M&T Intern Fellowship Report

I interned this summer as a Software Engineering Intern at Cooperatize Inc., an ad-tech startup based out of New York City. I hear about the internship opportunity from one of the emails that Jaime sends out detailing recruitment opportunities, and became especially intrigued when I discovered that M&T alum Roger Wu was a co-founder of the company. I met Roger at the M&T Alumni Event in New York in October of last year, and I remember really liking him and everything he had to say that night with regards to what kinds of experiences we should be aiming to get out of our work life. After I emailed Roger with my resume, he got back to me a few weeks later and scheduled a phone call. On the phone, we talked about my interests, what position I would want in the firm, and why I wanted that position. He then asked me to take a day and email him with 5 things I like about Cooperatize's website, 5 things I don't like, and 5 things I would like to work on. After that, I had a Skype interview with Roger's co-founder Al Chen where I told him a story in which I had to take a risk and spoke to him about two of my favorite fictional stories. The final step was to send Roger contact information for three people that were willing to give recommendations about me. After all of that, I received an offer.

Over the course of the summer, my primary task was to work with that JavaScript code to improve the quality of our data collection and provide other new features that would appear on bloggers' websites. Cooperatize faced multiple issues with the code snippet and I wanted to tackle as many of them as possible. For example, we utilized Google Analytics to collect and store all the data, which we then presented to the brands on our platform. However, sometimes page views were not being tracked for some reason, so the number we had saved on Google Analytics was often lower than the true figure, which was unfair to the bloggers. Furthermore, the data for user behavior (e.g. reading time, reading percentage) included many figures which did not make sense.

The experience as a whole confirmed my desire to work in a tech company, especially a growing startup. After hearing what many of my friends did, I realized I would never be able to have the same kind of impact at a large company as I had at Cooperatize, since they were so reliant on my work. Furthermore, it has made me seriously consider software engineering as a career route too. I used to think that was too technical for my tastes, but I really enjoyed myself this summer.

My main piece of advice for underclassmen would be to take risks! Roger told me that one of the key parts of being an entrepreneur was the willingness to take risks and the ability to portray a lot of self confidence (even if you don't necessarily possess it).

By Reuben Abraham