



MATA DIGITAL

Mata Digital in Matamata are the Waikato-grown digital specialists who specialise in growing the business bottom line for customers through transformative digital experiences.

Together, Mata Digital's team are a blend of techies and creatives who specialise in the three Ds of web development – design, development, and digital marketing.

Mata Digital designer, Bachelor of Creative Industries, and former Matamata College student Ally-Jane McDonald dropped FutureForce® a line to share her career experience so far...

For more information, check out [www.matadigital.nz](http://www.matadigital.nz)

### BECOMING A DIGITAL DESIGNER



#### Useful school subjects

At high school, in Year 13, I was still deciding on what career path I wanted to pursue. I kept my options open by taking:

- English
- Calculus
- Physics
- Art
- and DVC (Design and Visual Communication)

To find out more about this sector, profiles of young people like you in the industry, and career tools and tips...

*scan here*



The FutureForce® Crew sat down with Ally-Jane to chat about her role...

#### How did you get this job? What got you interested in this career path?

I've always been an artistic person and wanted to pursue a career in a creative industry. In the last year of my degree, I began looking for jobs. I wanted to get in early to secure an employment opportunity before the big release of new graduates at the end of the year.

So, in July I started doing a bit of research on businesses I liked then sent out my CV with a cover letter to those who I thought I would enjoy working for. I heard back from Tim from Mata Digital, and we organised a time to meet to see if I would be a good fit. I started working full time for Mata Digital once I'd finished studying.

#### TOP CAREER TIP

**KEENNESS TO LEARN IS A VALUABLE ATTRIBUTE THAT MANY EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR... PROVE THAT YOU ARE WILLING TO PUT THE WORK IN AND PEOPLE WILL INVEST IN YOU!**

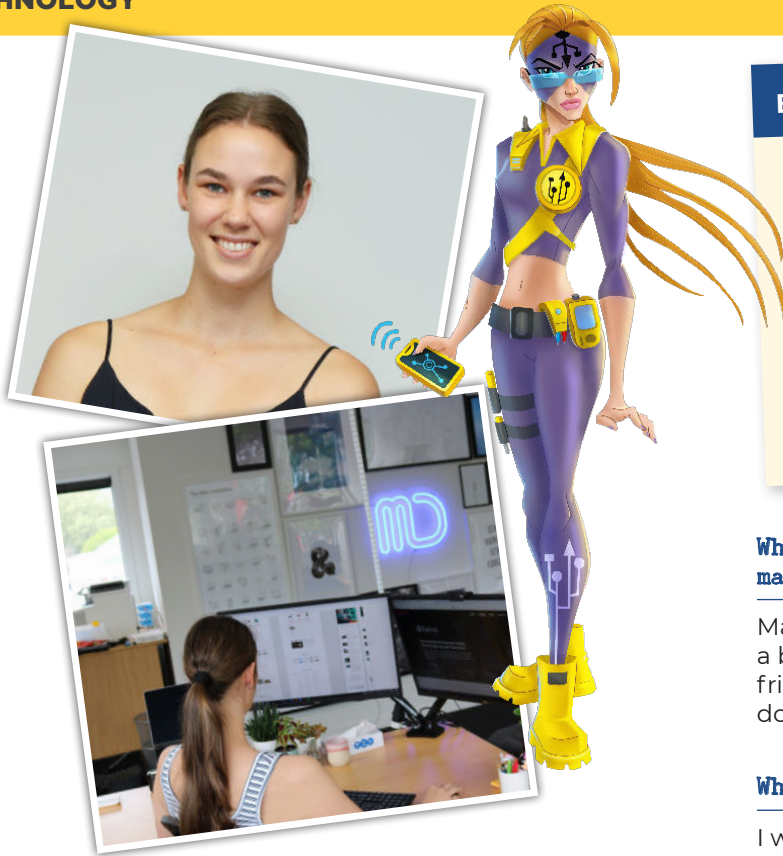
#### What do you do and what do you love about your job?

My main role is to build and design new websites. I've also had the opportunity to work on other digital and print media such as logos and branding, business cards, and social media design. I love my job because of the variety of projects I get to work on and having a great team to work with also creates an enjoyable working environment.

#### What sort of person do you need to be for this work?

I think it's most important for designers to be reflective and open to feedback. Being reflective allows you to be thoughtful about the work you do, helping you identify what works successfully and where you can improve. The more you observe the more you learn, growing your understanding of best practices.

**ALLY-JANE MCDONALD**  
DIGITAL DESIGNER



**What have you learnt on the job?**

The biggest on the job learning curve for me has been my technical understanding of websites and how they function. Since starting at Mata Digital, I have learnt two coding languages, HTML and CSS. While I now have a functional understanding of these, I am continuing to learn more every day.

**What do you wish you knew when you left school?**

I wish I didn't assign so much pressure on myself to choose a career at school. I don't think there is one right career for everyone, you can enjoy multiple avenues.

**What does someone need to know when starting out at work?**

Prove that you are willing to put the work in and people will invest in you. Keenness to learn is a valuable attribute that many employers look for. If you show you are willing to invest in yourself and your own self-improvement it won't go unnoticed!

**What do you like most about working at Mata Digital?**

I work alongside a really great team at Mata Digital who have helped and supported me as I learn. My colleagues have taught me so much about the ins and outs of the industry to which I am very grateful for.

**What challenges have you had to overcome?**

Sometimes I find it challenging to switch off at the end of the day, especially in a job where I rely on my brain a lot. I am still learning to leave work at work when I step out of the office for the day.

**BEST CAREER ADVICE?**

The best career advice I have ever received...

Believe in your abilities. This is probably something that a lot of people in the creative industry should remember to take on board, especially freelancers. Assign honest value to yourself and what you do to avoid underselling your work.

**What advice do you have for keeping balanced/ managing stress?**

Maintain a range of activities outside of work to sustain a balanced lifestyle. Whether it be regular catchups with friends or a sport, ensure you have your hobbies so work doesn't become all encompassing.

**Where would you like to go with your career?**

I would like to continue to learn more about the background functionality of websites and how they are set up. I like that I still have a lot of room for growth and development in my role and I plan to take advantage of this as my career progresses.



**I DON'T THINK THERE IS ONE RIGHT CAREER FOR EVERYONE, YOU CAN ENJOY MULTIPLE AVENUES.**



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