

# Internship's Final Report

Urs Enke

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This report complements the "mid-term" one about my experiences during my participation in CDS' Professional Development Program as an intern at Siemens Corporate Research in Princeton. As details about aspects like internship content, activities, language and living expenses have already been mentioned in that somewhat belated and thus still current previous report, this one rather presents an evaluative look back.

## 1 Mindset

As already indicated in my mid-term report, I enjoyed my six months in the U.S. – to now, the longest period I spent away from home – to an extent that made them just fly by. Admittedly, instant messaging and almost 100 hours of phone calls formed a backdrop of familiarity for everyday life, but both flatmates and co-workers heavily contributed to a very 'comfortable' time.

Although over the past two months, with the visa expiration date approaching, thoughts increasingly focused on the organization of the post-internship time, which job to seek etc., I could easily have stayed longer. Obviously, though, the incentive to start a temporary adventure abroad is stronger than that to extend it arbitrarily. After all, I am looking forward to getting home for a change, and even if I favoured another internship over applying for a 'proper' employment, that would pose a new opportunity to see something new.

## 2 Benefits

I opt against yet another internship, though, and so I spend these final weeks thinking about what to do next. As this internship was my first 'real' employment in a corporate environment, I now feel better prepared for job interviews and the actual work that will hopefully ensue from one of those. Although many things are bound to be done differently across organizations, observing from the inside provided some latent familiarity with the corporate world as such that might help me find my place in a more confident manner than how it might otherwise have developed.

Whether or not the actual content of my internship will prove relevant in future employment, witnessing procedures and problems of communication and cooperation was surely a valuable experience in itself, which I am curious to compare and contrast with future ones.

Said content I regret to leave at its most interesting point. One project, which was about the analysis of a document repository, its redesign and redeployment is nearing its final phase. The other, centred around the design and implementation of a modular human-workflow system, is just moving from the development basics to the exploration of interesting extensions. I will try to channel this regret into anticipation of opportunities to actually complete things in the future, and, right now in the last few days, into proper documentation that will allow others to build on what I have learnt.

Anyway, during my time at SCR I felt quite independent, able to propose and realize own ideas instead of being bound to external specifications. To, in retrospect, name one deficiency, I would have preferred working in teams more often than has been the case. But in the given setting, this would have contradicted the independence enjoyed, and would have proven difficult considering the limited size of my department.

Apart from these 'corporate and content' experiences, I will take with me the already mentioned memory of a sympathetic bunch of people around me, many touristic visual impressions of cities and landscapes and also a sharpened picture of the United States as such. The latter includes perceptions of everyday life here, ranging from pragmatic traffic laws over curious food products to the questionable prevalence and quality of power poles, but also of different political views like opposition toward ID cards or a state monopoly on schools.

## 3 Conclusion

While I would certainly not make a European mindset on energy consumption or tax harmonization a precondition for spending the rest of my life in the U.S., I still perceive a lack of standards and especially consider local legislation and law enforcement too unreliable to not consider Europe the safer choice, should no other aspects speak in favour of either.

Judging by my own experience, though, I can only encourage anybody playing with the thought of an internship in the U.S. to go through with it. For students or graduates of computer science, SCR in particular represents a great opportunity to spend an interesting (and despite high expenses 'financially sound') time here.

My thanks go to all who contributed to these six enjoyable and valuable months in the Land of Squirrels!