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## First Post

Hi all,

I find myself falling more and more in love with iPhone development. With over 40 million iPhones/iTouches in the world, the possibility making money is all too real. However, this is both a blessing as well as a curse. There are over 30,000 apps on the app store, the variety leaves very little to be invented. I have spent a lot of my time working my two jobs day dreaming of apps that I could invent. If you are looking for my recommendation, I stay stick to games. Choose a game that people are going to play on the bus, when they are bored in work or (albiet a more manly option) while sitting on the toilet :P. It has to start fast and be interesting enough to maintain your attention.

On my iPhone I tend to play Darts and FlightControl when I am in the mood for a quick game of something. The games basically start straight away and drop you in the action. You don't have to finish the game or beat a boss, its just to pass the time. However if I am looking for something addictive to pass the time (i.e. willing to spend more time on it) I will play games like Tap Defense. You have to slowly build an army along a track to defeat increasingly more difficult swarms of enemies. It looks simple but keeps you playing for hours.

So in saying that I have one of each type of game in the pipeline. Using what little time I have available I am creating a game that you can just pick up and play (should have that completed by mid-September) and another that will take more strategy but will be simply addictive (probably wont be complete until next year, I want to get this one right).

Thanks for reading and keep an eye on this space for my iPhone apps.

Kind Regards,

Gary

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## The Real World

I find myself writing this blog as a scared man. I am about three months into my work experience and to be honest I'm enjoying it. In two months I return to college to complete my degree but I cant help but ask....Can I do this as a career?

Programming eight hours a day, five days a week, is starting to take its toll on me. Lets take an example. I spent the last few days trying to debug a program I had written. Each day I was becoming more and more frustrated and it was becoming less likely that I was going to solve it. I went through the usually stages of "Its the computer, the computer is broken!" and "I give up! Never doing this again!". So I decided to recruit some help from my team (Some in Galway, some in Dublin and some in New Hampshire USA). We had a conference call and I shared my screen with everyone. However, despite our combined genius, we could not solve the issue. Now everyone is frustrated.

So we tried again with a few colleagues in India. We did some changes there and then but unfortunately it didn't help. An unsolvable issue perhaps? No. No it was not.

A lightbulb started to glow brightly over my head as I noticed one of the URLs in my code was incomplete. So many of us missed it, I was in disbelief. Is this what I want to spend the rest of my life doing? Looking for trivial little errors in code. And the simple answer to it is.....YES!

Words can not describe the feeling I felt when that little red x (I was using eclipse) went away and my code compiled. The satisfaction one feels from solving an issue, regardless of how trivial is fantastic. The rush I got was enough to keep me going for the entire day. I was in a great mood and got so much work done. And now I can look back on it and laugh, such a trivial little error.

So thats my decision, this is the career for me. I love it, the frustration, the anger, the relief and the joy all wrapped up in the space of an hour. Sure its stressful and may lead to some cases of instantaneous rage (thats actually a term in my employee handbook) but its worth it. Its the beginning of my life and I couldnt be happier.

Kind Regards,  
Gary

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## Life in general

Times have been interesting recently, and in most cases not in a good way. We lost a number of well know characters as you will all have seen in the news. We have seen planes vanish on routine flights and watch the economy worsen. All these events lead me to worry constantly throughout my days. Our world seems to be falling to pieces.

I noticed somewhat of an unintentional survey happening around me over the last few days. Everyone I know seems to know someone who has recently died/is dying. I can add myself to that list. What is happening? Why is this happening?

I do not know the answers. One could say that the stress of day to day life has increased to such a point that we are letting our health suffer to try and put bread on the table. People adopt the mentality of just wanting to get their lives together and organize things for the future. But even that is now becoming more difficult. Jobs are few and far between and Ireland is becoming more and more expensive. I don't want to be one of those people that constantly complains about the government but things are starting to get surreal. Why do we need a law against blasphemy? Why is it more beneficial for someone to be unemployed than it is to be out and working?

I cannot help but feel worry and sadness as these events transpire before me. Do we have the ability to pull ourselves out of it? I asked a very simple question on twitter a couple weeks ago. Are humans stupid? One answer was yes and to blame our society. Things have changed for the worse in recent years as killing and death become day to day events. Another claimed yes, and pointed out the fact that we are slowly but surely destroying the planet that we rely on for survival. All are sadly valid points. Not one person said no. We have come so far in recent years but when you see people smoking to a point that they are ending their own lives, its hard to know what to think. When we see an Irish politician making more money than the president of the United States you have to wonder if the odds are stacked against us. They are too busy lining their own pockets to care about us. So we must no longer live our lives, but fight for them.

I have spent some sleepless nights, tonight being one of them, thinking about my future and what I will do. I refuse to surrender. I refuse to be dragged down with this corrupt government. Its sad as I love Ireland so much. I wouldn't call myself patriotic but I'm proud of where I come from. So I intend to look after my family only for the foreseeable future. I will work my fingers to the bone to give my girlfriend and I the life we have always dreamed of. I don't know how but I can assure you that I will do it somehow. I won't let the worry consume me. Life is their to be lived. And by God I'm going to live it well.

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## A sad day in Ireland

It saddens me to have to do this but this blog is a complaint about my dear country. Recent events have brought a few things to my attention and none of them are positive. Twitter has become full of complaints about this so called blasphemy law. As another year of third level education starts back for some of us, it brings back the all too painful discussion about college fees. And I'll be having a look at some other, not so well known, Irish traditions.

This so called "blasphemy law" has officially been written in. This is supposed to increase the speed at which apologies are issued by publishers over blasphemous libel. I personally think this is a load of garbage. This rule has been around since the 1960's and now they decide to enforce it? On many levels this law is ridiculous, in some cases, some religions are blasphemous against other religions. The bible itself would have some occurrences of blasphemy against other religions. Does that mean that the bible is now a blasphemous publication, I seriously doubt they will do anything about it. What this has done for me is proved that the government are actually clueless.

Complaining will get us nowhere however as the government will do whatever they want anyway. We have no money, but now they are talking about building a bridge to England. Its ingenious! I feel completely powerless here and that worries me a lot. As I have mentioned before I love Ireland but living here has become a risk. This is what scares me. Our government is now borrowing €400 million a week. They are spending more money than what they are making out of us in tax. It's silly because our tax money is going to pay them huge salaries. Some of them don't actually do anything! They just sit there until they are needed, which is never! Out of 300 highly paid government officials, only 14 agreed to a pay cut. That is madness, if we stand any way of spending tax money wisely and getting ourselves out of debt they need to stop this luxury lifestyle they have wrongly become accustomed to. I mean I had to take a pay cut to keep my job, why shouldn't they. Brian Cowen is the biggest waste of tax payer money since the voting machines scandal.

Okay so now we have figured out that our money is going to waste. But that's OK once we can bring in big money ourselves. Get some high paying jobs and bring this country to success by ourselves. But no, the lads in the government decided to interfere with this also. The reintroduction of college fees is going to do one thing and one thing only. It will make college only for the privileged. This is going to drastically reduce the amount of people going to college. Our country is going to be reduced to a land of idiots and murders because anyone with any cop on will know to get the hell out of Ireland. They will either go in search of education or if they were lucky enough to get into college, they will leave as soon as they get their degrees.

So we are running out of money, our government don't care (they are getting paid more than the president of the USA for God sake, oops might get done for blasphemous libel for that one :P) and we are no longer entitled to college education unless we have a lot of money. Our country is sinking faster than the titanic and I for one am going to jump ship before its too late. It breaks my heart to say it but I have to put my family first. I have to put my future first.

I suppose there are members of the general public that need to take the blame also. These will be the people left behind I can assure you. I became enraged earlier this week at the sound of this electricians strike. We are in the middle of one of the toughest times in Irish history. To save my job, I had to take a 5% pay cut. It was painful but the fact that I am still making money is good enough for me. Obviously their area of work is hit by the recession more than others and so a 10% pay cut was introduced. They decided to strike instead. All this did was withdraw the ability to work from the electricians who needed some form of income, 10% pay cut or not. I thought this was so unfair. Then the unexpected, they demand a pay rise? How in the name of God does that make sense? (Oops, there's that blasphemous libel again). And what left me gob smacked was the fact the spoil little brats got what they wanted, and said NO!! They want more!! This just goes to show that they have no idea what they are doing as much as the government doesn't.

My next complaint is more of a personal complaint to be honest. I work in Citywest during the week and I take the M50. Some drivers on the roads today are moronic! It is somewhat of an Irish tradition to break the speed limit. On any road that's 80km/h, they will go 100km/h. On any 100km/h road they go 120km/h! I was driving home from Portlaoise the other day and was on the M7 which is 120km/h. I was on the inside lane going 120km/h. And a woman (typical woman driver :P only kidding) comes

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**flying up behind me at well over the speed limit. She glued to my bumper until eventually I got so angry that I just moved to get rid of her. She then speeds ahead and pulls out in front of me! She wanted to go in the left hand lane, why did she have to go around me at well over 120km/h! The left lane was free! Yet she forced me out! These are the people that get killed every week. What gives them the right to break the speed limit? What gives them the right to put other peoples lives at risk? On the M50 dangerous drivers are in higher numbers. Some decide to cross four lanes with no indicator.**

**That's it. That was the straw that broke the camels back. I cant take any more of this idiocy. I'm going to struggle to finish college and then I'm out of here. I'm going to take a job in a place that is suffering but dealing with it properly. I love this country and I always will. But its becoming more evident that the majority of people have absolutely no respect for this gorgeous land of ours.**

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I am the dog whisperer

I have been thinking about this blog for a long time now. I really wanted to do it right because I have been inspired.

If you recall from my first or second blog post (I don't remember which) I considered the possibility that humans are stupid. And now that feeling in my mind has been reinforced. If you think about children, it takes roughly until the age of 15 or so before they could effectively fend for themselves. We would not survive in the animal kingdom as we really have no instinct. I'm sure at some stage in our evolution we did, but it has definitely been dulled. I sometimes get the feeling that I should do something or behave in a certain way and I think this is my instinct trying to help out. But in all honesty mostly we resort to running or freezing on the spot.

This has been bothering me as you see the usually depressing things on the news (someone is dead, someone got killed, someone took loads of money and is not going to give it back etc etc) and I think to myself "How did the world get into such disorder?". I try not to think about it and just live my life and do what I need to do to make my own path. Just live life as God intended (or nature or Buddha or whatever the hell you believe in). That is how the animals do it. Then, while on a day off from work, I decided to watch National Geographic channel. This is where I came across Cesar Millan.

The Dog Whisperer is about an inspirational man that can rehabilitate dogs to return them to their animal mentality as nature intended. A lot of dogs have problems in the human world. Some become uncontrollably aggressive or controlling over a household. Cesar can teach them that humans are dominant and that they are part of the family (part of the pack). This really got me thinking as he does everything naturally. Just like dogs do in the wild, he uses their method of dominance and teaches them to become one unit. This is a healthy environment for the dog and you will be left with a much happier household. It's only fair to the dog to let him be an animal. He rehabilitates dogs back to their natural ways, he trains humans to welcome their animal mentality in a calm and assertive way.

My little Jack Russell, as seen above, can be a tad aggressive. So I bought some of Cesar's books and watched the show to try and pick up some tips on calming him down a bit. The problem was that he has so much energy and no time to use it all. So now I will go out and literally chase my dog. After a few minutes I'm bo\*\*oxed but he can keep running. I have never caught him. So then we play fetch. It was only after a few minutes that I realized he was doing as I told him. We ran together, not him going crazy while I followed. We were becoming a pack.

I can't spend as much time with him as I would like, so it is a slow process but it works. When I finish college I will get another dog, integrate him with the family and then start to form my tiny pack. It is healthy for them and healthy for me. I don't think I would be able to reach Cesar's level of running with a pack of 86 dogs, but I will get something going. If everyone had a dog's mentality the world would be such a controlled place. I watch dogs around my area interacting with each other, there is nothing but silence but they may as well be talking a thousand words a minute. They can convey more with body language than any human could hope to.

I am inspired to start working with dogs, to make myself a more balanced person. They are such amazing animals, relying on nothing but instinct to survive. It seems that my dog is teaching me rather than the other way around. You can use this dominance and use of instinct in everyday life. It makes you a more balanced and confident individual. I will take these lessons with me forever and I have Sam (above) and Cesar Millan to thank for that. I hope you all can learn something from your own pets. Life can be so easy! Until next time my pack!

## **Back to School**

I have finally completed my five month internship and in three weeks time I will be heading back to college in DCU. This is my final year before I get my degree in Computer Applications Software Engineering. I have some very interesting classes coming up. I get to do Concurrent Programming, Distributed Programming, two classes in Databases and some other courses on process improvement and quality assurance. I thought a lot about these courses as it would prepare me perfectly for a job in the real world.

I would love to try and return to my job as a programmer for Fidelity Investments, the past five months has been an amazing experience for me. All I have to do is to get through my final year and complete my final year project with a good grade and I should be good to go. But just before I left Fidelity I had a long chat with my manager. During the internship he has taught me so much about the job and about professionalism. I can apply the knowledge I gained to anything, not just to the programming world. He has basically convinced me to take another year in college and complete a masters.

We came to this conclusion after I mentioned that I may return to college in a few years to do a masters. He informed me he was trying to do the same and it was proving very difficult. It seems that staying in "Study" mode and completing the masters straight after my degree would be easier on me and those around me. I am in a serious relationship with my girlfriend Sarah and have no intention of letting her go. However, trying to juggle a job, a masters and a family would be impossible. Time would be so thin that I doubt my body could actually take it. I am unsure of the path I will take. It seems that either direction I take will leave me in somewhat of a bind.

If I take the masters straight after college, I will have to remain in my sales job for another year before I can get the job I have always wanted. It will mean another year of tough study, exam and projects. If I take a job and start my own life and family, trying to go back for the masters will hurt my family, friends and of course be a rough two years (doing the course work part time). I will see how things go when I get back into college, but I think I will remain a cheap student for another year and take the hit. It will leave me completely free to start my future and I cannot wait! But what would you do?

Until next time.....

## **Life changes**

I have been away from the blog for a number of weeks. To be honest it has been a hectic few weeks. I have returned to college and jumped in feet first. I also have been doing some iPhone work on the side which is taking up more time than it really should. So in other words, this is gonna be a quick catch up.

I started back in college but this year is different than the others. I really had to put thought into college this year as I have module choices. Some could look at it as a chance to gain an "easy" run to their degree, however I took this as a way to make the most of this year. One choice I made (and no one else seemed to) was Software Quality Assurance. I went into huge detail, but basically I am trying to improve my process, my ways of programming. So far it has been tough but completely worth while. My other choices basically revolve around what I have seen in action during my work experience. I hope I can take this information into next year when I do my masters. Its so tough and its a pain not making any money from it, but I am happy. I feel like I'm doing something that matters and I am on the right track. Life is good to be honest.

In other news, I managed to get my app approved and its now out for sale on the App Store. It hasn't been hugely popular but I'm still rather proud of it. I think I have found a career path. Mobile development is so interesting and I really enjoy coding it. I know you don't always get what you want, so it will probably take some time to get into that job. Maybe self employment is an option. Well first I will be dealing with the important things, basically getting money for a wedding plus a house.

Each year I always take up something new in college. First year was archery, second year was Judo, third year was kind of bits of everything and this year is Badminton. Sarah has been playing for years and years so I decided it was finally time I tried to kick her ass at it. Eoin joined too and so far it has been great craic. Ill train for the next couple of weeks but so far this is something I can see myself taking up.

This work for Shoryuken.ie has given me some joy in these recessionary times. Its fantastic having the ability to share my opinions on games with like minded people. I also got to attend the MAG do that Sony organized (fantastic people btw) and got to ask the creative designer a few questions. Quite a good job really!

So thats basically it. You are all caught up on what I was doing. I am working on two more iPhone games, an update for my current one and two reviews for Shoryuken in the coming weeks. I have a tonne of assignments about to drop in also which is going to be a huge pain in my ass. Oh well. C'est La Vie!

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**Back on the web!**

**Its a new year people! And I am back to the wonderful world of blogging!**

**Right there are two main things I wanted to talk about here. One of which is a new job I got and the other is my plans for the year. And I'll throw in a little college knowledge on the way!**

**As I have mentioned a few times in the past, I work in PC World in Swords. Its been a great job but I felt my passion for sales slipping away over the past few weeks. Perhaps its because its not what I am interested in. I have a passion for computers and using my knowledge to help others choose computers is great. But I feel like I could be doing so much more. So I made a pitch to get a job in the PC Clinic in PC World (now thats a mouthful) as one of the technicians was leaving (WE MISS YOU PADDY!! :P). And bingo bango I got it! I am now one of the techs (I get a new shirt and everything with a cool tech guys badge.....which I then melted with the iron the first day I got it, very short lived excitement) and I couldn't be happier.**

**Its more so the challenge that I enjoy than the actual work. As new problems come in I learn something new. I have a fairly high knowledge of mechanical and software computer problems. If you guys ever need any help just give me a shout.**

**Well with all good things you get the bad too! Some people are just stupid. Why would you pay me over €100 to repair your computer, then go home.....download LIMEWIRE!!! and complain when you get another virus!!!! When something says "There are 1000 viruses on your computer, download this to fix it" DONT DOWNLOAD IT!! Cause you will just have to pay me to fix it! Or maybe not.....**

**I have been thinking of developing a low complexity virus remover. It will remove everything from heavily infectious virus to even harmless cookies. It will make your computer much quicker and cleaner to use. Would this be any use? Would you like me to create it? LET ME KNOW :D**

**So work is going great, I would work for hours more than I should and love it. But now its back to college. I have been getting great results in my assignments and it looks like I will be doing my masters after all. My forth year project is a tough one and I will be starting this soon too. There is frankly too much to mention so I will detail it all in PART 2 of this blog post.**

**And finally, my plans for the new year. I will be going to California (hopefully if I get a scholarship) with my mates Phil and John. Its gonna be great craic as we will be attending the WWDC, Apples Dev Conference so we can become the worlds greatest iPhone and Mac developers (nerds ftw!). I also intend to go see as many comedy gigs as humanly possible. I already have my tickets to go see Dara O Briain at the end of the month. So many to see and so little money to get tickets but so God help me I will go see them!**

**I want this to be a good year for me, the year of my graduation and all that. I want to get my websites up and running and filled with content. I will be designing loads of programs (for free of course) and distributing them over the websites so keep an eye out. In other words, 2010 is a big year for me and I want to make the best of it. Its the start of my future, my career, my life in general.**

**Thanks for reading guys, Ill keep ya posted of anything else happening!**

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## **The Lone Robin**

**There is only one reason I am back to blogging. It has been the most difficult few months of my whole life. My girlfriend of four years broke up with me for reasons I still don't fully understand. She seems to think that silence is her best course of action and this brings little comfort to me. So I decided to privately blog how I felt in order to therapeutically resolve whatever hurt feelings I have.**

**I may never understand her reasons but I need to step up. I have recently been offered an amazing career in Fidelity Investments in Galway. So my life will start fresh when I move down there next month. Money is proving rather difficult to hold onto but it will be worth it in the end. I need to start to do things that will keep my mind active and away from thoughts of depression. I have already had some terrifying thoughts that I would never have thought would pass through my mind.**

**Friends have been a key role in my recovery thus far. Through support and random days out it has really helped. But at some point I am alone. For the first time in years I have no one to turn to when I am alone and the fact that I may find someone else in the future is of little comfort. Put I will struggle on.**

**Wastes of time seem to be a good distraction to be perfectly honest. I may start playing World of Warcraft again for no other reason that to distract my mind for a couple months! But I'm not sure. You know things are bad when WoW seems like a good option.**

**I have also started reading Richard Dawkins' books. He is an incredibly interesting writer and I think things like that, things that further my intelligence or even things that are just intriguing really make your life so utterly insignificant that break ups are meaningless. If I could recommend a YouTube video, watch Carl Sagan's "The Pale Blue Dot". It uses strong human emotion to get across the point that we are utterly insignificant in this vast ever growing cosmos. It makes arguments seem so irrelevant and I'm hoping in time it will make my break up seem like nothing at all.**

**Life is throwing so much shit at me (I apologize for my crude language but it has been one of those months) that I do not know what I will do next. Needless to say if anything interesting happens I will be back here. Thanks for reading (if you manage to find it this is, I won't be advertising it).**

**Later Days! (look it up, great Disney cartoon called The Weekenders).**

**Gary**