detailed UX designs and complete assets from a design agency but given that was the case here made our (three developer's) life a lot easier, and enabled us to concentrate on creating a product as close to the design as possible.

Most interesting on this project was the communications protocol that we created which included a git-like-rollback mechanism for transaction like updates of the back end.

JPMorgan : Sep 2012 - Dec 2012

Multinational banking and financial services

Working on site at the Glasgow Technology Centre I was given three independent projects to oversee. We purchased existing apps, and bolted a login onto the user interface and added changed the app to be able to pass penetration testing etc. The three apps were quite diverse yet formed to create a set of useful tools for professional bankers.

1) A map zooming animation tool for the iPad for the company to use in meetings.

2) An iPad screen sharing app using an iPad hosted http server and gamekit to show the finger positions of the host.

3) A to do list app specific to the needs of bankers.

I started this role by taking other apps that had login added and began to extract that code into a fully reusable component (amazingly it already was not) and used a git submodule that the other apps could build from.
From there it became a far simpler process to add the login component when more apps were purchased by the company.

Gordon Ramsay : (M&C Saatchi) Jul 2012 - Sep 2012

Cook with me

Working with m&c Saatchi, a deployed app was already in existence and in use, however in app purchases together with recipe bundles and a new video feature were added to the codebase. It had been worked on by at least 10 separate developers, I added the new code in a way that did not interact with the existing code unless absolutely necessary, we had no regression at all on the existing features which was testament to my light handedness.
Obviously if we had had more time refactoring and consideration of the existing code would have been assessed, but it was a very tight budget and getting the task done and out of the door was of the highest priority, as they already had a large user base.

Vyclone : Apr 2012 - Jun 2012
Make beautiful videos together

By stitching together videos shot by multiple users, the is the ideal tool for producing shareable content during live events like concerts, weddings and family gatherings.
Ahead of its time and used by artists such as Ed Sheeran to create a viral buzz for events.

Hope Relay : (Velti) Jan 2012 - Mar 2012

London 2012 Olympic offering from Samsung

This was a deadline that wasn't going to be moved and we only had a couple of months to get this finished.
Working as lead developer for iOS with a project manager, Android and server developers, this was a small team with a lot of drive and excitement.
The app was an absolute joy to code and use, it allowed the user to create avatars by taking a masked out picture of the user's face, the back end then created a video to post on facebook where you appeared with David Beckham, Victoria Pendleton and Jamie Oliver in the video.
The guts of the app was a gps tracking running app whereby for every mile the user runs they raise a pound for charity. Your friends could see you real time and send you audio messages that were played as you ran.
This was just the app for me given my participation in Ironman and having worked on two very large GPS apps prior to this.
Complexities here included a sliding window cheat detection algorithm and handling offline states and interrupting the audio queue while the app was in the background.

Playstion : (Velti) Jan 2012 - Mar 2012

iOS partner app for the playstation

Having been already been developed in its entirety I was tasked to add DLNA support for playing back videos from the iPhone to the Playstation.
The technical task was actually quite simple as I found a free library, there was much UI work though for creating a responsive feedback mechanism for controlling the video playback.

O2 : (Velti) Jan 2012 - Mar 2012

iO2 banking in your pocket

I only spent a month on this app and it was purely a maintenance roll while waiting for a spec on the Olympic app. I worked on updating the user interface to a newer style.

Vouchercloud : Nov 2010 - Apr 2011

Mobile vouchers and redemption codes

The company already had an MVP in existance, by myself and later working with a co developer we bought the app into a stable 2 million download app, and within 6 months the company was bought out by Vodafone for £12million.
The app has a fantastic simple interface and deals with issues such as deailign with limited redemption codes hwe offline etc, which can be quite troublesome.

	TomTom : May 2009 - Nov 2010 Car kit For my first commercial iOS app this was quite a feat, the app interfaced with an accessory which was a gps receiver to boost the Phone's then insufficient GPS. The main technical hurdle of the app was consuming and monitoring the raw nmea data from the accessory and displaying the reception.
	TomTom : May 2009 - Nov 2010 World leading navigation Developing the main TomTom app for the iPhone with 3 other teammates. My role was focussed on the user interface. The software used a really unique technical solution. A virtual symbian operating system in c++ running in the background inside the iPhone. This is to run the mapping code that is standard across all clients. The iPhone user interface code interacts with the c++ code, via an abstraction layer. I really enjoyed working on this app and it did set me up for an awesome career in iOS development as I touched many areas of the SDK including audio, threading, quartz graphics, Location, and a complex google places integration.
	Miltrak : 2007 - 2011(4 Individual contracts) Situational awareness for military Working at Thales on this project was a transitional period for me, I spent 2 years writing an app in Symbian and given that this was a bid for a massive government contract, I was required to port the app to Android and later the iPhone platform. The app took a nokia 5500 a small sports phone and used a caddy to protect the phone for frontline soldier use. It physically used pushrods connecting to the keyboard. This solution proved to be revolutionary as the cost of the platform went from thousands to hundreds per unit. Communicating to an external hardware device using IR (to avoid bluetooth jamming) a protocol was developed to transmit positional, map, route enemy position data over a radio network. Technically I completely took over the nokia Interface replacing with an ultra simple 5 button user interface with custom written mapping, route planning displays and operations. This was without a doubt the most amazing project that I have had the chance to work on as the sole lead developer makes me so proud of an amazing accomplishment. Thales did eventually win the contract and is still in active duty as the system was purchased by governments globally.

Personal iOS Apps

	Skylab : 2008 Tilting and rotating marble game Taking concept from the game Kuru Kuru Kururin from the Gameboy Advance I created a game using just standard UIViews which even with parallax and bitwise collision detection give an ultra smooth framerate. The game was received well with 165k downloads within 6 months
	Hotel Search : 2012 Easy to use hotel searching Ironically i built this for the interview of my hotels.com app, fortunately for them it didn't do as well as their app, it does have some really cool natural language drill down user interface in there and is slick and easy to use.
	Calchua : 2017 Pomodoro and Kanban in one This is released and it really quite good, but does require a little more work. I am especially proud of the animations on the login screens, and the audio notifications which use text to speech recorded to a wav then used as the local notification sound. Vid Here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EepyueGHq4I
	Triathlon Timetable : 2012 A scheduling app for training for a triiathlon This is a scratch you own itch app, it has actually sold quite well over the years more than paying for the development cost in terms of time. I wrote it using really (overly) decoupled architecture, whereby between every model / controller / view controller, and intermediate agent object was used which accepted interfaces rather than concrete objects. It did lead me down the avenue of TDD though as it's basically the fundamentals of dependency injection and it did land me the job working for the CAN project later.
	Life Tracker: 2008 Record your life My absolute first project, it took me a month to write while I was learning objective C and cocoa and made me about 20k in cash! Looking back it is monumentally ugly, but it did have a lot of happy users, the app beauty bar was quite low back then.

Loathe: 2016

A very difficult game

This is the follow up to my Skylab game. It uses Sprite Kit and as as the subtitle suggests is incredibly difficult, but quite addictive.
The beam is guided around a track and the player can rotate the beam to dodge the obstacles.
I've made games since I was a child and every few years feel the need to be creative which also serves to guide me into new technology.

OnTrack : 2009 - 2010

Sat nav for Mountain Bikers

I developed this app once again to scratch my own itch.
While out of the mountain bike following trails it can be annoying to repeatedly check the a map.
With this app you can create a route and the app with give you audio notification when you deviate off track.
The app has a slick interface and a handful of loyal users.