Thomas Gideon

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PROFILE

I'm a dedicated leader, thinker, and maker who designs and builds valuable technology, crafts clear strategies, creates achievable plans, and works hands-on to support the success of teams. I'm adept at translating between technologists and stakeholders to foster communication to improve the value of software products and services. And I take pride in keeping up with technology trends so I can evaluate, select, and apply the best tools and practices to deliver high quality, high value software. **My core competencies include:**

SQL and NoSQL Databases • Java • Enterprise Java • Python
HTML/JavaScript/CSS • Node • React • Express/Sails.js • Rust
Agile/Scrum/Kanban • Software Architecture • Linux

EXPERIENCE

Vistaprint Digital; Silver Spring, MD — 2015–Present

Vistaprint Digital is the group within Vistaprint responsible for developing, delivering and supporting the digital products to help small business owners succeed.

Engineering Team Lead and Full-Stack Developer

Work on Vistaprint Digital's next generation web site builder. Coach three other engineers on their career development. Lead a team of five product engineers and two engineers in test. Was agile facilitator for the team for a year before becoming its lead at the start of 2017. Facilitate the mentorship guild which supports career coaches and mentors throughout the organization.

- Working on the dev ops team, building new infrastructure for deployment at scale on top of Kubernetes and AWS. Team is rebuilding the CI/CD pipeline using Jenkins with the Kubernetes plugin to support dynamically scaled builds and Spinnaker for canary and blue-green deployments. Writing a configuration and deployment command line tool, in Rust, inspired by tools like npm and cargo. Wrote and maintain a developer SSO service that is API compatible with the production service to greatly reduce the cost and complexity of testing product services in Kubernetes.

- One of the top contributors to Vistaprint Digital's new website builder, an ambitious single-page app built with React and its supporting microservice built with node. Coded extensively on both the front and back end of the product. Notably migrated the server code from a hand rolled MVC framework to Sails.js. Wrote the dynamic template engine that makes it possible during the first time experience to see website templates customized to customers interests, industry and goals.

- During an aggressive, marketing driven deadline to bring the new website builder to market, worked on a domain name product, a microservice built with the Spring Boot framework with a React front end. Transitioned to lead the team during the final push of this effort. The team consistently hit its milestones throughout this headlong rush to market.

- Wrote and maintain several lower level tools. Single handedly wrote a developer tool to orchestrate the new website builder and the other services it depends on. Wrote the single sign-on client, based on OpenID Connect, for Java based microservices. Wrote a command line utility for securely requesting valid service authentication tokens from a shared security service. These tokens are needed to call the REST APIs of all of Digital's microservices.

Open Technology Institute at New America; Washington, DC — 2011–Present

The Open Technology Institute is a high-profile program in the world of technology public policy that improves equitable access to communications technology through research, analysis, and policy reform.

Director of Technology

Simultaneously managed several technology projects focusing on open source wireless networking and big data. Supervised a team of twelve technologists. Raised funds from charitable foundations, corporate donors, and federal agencies. Approved and managed annual individual project budgets for staffing, contracting, equipment, travel, and other expenditures. Managed personnel including conferring with them about their ongoing career development.

- Grew Measurement Lab (M-Lab), a big data project that produces the largest data set on Internet performance—from sixty servers in North America and Europe to over a hundred over every continent—by writing shell scripts and Python to automate ongoing management of measurement code. Documented the remaining manual tasks and improved the project's code, which was written in C, Java, Python, and Bash.
- Strengthened the technology staff's programming skills by leading group study sessions, facilitating brown bags on programming and engineering topics, sharing practical programming experience, securing books and other resources, and peer reviewing code.

Learning Objects; Washington, DC — 2008–2011

Learning Objects is a social-learning software-as-a-service product that integrates with the leading online tools used by higher education institutions. Learning Objects also provides flexible content and collaboration tools.

Engineering Team Lead and Full-Stack Developer

Worked with ExtJS, jQuery, HTML/JavaScript/CSS, Enterprise Java, GlassFish, Python, Django, PostgreSQL, Lucene, and Cassandra. Improved and maintained all aspects of the low-level database code from its performance to the usability of its APIs. Overhauled and maintained the indexing engine to ensure high quality results in processing user content and swift performance when searching that content. Served as the scrum master for the engineering team.

- Improved the product's responsiveness by a factor of three by reviewing database logs and execution plans from PostgreSQL, optimizing SQL queries, and refactoring low-level database access code.
- Prepared the product for future scaling by evaluating alternative data storage options, selecting the Cassandra NoSQL data store, and writing the new code such that it could seamlessly slide in without requiring any changes to the modules it interfaced with.

Brivo Systems; Bethesda, MD — 2005–2008

Brivo Systems disrupted the access-control space by introducing a web interface so customers could monitor and control access to their facilities from anywhere. Brivo combined their web application with easy-to-install custom hardware based on a system-on-chip design running embedded Linux.

Principal Application Engineer and Full-Stack Developer

Worked with HTML/CSS/Javascript, Enterprise Java, Struts, JBoss, Oracle, and C. Led the team responsible for the product's server components. Maintained the existing versions of the server applications while designing newer versions. Supported the server-engineering team by working on the low-level code with a focus on the database and back end.

- Reduced weekly production issues to less than quarterly occurrences by reviewing logs with the production support staff, statically analyzing code, and quickly turning around necessary fixes, including quality assurance review and testing.
- Increased the performance and capacity of the control and configuration server for the hardware units by a factor of four by refactoring its code.

Qbit; Bethesda, MD — 2004–2005

Vice President of Software Engineering

- Brought on as the first engineering hire and promoted to vice president a year into employment.
- Created and maintained product road maps. Promoted business development by explaining the benefits and details of research and development offerings to prospective licensees.

- Grew the engineering group to eight engineers on three teams. Managed the engineering staff, leading them toward meeting milestones from product road maps derived from the ideas and models produced by a staff of research scientists.

B2eMarkets; Rockville, MD — 2000–2003

Lead Software Engineer and Full-Stack Developer

- Worked with HTML/JavaScript/CSS, Enterprise Java, Struts, Oracle, and Linux.
- Built new modules and features and led several large-scale design efforts including a set of web services for integration and a deep rethinking of the overall system organization.

marchFirst; Bethesda, MD — 1997–2000

Director of Internet Development

- Worked on all aspects of the software development life cycle: requirements analysis, functional specification, technical design, implementation, and maintenance.
- Participated in departmental planning and budgeting and worked in close liaison with the other departments to better integrate their efforts with those of the engineering staff.

EDUCATION

College of William & Mary, Williamsburg, VA — BFA, 1995