



Interview with Team Member

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**Lukas Belke**  
Developer

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## „You have to keep moving.“

*Lukas Belke is 29 years old. He grew up in the Sauerland, before moving to the tri-border area for his studies. In his free time, he plays defense for the soccer club, TSV Hertha Walheim and is an avid traveler. His most recent adventure took him on a Central American tour to Nicaragua.*

▶ **Lukas, how did you hear about Thinking Networks?**

**Lukas:** When I was studying Computer Mathematics at the RWTH Aachen University, I was looking for a job in the area. I stumbled across Thinking Networks in the regional job listings.

▶ **And why did you choose Thinking Networks?**

**Lukas:** For one thing, I could use my Java specialization in this job. I was also motivated to help spearhead the revolution of Thinking Networks' own software with an innovative project. I was excited to expand my know-how by joining an experienced team and getting hands-on training in professional development methods.

▶ **What parts of your job do you still find exciting?**

**Lukas:** I really love that I am constantly pushed to learn new things every day, and that I keep learning – in our team we are always discussing and exchanging ideas, e.g. in mutual code reviews. At the same time, our whole company is characterized by flat hierarchies and open doors.

▶ **How do you start a typical day??**

**Lukas:** Every day is different. On one day I might start by reading the current designs for future modules. Then I have to think about how I will implement the actual requirements before I start coding. On other days, I scan bug reports or inquiries from services in our issue management system, Jira. Basically I have to plan my day based on job priorities and tasks, or meetings with the consultants involved. Our whole team also meets regularly to discuss the current development status, as well as future plans, improvements and new approaches.

▶ **What other core functions characterize your work?**

**Lukas:** Another important area is quality assurance. On the one hand, I communicate regularly with our QM department to describe test scenarios for new modules and features. On the other hand, I am working on developing automated test methods that will significantly reduce testing effort.

▶ **What other software tools do you use a lot?**

**Lukas:** As IDE we use Eclipse; the daily build is generated with Maven and Jenkins; versioning takes place with Subversion; and we use Crucible for code reviews. I also work with MS SQL Server Management Studio to program stored procedures.

▶ **What have you worked on recently?**

**Lukas:** Recently I worked on improving the user interface. I developed new keyboard shortcuts that really speed up the work with our web tool.

▶ **What role do agile development methods play at TN?**

**Lukas:** We work according to the Scrum method. That means we continuously monitor and optimize the development process and our software product. Every two weeks we develop software increments, called development sprints, then we discuss them with our customer service team. That's how we adapt our development priorities with user feedback and avoid bigger revision loops.

▶ **Any tips for newcomers??**

**Lukas:** In my job, you have to react quickly and be ready for new things. Just like on the football field, you are constantly in motion. This has a lot of advantages for your own development. But it also means that you are often confronted with lots of information and very complex tasks. In addition, you have to be able to take criticism, and when it comes, for example, during reviews, you have to see the feedback as constructive criticism and take it as a chance to grow professionally. At the same time, you have to be your own critic and keep questioning your own designs, as well as other peoples' designs and concepts.