Job Description

Title: Senior PHP Developer
Type: Permanent, Full Time
Start date: ASAP
Hours: 40 hours per week, flexible hours
Salary: Competitive, dependent on experience
Location: This role is 100% based at our new HQ in Aylesford, Kent

Who is Must Have Ideas?
Whilst still only young, we're one of the UK's fastest growing ecommerce brands, helping over 2 million customers 'discover something new' every year. One in ten homes in the UK now have one of our clever, problem-solving products and we're widely recognised as one of the leading ecommerce innovators of the past few years. Named by The Sunday Times as the 66th fastest growing company in the UK, we're a British success story and our incredible growth isn't stopping any time soon – and we'd love you to join us on this exciting journey!

The Team
You'll be working with a group of great people who think independently but collaborate as a strong team to deliver exceptional results. Career progression? Absolutely - there are plenty of opportunities to grow and develop, as our rapid growth continues.

We're fully office-based
We believe that we are at our best when we're together, and that's why our team fully works from our office from our swanky new base in Aylesford, Kent. Being together facilitates superior collaboration, encourages conversations, and sparks creativity. And there's some pretty sweet incentives to coming to the office, too, including free breakfast every day!

This Role
As a Senior PHP Developer, you'll help design and develop the systems that power our business, taking projects from an initial idea through to launch and ongoing improvement. You'll combine hands-on PHP development with project planning and technical architecture, making decisions that keep our applications reliable, scalable and easy to maintain.

We're looking for someone with an AI-first approach to development, who uses AI confidently and efficiently throughout the development process. You'll also play an active role in developing the team, helping junior developers strengthen their coding and system design skills, build confidence in their decisions and get the most from AI.

Your responsibilities will include:

- Design, develop and maintain applications using CakePHP, making practical decisions about application structure, database design and integrations with other systems.

- Own projects from start to finish, including understanding requirements, planning the work, designing the architecture, development, testing, deployment and reviewing the results after launch.
- Work with colleagues across the business to understand what they need, agree priorities and realistic timescales, and keep them informed as projects progress.
- Use AI as a core part of your development workflow, providing clear context and breaking work into suitable tasks to improve efficiency across planning, coding, debugging, testing and documentation.
- Take ownership of the quality of everything you deliver, including AI-generated code, ensuring it is understood, reviewed and tested, and meets our standards for security, performance and maintainability.
- Lead technical discussions, providing constructive feedback and helping the team make sound design and implementation decisions.
- Mentor junior developers through practical guidance on problem-solving, writing maintainable code and designing systems, helping them become more confident and independent.
- Guide junior developers in using AI effectively, including framing problems clearly, providing useful context, questioning suggestions and checking that the resulting code works as intended.
- Investigate and resolve issues in existing applications, addressing underlying causes and identifying opportunities to improve reliability and performance.
- Help improve our development practices, evaluating useful AI tools and techniques and sharing approaches that help the team deliver better software more efficiently.

You'll excel in this role if you have the following skills & experience:

- Strong PHP development experience using CakePHP or a comparable framework such as Laravel.
- Experience taking ownership of projects from initial requirements and planning through to successful delivery.
- The ability to understand business needs, question requirements constructively and choose practical solutions that balance delivery timescales with reliability and long-term maintainability.
- A strong understanding of application architecture, database design and MySQL, with the ability to choose practical solutions that support future development.
- Experience designing and integrating APIs, including working with third-party services, handling failures and maintaining data consistency between systems.
- Practical experience using AI development tools, with the judgement to assess their output and the technical knowledge to refine and validate it.
- The ability to write clean, secure and efficient code, supported by clear documentation and automated tests that help prevent issues when making changes.
- Strong troubleshooting skills, with the ability to investigate unfamiliar code, resolve complex issues and improve application and database performance.
- Solid knowledge of HTML, CSS and JavaScript, alongside experience with Git and collaborative development workflows.
- Experience mentoring junior developers and explaining technical concepts and design decisions clearly.
- A proactive and organised approach, with the confidence to make decisions, communicate progress and see work through to completion.

What's it like to work here?
We know that our people are key to our success. That's why we strive to make MHI a great place to work – just ask our team. It's a friendly, welcoming and fun environment here. We've worked hard to create an amazing experience for our people because we know that workplace happiness goes way beyond just your salary. We're proud to offer one of the best packages of team perks in the area, including:

- Private healthcare
- Free breakfast every morning
- Paid sick leave
- Flexible hours
- Minimum of 25 days holiday per year as standard (plus more the longer you stay)
- Buy or sell holiday
- Generous paid maternity & paternity leave
- Your birthday off work every year
- Free electric vehicle charging
- Free car washing every month
- Regular team & charity fundraising events
- Free products from our range
- Generous staff discount on our range of products
- Free personal use of company vans
- Company pension
- Salary sacrifice schemes (cycle to work, electric car leasing)
- Season ticket loans
- Casual dress code
- Free and unlimited fruit, sweets, cold & hot drinks

What happens next?
If we think you could be a good fit, you'll be invited to come and see our new state-of-the-art facilities and for a more in-depth conversation. We may ask you to complete a small task to show us your skills and there may be a second interview stage, too.

This is an excellent opportunity to join us while the company is still young and to be part of our high-growth journey, with all the opportunities that brings.

Must Have Ideas Ltd is an equal opportunities employer and we're working hard to build a diverse and inclusive workforce.