

TIM LAI

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Franklin, MA

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GLOBAL SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT LEADER

Data-driven Senior Engineering Leader with demonstrated success building and leading high-performance teams to deliver scalable SaaS platforms, internet-scale e-commerce sites, and AI/ML data products. Excels at collaboration across Executive Leadership, Product, Design, GTM, Technology, & Customer Support teams to deliver value to our customers and meet strategic company goals. Extensive experience creating innovative event-driven cloud-native modern software platforms. Fosters a culture of operational excellence and growth through continuous improvement of teams and processes.

Organizational process expertise in OKR, QBR, M&A, Scrum.

Certifications: AWS Solution Architect, Certified Scrum Master, OKR Coach, IBM Blockchain

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

PAYSCALE Burlington, MA

Vice President of Engineering

2022 – Nov 2024

Led cross-functional software engineering organization responsible for Product Engineering of our core SaaS web product (Payfactors) and platform services through my leadership of full-stack Software Engineering, Data Engineering, Software Architecture, QA, and DevOps teams.

- Led Engineering initiatives through strategic direction on architecture and mentorship of engineering leaders building our SaaS platform with cloud-native event-driven microservices, performance improvement of existing systems, and re-architecture of core data systems for improved performance, scaling, reliability, and cross-product utility.
- Led development of our Data Platform leveraging DW, AI, ML, and GenAI LLM including Data Ingestion pipelines, ML Ops pipelines, orchestration and observability services, API services, embeddings, VectorDB, Azure OpenAI services, open-source LLMs, and proprietary ML Models. These advances led to data ingestion at scale, semantic search, cross-product AI integration: innovating how users get value from large-scale data.
- Partnered with Engineering, Product, and business senior leaders to ensure R&D Roadmap aligned toward Customer needs and Platform Scalability, Interoperability, Security & Quality: directly resulting in increased Customer Retention/Sat & Product ARR.
- Modernized CI/CD DevOps processes through technology and process optimizations resulting in improved reliability of product delivery across Engineering teams.
- Collaborated with other functional Leaders to ensure that Engineering executes with consistency to deliver a scalable product through common processes and metrics.
- Fostered performance culture through goals and metrics to ensure high-capacity delivery & execution from Engineering. eg ARR, Velocity, Defect Rates, PR throughput
- Ensured SOC-2 compliance through regular DAST, SAST, Pen Tests and remediation.
- Supported growth and quality of Engineering organization's talent through rollout of learning platform (Pluralsight), professional training/certification, and manager training.
- Partnered with HR to set Career Ladder and Career Development process for improved clarity in career paths and skill development aligned with company strategic goals.
- Tech Stack incl: React, Angular, .Net Core, C#, Selenium, Python, NodeJS, SQL Server, PosGres, MongoDB, Redis, Elastic, Snowflake, Tableau, FiveTran, Docker, Kubernetes, Kafka, AWS and Azure Cloud, GitHub Actions, Jenkins, DataDog, Google Analytics.

Senior Director of Engineering

2021 – 2022

- Led M&A technology strategy (due diligence and integration) of three companies. Led consolidation of team operational strategy allowing for predictability of delivery, and overall staffing/resource spend. Partnered with Product to redefine R&D Roadmap.
- Led Migration of customers from on-prem to SaaS product collaborating w/ Customer, Engineering, Product, and Sales teams with high customer-sat and 90% renewal rate.
- Partnered with Marketing and Design for UX refresh of www.payscale.com

- Led creation of off-shore development team with new contract partner, met goal of stabilization and strengthening of Legacy platform products with new team in 6 months. PAYFACTORS (merger with PAYSACLE 2021) Burlington, MA

Director of Engineering**2020 – 2021**

- Reduced siloing and communication challenges caused by the Pandemic shutdown through re-alignment cross-functionally on best practices for WFH.
- Introduced additional rigor through Engineering best practices (eg, code review, SoS, QA Automation, modernization of the DevOps CI/CD stack, SOC2, GDPR compliance)

VISTAPRINT (CIMPRESS) Waltham, MA

Software Engineering Manager**2018 – 2020***(Merchandising Tech & Large Assortment Tribes)*

Progressively increasing team management scope from two squads to six squads of full-stack Software Engineers building the design system, site navigation, site search, global home, product and category site pages for e-commerce site www.vistaprint.com (10+ million users)

- Led teams to delivery of new mobile/web platform from green-field to production (ReactJS, Gatsby, node.js, TypeScript, SaaS integration) and implementation of rapid delivery CI/CD platform (AWS: CloudFront, CloudFormation, ECS, EKS, Lambda, S3; Docker, Kubernetes, Gitlab). Optimized existing systems for scalability & performance (.Net, SQL Server, React)
- Optimized team processes through coaching of Agile best practices.
- Partnered with Product to create Product Roadmap with focus on customer value.
- Led architectural discussions and provided direction for technology roadmap.
- Modelled servant-leadership to foster team autonomy and self-organization.
- Drove SRE principles in production operations (e.g. SLOs and error budgets).
- Managed vendor relationships including contract negotiation and proof-of-concept.
- Led teams in goal setting and measurement (OKRs and QBRs).
- Led geographically dispersed engineering team members. Fostered individual growth and professional development through formal training, 1-on-1's, and individualized career development plans, resulting in maturation and growth of the team and individuals.
- Led hiring across multiple locations (US and India).
- Mentored new leaders in leadership and organizational best practices.

IBM Waltham, MA and Boca Raton, FL

Solution Architect and Operations Team Lead (IBM Procurement)**2013 – 2018**

- Defined Architectural strategy for large scale, fault tolerant, high capacity, and highly available solutions on IBM Cloud for IBM Supply Chain (RFx and Catalog management)
- Managed team of Systems / Operations engineers.
- Led initiative to reduce the organization's workload by 500+ workhours per year.
- Implemented Jenkins solution to replace existing manual builds with CI/CD pipeline.

Team Lead / Application Architect (IBM Microelectronics)**2000 – 2013**

- Rapidly learned customer's complex business needs across multiple domains, including wafer design management, and integration with Manufacturing Execution System.
- Hired and mentored new team to engineer and deliver integrated software suite.
- Tech Lead for multiple additional projects including ETLs, Data Warehousing, BI, and SaaS products. Tech Stack: UNIX (AIX, Linux), C++, Java, J2EE, JavaScript, DB2, XML, JSON

EDUCATION

RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

B.S., Computer Systems Engineering