

**Hello. My name is Sarah and I am working in the field of Software Development at the Secomba GmbH. To be more accurate: I am employed as a working student. Before this position, I was an intern for a period of three months. Today, I would like to tell you my story of how I, as a woman, started my career in software development.**

First of all, I need to clarify that I am neither a mathematical, nor a mental arithmetic genius – what led me to the conclusion the study of (pure) mathematics isn't the right fit, for me. However, I discovered I have a knack for puzzles, problem solving and prime numbers – yes, almost like a little crush for them. Especially complex polynomials became sort of “my thing”. I just love those extremely cute Greek denominations... And prime numbers – simply way more gorgeous than any other number <3.

The affection for those things led me to informatics. A field of expertise, my father gave me an understanding for. My father, who to this date never fails to impress with an impressive technical skill and knowledge, which is self-thought. For me, he is a prime role model for how to fulfill ones' own dreams and educate oneself further, by showing particular interest in technology.

## **My personal entry into information technology**

I always enjoyed working on a computer a lot. It was so easy: They just did what I wanted them to do. So, I decided to dive deeper into the subject

and started studying information technology.

When the decision is made to study information technology at the university of Augsburg, one should expect to be accompanied by 500-600 other students in the lectures Information Technology I and II. But the large number of students includes a fair share of students from different study-programs, since a basic knowledge of programming skills is also useful for various other fields of expertise.

At the beginning of the information technology study program the share of female students is roughly at 30%. However, I am experiencing a growing number of enrollments by female students every new year. But as with all STEM study programs, there is rather high quota of students changing or leaving the study program. Therefore, the further into the study program, the amount of studying colleagues gets fewer and fewer. Here it is important to note that the ratio of female and male students changing or leaving the program is approximately equal, resulting in the overall ratio of female students in the program to decrease even further.

**SARAH SPORCK**

Working Student



### **Is it more difficult studying information technology as a woman?**

In my honest opinion: it isn't. The amount of individual male and female students leaving the study program is pretty equal. And those female students that made it beyond the second semester are very likely (in my opinion) to make it to the end of the program too. This is due to the fact that studying information technology is a very conscious decision for most women.

### **My personal start into the work routine of a software developer**

With all the theoretical knowledge of my studies at hand, I was searching for an internship position in order to put my knowledge to work. The Secomba GmbH | Boxcryptor caught my particular interest, due to a team of 25 employees (at that time) being manageable, for me to handle. The proximity of the office location to the university is very convenient for me, too. And since I was looking to challenge myself, during my internship, I really enjoyed discovering a completely new field of expertise: encryption.

During my internship I was working on a project, which is called Monkey, with two other interns. The objective of Monkey was to develop a chatbot, which would simplify internal processes. As a result of me starting my internship one month later than my two intern-colleagues, I needed to catch up on the code and their ideas. Additionally, I had never made any experiences with web development, since I had just wrapped up my fourth semester.

By working for Boxcryptor, I foremost learned to quickly familiarize myself with different programming languages and code, written by someone

else. For example, I was assigned with the creation and administration of the "Monkey-database", at the beginning. In addition, I got to know a variety of tools, like Bitbucket for reviewing codes and Jira for the management of tasks.

As a very memorable experience I will always recall the work as a team with the other interns - but also with the working students, developers and even the management. No matter with whom I was working, there has always been an impressive amount of mutual respect and appreciation.

Every week there is a Tech-Meeting at the Secomba GmbH, in which every developer is presenting his or her progress in a project, compared to the last week – the interns do so as well. In this Tech-Meeting everyone gets to know the responsibilities and projects of the other developers and it is possible to discuss some issues as a collective. Furthermore, every second week there is a comprehensive Team-Meeting where all the other functions of a company present their projects and the respective progress. This way all functions (i.e. Sales, Marketing, Support and Tech) get to know what is going on in the company.

To put it in a nutshell, I really enjoyed making my first working experience at the Secomba GmbH. All colleagues are very helpful, considered and non-perfect as oneself. During my internship I was able to gain a lot of insights into web development and was furthermore capable to concern myself with encryption, to some extent. All those reasons were certainly reason enough for me to not leave the company after my internship has ended, but to stay with Secomba as a working student: To date, I am a member of the Boxcryptor Team for almost a year.