Reuben Firmin

Technology leader, startup CTO.
High productivity software engineer and architect.
US citizen, authorized to work in the US.

Summary

I am a highly productive technology leader and startup CTO with a strong background in software engineering and architecture. I have significant experience in managing remote engineering teams and sourcing developers.

I served as CTO at ExecVision, growing the technology organization and product from inception in 2015 through acquisition in 2022. I then served as Vice President of Engineering at Mediafly, focusing on integrating the ExecVision conversation intelligence product into the Mediafly product suite. I maintain strong hands-on coding skills, and am a productive architect and software engineer, with a strong interest in NLP and machine learning.

Experience

Mediafly

Vice President of Engineering

Apr 2022 - Present

Joined Mediafly via the acquisition of ExecVision in April 2022 as Director of Engineering, promoted to Vice President of Engineering. My overall focus was to successfully integrate my team and the product.

- Led engineering efforts to integrate the rebranded ExecVision platform and technology into the Mediafly salestech suite, allowing the GTM team to target new market categories.
- Led technical diligence for a successful strategic technology acquisition.
- Managed three remote engineering teams who were onboarded from acquisitions. mentored new engineering managers, and led recruiting and onboarding for new developers.
- Served as the de facto principal engineer, and worked hands-on in complex or strategic code as necessary. Examples:
  - Worked on our autoscaling and data pipeline to improve efficiency, leading to 15% savings on our monthly AWS spend.
  - Prototyped summarization, entity and question extraction, autoscoring and natural language filtering using GPT-4.

Technology: Kotlin, Python, Postgresql, ElasticSearch, SQL, AWS, Linux, GPT, LLM, NLP, ML, React, Typescript, Javascript, Distributed Systems, Data Pipelines, Architecture, Agile Project Management.

ExecVision

Chief Technology Officer

Oct 2015 - Apr 2022

Joined ExecVision (a conversation intelligence company) months after founding; the co-founders had a prototype, but weren't equipped to take it to production. I constructed a technology organization, built out the codebase from the ground up, managed the product, wore many hats, and helped take the team to a successful acquisition.

- Hired and managed a fully remote team from 2015 onwards, growing the team to 25 engineers at peak, including 4 managers. Performed most candidate sourcing, designed and led interview process, managed (and eventually delegated) onboarding process.
- Coded significant parts of the codebase, performed profiling and performance optimization, led architecture, implemented distributed processing framework.
- Managed product roadmap and specifications, performed hands-on oversight of product design, built wireframes, ran iterative feedback cycles, worked directly with UI designers, and regularly sought customer feedback.
- Mentored, coached and trained engineers & managers. Helped engineers level up in skills and seniority. Helped managers set up and run regular 1:1s. Initiated PIPs when necessary, and personally handled firing on a handful of occasions when it became needed. Also personally handled layoffs that were needed during the pandemic.
- Nurtured strong remote-first culture, sought regular feedback from the team to mutually design and iterate on processes. Set up a cadence that provided engineers of trust and autonomy, with minimal scheduled meetings and ad hoc huddles as needed.
- Designed and implemented compliance policies, obtained and maintained SOC 2 compliance, hired for and managed pen testing cadence, managed client security reviews.
- Participated in fundraising; regularly presented to the board and to VCs.
- Performed code reviews, and set the tone and depth for peer review.
- Managed and trained QA team, and established quality/risk management process.
- Selected and managed vendors. Managed and optimized budget.

Technology: Kotlin, Python, Postgresql, ElasticSearch, SQL, AWS, Linux, NLP, ML, Java, React, Typescript, Javascript, Distributed Systems, Data Pipelines, UX Design, Architecture, Agile Project Management.

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4rc.io

Chief Technology Officer / Founder

Sep 2013 - Oct 2015

Virtual/Fractional CTO consulting company, which I founded as CTO / CEO.

- Designed and implemented a business model whereby we'd engage with an early stage business client with an equity/cash contract, build product, technology and team to 1.0, and then backfill and move to the next client.
- Three successful engagements, culminating in ExecVision in 2015, who I went full time with.
- Managed all sales, marketing, and client support. Performed requirements analysis & iterative product development with clients.
- Recruited and trained offshore technology/product teams. Owned product prototyping and architecture, and performed hands-on coding.
- Approaching $2m revenue in 2015.

Technology: Java, Postgresql, Redshift, Python, SQL, AWS, Linux, Javascript, ETL, Architecture, Data Pipelines, Agile Project Management.

Catalist

Chief Architect

Oct 2010 - Sep 2013

I joined as Principal Engineer, and was promoted to Chief Architect, assisting the CTO on setting technical direction for all products. The focus was on microtargeting for political campaigns and organizations, using big data and analytics.

- Inherited and improved big data architecture.
- Managed multiple engineering teams.
- Significant hands on coding work.

Technology: Java, SQL, Postgresql, Vertica, SQL, Linux, Javascript, Architecture, Data Pipelines, Agile Project Management.

Skills

Technology Leadership
- Team management, recruiting, mentoring, team optimization
- Agile project management, kanban + sprint
- Architecture and strategy
- High performance, high quality, hands on coder
- Effective bridge between executive and engineering organizations

Programming Skills
- Kotlin - 6 years for backend webapps, 2 years for web frontend
- Java - 15+ years
- SQL - 20+ years
- Python - 5 years
- Javascript/Typescript, HTML, CSS - 15+ years
- C, C++, Perl - 1 year

Frameworks & Libraries
- Dropwizard (Jersey, Jdbi), Sprint - 10 years
- Guice, Guava - 10 years
- React - 1 year

Databases & Search
- Postgresql - 15+ years
- Sqlite, MySQL, Oracle, SQL Server - 2 years
- Redshift - 5 years
- Vertica - 3 years
- ElasticSearch - 8 years

DevOps
- Linux - 20+ years
- AWS (RDS, EC2, S3, ELB, ASG, IAM, Redshift) - 10+ years

Education

University of Aberdeen, Scotland

BSc (Hons) - Computer Science with AI & Psychology.

- Summa cum laude.

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Patents

Ergonomic Keyboard
- US US20170185163A1 - Issued Jul 17, 2018
- Hardware invention, sole designer and patent writer

Systems and methods for generating multi-segment longitudinal database queries
- US WO2016154387A1 - Published Sept 29, 2016
- Client sponsored patent, co-wrote with Cooley specialists

Endorsements

"Reuben's team punched way above their weight class especially given the limited resources we provided them. They cranked out more functionality in our product than teams 3x their size. It was a small but mighty group - exactly what our business needed." - Steve Richard, CRO, ExecVision

"Reuben is an architect and a hands on CTO. He is willing and able to speak with customers and prospects to understand their needs and translate that back into a complete product vision. He can also jump on a call anytime as a technical resource and outperform most salespeople. He has a natural ability to guide and motivate his team which was especially critical with the speed of development we needed to compete in our SaaS category." - David Stillman, CEO, ExecVision

"He's a smart, thoughtful, level-headed tech leader with a rare combination of strong technical chops, solid project management skills, good instincts when sourcing talent and an ability to translate the most sophisticated technology to meet customer needs and business objectives." - Mitch Praver, CEO, Devexi, Client

"Detail oriented, with a positive attitude and an ability to productively work with a variety of team members, he makes any manager look great and any team a winner. He is effective, thorough and quick. He thinks issues through and brings you solutions not problems. I enthusiastically recommend his work." - Tom Des Jardins, Manager, Streamsage/Comcast

"[He] is a very mature and level-headed technical leader. He has great depth and breadth in software engineering and is good at communicating and mentoring. He is an incredibly fast study on the business requirements and issues." - Peter Connolly, Direct Report

Contact

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Location: Working remotely for US companies with excellent fiber internet.