



Challenges on the job

Margaret Jo Erickson

Margaret Jo Erickson, student of Business and Germanistics at the University of Washington, D.C., spent an Internship at Java Marketing Services at Mötzingen. In her report she describes her challenging *on-the-job* aspects such as event management, communication, German language, or globalization

With almost no idea as to what my internship would be like, I hopped on a plane to Stuttgart. Final destination: a tiny village called



Mötzingen

that would serve as my home for the next three months.

The very next day, my boss and I shipped off to *Bavaria* where I would be working on and attending my first polo tournament ever. Not only did I get to work with our sponsors from Rolls Royce, Villiger cigars, and Range Rover, but I also got to meet a German princess and her family. Not bad for a first day of work!

One of the perks of working for a five employee-company like JAVA Marketing Services is that I always had something new and interesting to do. Since I have been here I have had a wide variety of tasks and learning opportunities, ranging from translating press releases into

English, designing menus, hosting raffles, to even writing speeches.

From a marketing perspective it has been great to see the level of details that go into event coordinating, as well as how to work with the press. One of our last polo events even got a six-page spread in *Bunte Magazin*, the German equivalent to *People*.

I have seen firsthand how globalized the world is. At the large scale polo tournaments and Grand Prix I met people from all over Europe. Working with non-native English speakers challenged me in my ability to communicate and work effectively. I was surprised to see just how much English is used as a world language. A German and a French worker would use English to communicate with each other. At one VIP Porsche event I got to dance with the Deutsch, salsa with the Swedes, and dance battle with the Norwegians.



Traveling has also been an important and enjoyable part of my time here. Thus far I have got to visit Luxembourg, Switzerland, and Italy with friends that I hadn't seen since high school.



One of the biggest challenges for me was being so isolated socially. The combination of living alone in an apartment, working for an extremely small company, and living in a tiny village in the country made it very difficult to form good relationships with my peers. I'm a highly outgoing individual and yet I had great trouble finding friends.

But besides the social aspect, my trip has been pretty incredible. My time in Germany has been an invaluable learning experience. I would highly recommend starting a blog if you plan to study/work abroad. It serves as a great record keeper of all the fun adventures you have, the small nuances you learn about a culture, and a great way to keep your family and friends up to date on your activities.

I use German about 50% of the time. My time in Germany has been invaluable.

(SSG-USA Interns ja/scha)

