

Rich Leland

Software Engineer

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Who I Am

I'm a passionate craftsman with a unconventional background that includes print and identity design, web design and development, software engineering and architecture, and developer relations. I love writing code and prose, and making things look and feel great for users.

When I'm not building things at Avaaz, I'm either hanging out with my kids, growing my own food, building something in my garage, or learning how to longboard.

What I'm Looking For

I want to be a part of a team that believes in what we're building, pushes one another to be their best, and feels like a family. I want to come to work every day knowing that there are complex problems to solve, and that the team I work with are passionate about supporting our audience and one another.

An ideal organization for me would be one that has complex challenges to solve, embraces open-source technologies, promotes creativity, encourages community involvement, fosters diversity and equality, and employs a well-rounded team.

What I've Used

Following is a shortened list of technologies and tools I've used:

JavaScript	Amazon Web Services
Python	DVCS
HTML	nginx, Apache
CSS, LESS, SASS	Varnish
PHP	Memcached
Ruby	RabbitMQ
Adobe Creative Suite	Vertica
PostgreSQL, MySQL, Cassandra	Bash, Zshell, Fish
Ansible, Chef, Puppet	Bamboo, TravisCI

Where I've Been

Tech Director, Avaaz

October 2017 – Present

At Avaaz I manage a fully distributed team of engineers, product owners, and external contractors building the tools to help campaigners tackle some of the most critical issues facing our world.

- Manage tools, tech, and automation used by campaigners to address some of the most serious issues of our time around the world
- Reduced cycle time from more than 2 weeks to less than 6 days
- Reduced build / deployment pipeline time from 2 hours to 20 minutes
- Implemented coding standards and code quality automation tooling
- Implemented automated security vulnerability scanning and alerting for project dependencies
- Implemented Docker with continuous integration for isolation during testing
- Built open and click tracking infrastructure and automation using Python, serverless framework, AWS, Google Cloud Platform
- Implemented GDPR consent monitoring and alerting
- Created API standards and instituted API documentation-first approach
- Performed front-end rebuild R&D and proof of concept using Next.js/React
- Research, planning, proof of concept for move from in-house PHP solution to Laravel framework
- Maintain email delivery system built in Python
- Maintain Python APIs consumed by PHP front-end
- Maintain infrastructure and configuration through Ansible
- Debugged and tweaked performance of bulk publishing system, reducing page publishing time from 4 minutes to 9 seconds

Director of Application Development & Developer Relations, SparkPost

July 2013 – September 2017

At SparkPost I went from Lead Software Engineer to Manager of Application Development to Director. Following are some of my responsibilities and achievements:

- Lead a twelve person, partially remote team consisting of engineers, UX/UI designers, developer advocates, and community manager
- Successfully launched SparkPost, a new email infrastructure service
- Architecture, development, testing, and support of our API and UI using various technologies and services including Node.js, AngularJS, Cassandra, Vertica, and AWS
- Created webhooks infrastructure as ETL processes using Node.js

- Architect and implement ETL processes using Node.js, RabbitMQ, and various data stores capable of handling trillions of events per month
- Implemented continuous integration and deployment pipeline with Bamboo and Ansible
- Released and maintain open source client libraries for Python, Node.js, PHP, Java, Go, and Elixir
- Launched Slack community, which now has 3,000+ members, with internal Slack bots for corporate and community Slack
- Implemented API documentation using static files and Algolia search
- Created Heroku add-on for SparkPost
- Support integrations for partnerships with Heroku, HP, and Microsoft
- Implemented google analytics, mixpanel, and optimizely for data analysis
- Developed on boarding process for new engineers
- Established business hours support rotation and on-call procedures for application engineering team

Following are some of the other positions I've held:

Web Developer, Discovery Communications

September 2011 – June 2013

Application Architect, National Geographic

June 2010 – August 2011

Lead Web Developer, Discovery Communications

January 2007 – June 2010

Creative & Technology Director, Vitamin

December 2004 – January 2007

Contracted Designer/Developer, Discovery Communications

May 2004 – December 2004

Senior Interactive Designer/Developer, Planit

September 2002 – May 2004

How I Learned

I am self-taught. Over the past 22 years I have worked for a variety of organizations—from design shops and ad agencies to a global media company to an email service to a non-profit—where I have consistently pushed myself to develop my skill set. I've also been fortunate enough to work with a diverse set of talented designers, developers and other individuals who have helped me become the engineer I am today.