Kevin Olson

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Summary

Bringing 25+ years of hands-on software development and architecture experience to organizations that value pragmatism, mentorship, and delivering business value through thoughtful technology choices.

Experience

FirstLark LLC - Founder

July 2023 – Present

Founded and built MotionMade, a SaaS platform that helps organizations apply Robert's Rules of Order. Led the full product lifecycle—from architecture to deployment—using modern functional programming and cloud-native tools. Tech stack includes Clojure, Fulcro, React/React Native, Datomic, AWS (Amplify/Cognito), containers (podman/docker) and LLM integration for enhanced UX.

Garda Capital Partners - Senior Solutions Architect

February 2016 – June 2023

Helped launch Garda Capital Partners, reporting directly to the CTO. Operated in a high-trust, cross-functional role —building software, designing infrastructure, and supporting trading systems. Key contributions included:

- Built and maintained custom software (Java, React) used by the whole firm
- Extensive database experience, including design, querying and debugging, primarily relational stores but also NoSQL
- Deployed and supported custom and third-party applications (e.g. Tableau server environment and reports)
- Served as primary liaison between Garda and managed service provider (Options IT)
- Designed and led the implementation of the firm's Disaster Recovery plan, including biannual tests
- Evaluated and selected software vendors, provided architectural guidance and development expertise (e.g., Tempo project)
- Owned and maintained the batch processing system (ActiveBatch)
- Used and helped manage our TeamCity environment
- Provided team leadership and mentorship across multiple projects

Black River Asset Management - Director

May 2004 – January 2016

Held senior developer and consultant roles across multiple teams, delivering enterprise Java applications, developing and querying Oracle data models, and mentoring peers. Key contributions included Java and Scala based web applications, investor portal development, REST API integration, team leader and leadership of Java peer groups.

Cargill - Senior IT Analyst

June 1998 – April 2004

From 2001-2005 I worked as a senior developer in the Corporate IT department doing custom software development for various Cargill business units. The projects were mostly small to medium sized Java web applications. From 1998-2001 I worked on the Corn Milling technology team where my primary responsibility was developing Visual Basic client/server applications. The applications tracked quality metrics on products within the North American Corn Milling plants and terminals.

Education

North Dakota State University - Bachelor of Science in Management Information Systems, 1994-1998