

Richard Leland

Software Engineer

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Who I Am

As a director at SparkPost, I get to work with an awesome team of people to tackle a wide range of challenges in engineering, community, and content. I love writing code and prose, and making things look and feel great for users. 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.

When I'm not building things at SparkPost, 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 something bigger than myself. Ideally, I would help build a product, service, or set of services that are making a material impact on the world. I want to be a part of a team that believes in what we're building, has a balanced life, and enjoys the company of 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, and employs a well-rounded team.

What I've Used

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

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

Where I've Been

Director of Application Development & Developer Relations, SparkPost

July 2013 – Present

At SparkPost I've gone from Lead Software Engineer to Manager of Application Development to my current role as 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

Web Developer, Discovery Communications

September 2011 – June 2013

- Worked on Discovery Creative team responsible for supporting various marketing initiatives including the American Chopper live finale and Skywire Live with Nik Wallenda
- Led implementation of Django-based front-end consuming Discovery Web Services to drive various Discovery properties including Discovery.com, AnimalPlanet.com, and TLC.com
- Built and maintained client-side and Django-based server-side code powering TreeHugger.com

Following are the remaining positions I've held since the start of my career:

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

Senior Designer/Front-end Developer, G.1440

January 2000 – September 2002

Designer/Front-end Developer, Impreza Design

September 1997 – January 2000

How I Learned

I am self-taught. Over the past 19 years I have worked for a variety of organizations—from a three-person shop to an ad agency to a global media company to an email service—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.