

AT&T Cool Jobs: Using social media and gaming tech to deliver customer satisfaction

A fun and informational social media command center at AT&T helps the company interact with its customers in real time.

Observing social media mentions in real-time using a fun, engaging interface helps AT&T keep track of customer satisfaction and make improvements. In this video, AT&T Senior Project Manager Fatima Hanif and Senior Technical Director Tim Johnson explain how the PRNOC social media command center came about, and what it can do.

The command center monitors Facebook, Twitter, blogs and other forms of social media for mentions of AT&T, to see how people are reacting to new devices and services. PRNOC was developed in partnership with a third-party game development firm, bringing in some exciting functionality from 3D gaming and animation. Each of the screens focuses on a different area, like real-time mentions, what's trending and what's happening in individual local markets.

"Projects like PRNOC wouldn't be possible without the backgrounds in math and engineering, all these things you have to take into consideration when you're faced with a project that's never been done before," says Johnson. "There's no rule book. You're creating things for the first time and it may not be anywhere else in the world."

AT&T and the AT&T Foundation have donated nearly \$87 million to support STEM initiatives since 1995, including scholarship programs, hands-on technology labs and science-focused summer camps for at-risk youth.

"The advice I would give is to explore what it means to go into IT," says Hanif. "There are a lot of challenges to be solved. Knowledge will be a big part of your future."

AT&T Cool Jobs: Helping kids learn how to read with fun text-to-speech apps

Developing apps that use cutting-edge speech synthesis technologies is one of the cool science and math-focused jobs available at AT&T.

Asking questions, even if the answers seem impossible, can lead to the most amazing discoveries. Just ask AT&T researcher Taniya Mishra, who works primarily on speech synthesis and speech analysis. In this video, Mishra discusses how her computer science, math and speech technology degrees have led to a satisfying career creating entirely new solutions to common problems.

Mishra developed an app that uses text-to-speech technology to read children's stories aloud using computer-generated voices. The text from the books doesn't need to be pre-recorded; the sound is synthesized from the text on the fly. The computer uses a different voice for each character, so it's engaging for kids, and even highlights each word as it's spoken to boost reading and pronunciation skills.

An early interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) subjects encouraged Mishra to develop the skills that led to her dream job. AT&T and the AT&T Foundation have donated nearly \$87 million to support STEM initiatives since 1995, including scholarship programs, hands-on technology labs and science-focused summer camps for at-risk youth.

"For the next generation of young scientists and engineers, my advice would perhaps be the same as what my math teacher gave me - be curious," says Mishra. "Ask why. Ask lots and lots of whys. Be undaunted by problems that seem really big, because maybe you are the first person to be thinking about that problem."

AT&T Cool Jobs: Changing lives and improving safety with cutting-edge technology

For AT&T researchers, solving real-world problems like automobile safety starts with a sense of curiosity.

Researchers at AT&T laboratories use their backgrounds in math and science and their passion for innovation to change people's lives with technology. In this video, AT&T researcher Kevin Li discusses how he works to improve road safety with smart tech, like vibrating motors in car seats that warn drivers of potential dangers.

Li's fun and rewarding job at AT&T wouldn't be possible without an education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). AT&T and the AT&T Foundation have donated nearly \$87 million to support STEM initiatives since 1995, including scholarship programs, hands-on technology labs and science-focused summer camps for at-risk youth.

"I realized I wanted to go into engineering research when I was at this poster session at a conference, and saw all the different kinds of cool technologies that people were working on with gadgets and new ways of interacting with technology," says Li. "It wasn't until that point that I realized, 'Hey, you can actually solve a lot of real world problems.' For me, that's when I realized that this is what I want to do for a career."

For kids who want to be among the leaders in cutting-edge technology when they grow up, Li has some simple words of advice.

"Be curious. you never know what might actually turn into a career path. Get outside your comfort zone. it may turn out that something you're really excited about could turn into a career, and if you're lucky, you could actually improve people's lives."