

MIKE FINKEL

PRODUCT AND PLATFORM ENGINEERING

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Innovative engineering leader with 20+ years of experience scaling teams and delivering high-performing user-facing applications. Proven success in driving strategic growth, improving operational efficiency, and implementing modern engineering practices to foster cross-functional collaboration and product innovation.

EXPERIENCE

Major League Baseball

SVP, Engineering | June 2021 to Present

Led a 90+ member technical organization, including software developers, engineering directors, program managers, and test engineers, responsible for product innovation, delivery, and reliability across critical user-facing platforms such as MLB.com, MiLB.com, MLB and MiLB mobile apps, Gameday, MLB Play, and Film Room.

- **Strategic Leadership & Vision:** Developed and executed a multi-year technology strategy, modernizing the native mobile, front-end web, and data services architecture to meet evolving business needs, resulting in higher-quality and more consistent product delivery.
- **Team Building & Leadership Development:** Scaled and mentored cross-functional teams, cultivating a high-performance culture that balanced strategic alignment with team empowerment, collaboration, and innovation. Built a robust leadership pipeline, developing engineering directors into effective leaders.
- **Organizational Transformation & Change Management:** Spearheaded the adoption of modern product development practices including Agile, Continuous Delivery, DevOps, and Generative AI tools, increasing delivery efficiency by 20% while significantly enhancing the product experience.
- **Operational Excellence:** Implemented team-level and product-level SLOs, a cross-functional Incident Management and Response framework and tools, and service mappings with cloud cost attribution, leading to easier cost management and significant reduction in number of support issues and time spent on resolution.
- **Vendor Management, Budgeting, & Resource Optimization:** Managed a \$20 million budget encompassing in-house staff, key software vendor relationships, and near-shore staffing providers. Ensured on-time delivery of high-quality applications while optimizing costs and maintaining a focus on operational efficiency.

Dow Jones and Company

VP, Engineering, The Wall Street Journal | November 2018 to June 2021

Led a department of 40+ engineers, managers, QA leads, and project managers, overseeing the development and maintenance of web and native mobile applications for The Wall Street Journal.

- **Strategic Product & Technology Leadership:** Developed and executed product and technology strategies in collaboration with leadership peers, driving long-term goals, roadmap development, and budget planning to improve product development efficiency and quality.
- **Technology Strategy & Architecture:** Collaborated with engineering leadership peers to create a cohesive technology strategy focused on shared web and native mobile platforms, cloud-native microservices in AWS, and incremental architecture adoption to support scalable and efficient product delivery.
- **Engineering Culture & Process Improvement:** Introduced significant engineering culture improvements, including self-directed time initiatives, OKR-based quarterly goal planning, and engineering collaboration forums to boost team engagement and productivity.
- **Team Building & Leadership Development:** Designed team structures to align with strategic business goals, mentoring engineering leads into management roles and driving recruitment efforts to build a high-performing organization.

VP, Mobile Engineering | August 2017 to November 2018

Oversaw a 19-person team of iOS, Android, and backend engineers and managers responsible for mobile applications for The Wall Street Journal, as well as supporting backend services for other Dow Jones brands.

- **Mobile Strategy & Execution:** Defined and executed mobile technology and staffing strategies for The Wall Street Journal, Barron's, FN London, and other Dow Jones brands, delivering high-quality mobile applications and backend services.
- **Technology Leadership & Cross-Platform Architecture:** Initiated and led several cross-organization

projects focused on shared services, API strategy, and cross-platform editorial tools, driving alignment and efficiency across engineering teams.

- **Product Delivery Process:** Implemented and promoted key product development frameworks such as Design Sprints, Dual-Track Agile, and project-based OKRs, solidifying Agile practices to ensure continuous, incremental product development and release cycles.

Scripps Networks Interactive

Director of Software Engineering, Mobile | October 2014 to August 2017

Led an 8-person engineering team responsible for developing and maintaining the Food Network mobile applications on iOS and Android, along with supporting backend REST services.

- **Mobile Application Development:** Architected, planned, and led hands-on development of a fully rewritten mobile application framework in Swift and Java/Kotlin, replacing the Food Network's mobile applications in under a year, improving app performance by more than 50% and enhancing user experience.
- **Emerging Platforms Strategy:** Created and led the Emerging Platforms team to explore new technologies such as Amazon Alexa and Facebook Messenger, assessing their feasibility and potential for future Scripps Networks products.
- **Backend Service Architecture:** Directed the architecture and implementation of a scalable backend API platform using Ruby-on-Rails and AWS technologies, including CloudFormation, API Gateway, Lambda, and EC2, ensuring reliability and scalability.
- **Engineering Culture:** Established key engineering best practices, including test-driven development (TDD), continuous integration, and automated release management, driving operational efficiency and code quality.
- **Agile Transformation:** Spearheaded the implementation of Agile methodologies during a strategic transition from vendor-based development to an in-house team, resulting in greater control over product development and faster iteration cycles.
- **Product Development Process:** Introduced product discovery processes and lean product principles, empowering the team to make data-driven decisions and optimize the product development cycle based on user feedback and market insights.

The New York Times

Executive Director, Web Products | September 2011 to August 2014

Led a department of 40+ developers and managers, overseeing the development of key digital properties, including NYTimes.com, mobile web, and HTML5 mobile applications.

- **Technology Strategy & Leadership:** Developed long-term technology strategy and implemented innovative solutions to support NYTimes.com and its mobile properties, driving an improved user experience and increased site performance.
- **Engineering Culture & Best Practices:** Led cross-functional collaboration to introduce continuous integration, test-driven development (TDD), and automated deployment processes, ensuring higher code quality and accelerating release cycles.
- **Agile Transformation & Process Improvement:** Spearheaded the adoption of Agile and Scrum methodologies, customizing them to meet business needs and enabling more frequent product updates with reduced time-to-market.
- **Mentorship & Leadership Development:** Mentored emerging managers and architects, fostering leadership growth within the department to support the company's evolving digital strategy.
- **Technical Innovation:** Contributed to the development of key projects, including Varnish modules, HTML5 applications, and automated release management tools, improving the efficiency and scalability of the NYTimes digital platforms.

Thomson Reuters

Director, Consumer Media Technology | April 2006 to September 2011

Managed multiple development teams across local and offshore locations, delivering key business initiatives, including the Reuters.com redesign and mobile app development for iPad, iPhone, and Android.

Dow Jones and Company

Senior Software Engineer | May 2003 to April 2006

Led hands-on development of subscription management and billing systems supporting The Wall Street Journal and Barron's consumer products.

Educational Testing Service

Software Engineer | July 2002 to May 2003

Designed and developed portfolio management tools for educators.

Information Architects Corporation

Software Engineer | January 2000 to November 2001

Developed web applications for prospective clients across various industries.

PROFICIENCIES

Leadership & Strategy

- Technology and product strategy development
- Scaling and leading cross-functional on-shore, near-shore, and remote teams
- Driving Agile, DevOps, and organizational transformations
- Vendor management, budget management and resource optimization

Technical Architecture & Engineering

- Highly scalable full-stack web and mobile architecture
- Backend services and API development (AWS: CloudFormation, API Gateway, Lambda, EC2, Ruby-on-Rails)
Cloud infrastructure and microservices management (AWS, GCP, Terraform, containerized environments)
- Continuous integration (CI/CD), automated deployment processes

Product and Project Management

- OKRs and Strategic planning
- Design Sprints, Dual-Track Agile, Product Discovery and Lean methodologies
- Cross-functional program management

Hands-on Development

- Proficient in Swift, Java, Kotlin, JavaScript, C, and PHP
- Mobile, web, and backend service development

EDUCATION

B.S Computer Science

Rutgers University, New Brunswick NJ, January 2000