

Leif Singer

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Engineering Manager & Product Manager: Servant-leader focused on helping developers grow and be the best versions of themselves, continuously experimenting with practices that improve collaboration, e.g., Kanban, retrospectives, or design sprints. Used market and user research to triage, prioritize, and tightly scope projects; worked with support and marketing to coordinate initiatives and understand impact.

Full-Stack Developer: Developing for the Web since 1996 — as an employee, contractor, and co-founder. Experience with a range of languages, frameworks, libraries, and practices. Built solutions from ideation to maintenance. Worked on deployments with hundreds of millions of users.

Remote Worker: Working remotely since 2014 in diverse organizations. Used insights from research on collaboration to shape work environments.

Writer: Authored 25+ academic papers and blogged about them. Acknowledge writing as one of the most powerful tools available for collaborating with others and clarifying my thinking.

Speaker: Invited talks at, e.g., Microsoft Research, Audi, and several academic conferences.

Mentor: Coached and mentored developers, software architects, and students from B.Sc. to Ph.D. levels on diverse technologies, frameworks, practices, and research methods.

Professional Experience

Head of Developer Advocacy

remote

WooCommerce, Automattic

since 2021

- Built a developer advocacy team from scratch.
- Hired three developer advocates, developed team vision, created OKRs and other KPIs, introduced and documented team processes to increase team's leverage and resiliency.
- Built relationships across organization to employ our expertise where it was need and find synergies.
- Developed a developer satisfaction score to regularly measure quantitative and qualitative sentiment in the WooCommerce developer ecosystem.
- *Technologies:* JavaScript, React, Redux, NodeJS, Puppeteer, PHP, SQL, CSS, HTML.

Engineering Manager

remote

WordPress.com, Automattic

2017–2021

- Led teams of up to twelve developers and designers. Introduced and refined Kanban, retrospectives, and other collaboration practices; saved effort and increased reliability with checklists, process descriptions, and templates.
- Introduced design sprints, wire-framing, user testing, and other practices to plan and explore projects. Wrote project briefs and helped create roadmaps for two development teams.
- Talked to customers and used analytics to help identify and scope problems and design solutions, used analytics and A/B tests to monitor impact.
- *Technologies:* JavaScript, React, Redux, NodeJS, Puppeteer, PHP, SQL, CSS, HTML.

Full-Stack Developer

remote

WordPress.com, Automattic

2015–2017

- Squad lead for small team focused on building a framework for others to use.
- Scoped and built a contextual help system for WordPress.com; delivered value after the first sprint.
- Built testing tool to visually compare landing pages on staging and production; cut review times by ~90%.
- *Technologies:* JavaScript, React, Redux, NodeJS, Puppeteer, PHP, SQL, CSS, HTML.

Product Manager & Full-stack Developer

remote

iDoneThis

2014–2015

- Front-end, back-end, and product work in a B2B SaaS product focused on making team collaboration better.
- Helped double MRR and cut monthly churn from 10% to 3%.
- Used market and user research (surveys, interviews, analytics) to prioritize and scope work, e.g. an API and a Slack integration later used by 90+% of paying teams.
- *Technologies:* Python, Django, CoffeeScript, Backbone, Stripe API, Heroku, memcached, SQL, Bootstrap, Ruby, JavaScript, CSS, HTML.

Postdoctoral Fellow

Victoria, Canada

CHISEL Group, University of Victoria

2013–2014

- Researcher in collaboration tools and processes for developers.
- Started, led, and collaborated on several studies (e.g. *How Software Developers Use Twitter*¹ or *Kinds of Links Shared on Stack Overflow*²); built software tools and scripts for research.
- Mentored PhD students, published academic papers, gave talks in academia and at companies.
- *Technologies*: Java, Ruby, SQL, JavaScript, d3.js, CSS, HTML.

Researcher & Ph.D. Student

Hannover, Germany

Software Engineering Group, University of Hanover

2008–2013

- Conducted research on how developers collaborate, use tools, and adopt engineering practices.
- Started and led international collaborations and studies (qualitative and quantitative), e.g., *Testing Practices on GitHub*³ or *Gamification of Version Control*⁴.
- Wrote and published academic papers and blog posts on my research; talks in academia and at companies.
- Built software tools for research, teaching, and experiments.
- Supervised and coached students in courses and theses; coached and mentored commercial developer teams.
- PhD thesis: *Improving the Adoption of Software Engineering Practices Through Persuasive Interventions*⁵.
- *Technologies*: Java, Ruby, SQL, Python, JavaScript, CSS, HTML.

Full-stack Developer

Hannover, Germany

Freelance, Several Clients

2002–2008

Interviewed customers on their problems and needs, then designed, built, and deployed solutions in tight feedback loops. Examples: inventory management, calendaring system, work roster system.

Technologies: Java, PHP, SQL, JavaScript, CSS, HTML.

Full-stack Developer

Hannover, Germany

A&L GmbH

2001–2002

Designed and built a Web app for creating Web apps by nesting and configuring components. Designed and implemented component architecture, started practices like refactoring, unit testing, pair programming.

Technologies: Apple WebObjects, Java, SQL, HTML, Mac OS X Server.

Co-Founder and Full-Stack Developer

Cologne, Germany

wap3 Technologies GmbH

1999–2001

Product and development focused on the early mobile Web. Think *Geocities for WAP*. Helped raise venture capital, built front-end, helped grow site to 40,000+ users, wrote ad server in Perl.

Technologies: Perl, PHP, SQL, JavaScript, HTML, Apache Webserver, Linux.

Education

Software Engineering

Dr. rer. nat. (Ph.D.)

University of Hanover, Germany

2008–2013

Computer Science

M.Sc.

University of Hanover, Germany

2005–2008

Computer Science

B.Sc.

University of Hanover, Germany

2002–2005

¹<http://leif.me/2013/11/how-software-developers-use-twitter/>

²<http://leif.me/papers/Gomez2013.pdf>

³<http://leif.me/2012/09/github-testing/>

⁴<http://leif.me/2015/02/nudging-novices-persuasive-patterns/>

⁵<http://leif.me/2013/02/dissertation-published/>