Intern Spotlight: Tan Tuohy
Compiled by Noah Jeffrey

Tan is a Management major and had a Web Design internship at Worldwide Gaming in Hamel, MN.

How did you find out about the internship and what was the application process?
I decided to utilize multiple resources with my internship search, beyond Career Services, the Internship office, and e-link, and was able to find this opportunity through my local Craigslist. The application process was fairly simple. I replied to the Craigslist ad with my resume and set up a time to meet with the president of the company. The hiring process itself was like any other job. I had to fill out paperwork at the office and took a tour of the warehouse and front office.

What are some of the highlights?
One major highlight is the fact that the internship itself is different than what most do at a desk with day to day tasks. As a Web Developer, I have to use creativity along with other skills to complete tasks. I have quite a lot of freedom to implement my ideas and I get to see my ideas come “alive” on the World Wide Web. The internet is a powerful publishing medium for ideas and products that can reach a very large amount of people.

What was a “typical day” like? What were some of your major responsibilities?
My typical day starts off an hour before 9 AM. I usually come in with a cup of coffee to start off the day right. Because I get paid so much for working at Worldwide Gaming as an intern, I drink Folgers Coffee. Joking aside, my morning at works starts off with a briefing with the boss about what tasks need to get done by the end of the day. The short morning meeting usually includes my thoughts on what can improve about the company’s website and online store, along with any concerns. Throughout the day I work on completing the tasks as the boss checks in to see how I am doing. The random checking usually involves him using the intercom and calling my office phone. At the end of the day, there is usually a de-briefing of what has been accomplished and what is still in the works.

What were some of the challenges of your internship?
One challenge of the internship was working on Search Engine Optimization or what web gurus call “SEO” for the company. SEO is not an exact science, and as a result, a lot of guesswork has to be done. I have implemented changes to both the company front end and the online store to make the overall site more appealing to Search Engines, or what my colleagues would abbreviate as “SE”. Another challenge was trying to explain to the boss what was needed to be done with tasks. Communication was an issue because the boss either did not know what the terms meant or did not know what must be done in the background for the end result.

What did you learn?
The greatest thing I learned from the internship is probably the importance of balancing technical expertise with practicality. Managing tasks and prioritizing those tasks is important when trying to get things done, especially on the internet. The internet works at a very fast pace when it comes to building trust and building an identity online. This can be good and bad. Millions of new sites pop up every day and competition is very high when it comes to ecommerce. To be successful, one must know where to focus resources.

What advice would you give other students interested in internships?
If a student is interested in an internship, choose an internship that is both meaningful to you and meaningful to what you want to do in the future after college. If you have passion for what you do, it will definitely get you farther in life and you are less likely to burn out.