

Benton Roberts

Software engineer and systems administrator

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Professional Profile

I am a veteran computer professional with the business and communication expertise needed to effectively apply cutting-edge digital technology to an organization's bottom line. I offer the hardcore technical expertise of an old-school programmer, combined with the informal, no-nonsense attitude of a pragmatic project manager.

Objective

Currently, my full-time duties preclude heavy involvement in other projects, but I'm always interested in hearing about cutting-edge information technology.

Skills Sampler

Computer Software Development

Software system design and implementation for UNIX, Windows, Macintosh, and mobile platforms

- Solid academic grounding in programming theory and best practices: repeatable, object-oriented design patterns; UML modeling and planning techniques; quantitative performance analysis; test-driven development
- Pragmatic, no-nonsense approach to applying all such "best practices" selectively and realistically
- Familiar with common IDEs, such as Visual Studio and Eclipse – but prefer a powerful text editor, a shell window, and a suite of solid command-line developer tools, like ant or rake
- Languages include Ruby, Java, Perl, C/C++, SQL, HTML, PHP, and Javascript
- Familiar with a variety of web-centric application frameworks and middleware: Rails, J2EE, Zope, etc.
- Revision control systems: RCS < CVS < SVN < git.

Computer Systems Administration

Installation, configuration and maintenance of UNIX, Windows, and Macintosh hardware and software systems. Particularly deep experience in the following areas:

- Scalable clusters and parallel computing: Amazon EC2 and other cloud computing platforms; Xen, VMWare, and other virtualization systems; HAProxy and other load-balancing tools and techniques; transaction-based and queue-based architectures
- High-availability deployments: Heartbeat and other failover software; monitoring, alerting, and data collection systems; software and hardware RAID, distributed storage solutions; redundant MySQL; global 24/7/365 support team leadership
- Platform and product life-cycle: Software development-QA-release process optimization; zero-downtime software upgrades; cluster benchmarking and load testing
- Networking: hosting and infrastructure capacity planning; local and wide-area troubleshooting; firewall and router configuration; VPN solutions; DNS administration; ISP relationship management
- Back-office infrastructure: commercial-grade email systems; groupware portals, wikis, and other content management systems; issue management / trouble ticket software; cross-platform file-sharing tools

Technical Communication

The ability and eagerness to communicate complex technical ideas to both neophytes and fellow experts

- Strong teaching, training, and technical writing skills (English / French)
- Project leadership and customer relationship management abilities
- Open-source contributor and advocate

Digital Media Production and Post-production

- Operation, maintenance, and troubleshooting of a wide variety of professional-grade recording and broadcasting technology; expertise in digital production and post-production techniques
- Media archiving and delivery systems; expert in codecs, transcoding, and streaming techniques

Recent Work Experience

Present

Cloud Engineer, Medidata Solutions, Inc. (New York City) – Software to support medical clinical trials. Writing code to increase the scalability and reliability of several large SaaS platforms.

2010

Chief Operations Officer, Aranetic LLC (New York / D.C.) – Litigation support tools and services. Applying the latest agile technical and business practices to reducing data support costs.

2008-2009

Head of System Operations, Starcut USA, Inc. (New York City) – Digital services for mobile devices.

- Ultimately responsible for the 24/7 uptime and support for several hundred high-profile mobile web properties for “no-compromise” clients, including NBC Universal, ABC, MTV, and Maxim.
- Built a self-assembling, automatically-scaling compute cluster to drive NBC's 2008 Beijing Olympics mobile web site. Replicated and extended the same technology for all other customer sites.
- Perform regular and diverse coding tasks: e.g., traffic analysis, data archiving, infrastructure migration.

2007

Operations and Development, Clirk LLC (New York City) – Digital Lifestyle Consulting.

- Developed a scalable, centralized IT infrastructure for configuration, monitoring, and management of customer networks.
- IT infrastructure maintenance: backups, networking, and primary administrative responsibility.

2006 to 2007

Senior Systems Administrator, MeMedia Inc. (New York City) – Contextual Internet advertising.

- Responsible for the 24/7 uptime of the company's main application, and other systems, running across 60+ server computers in a dual-data center environment. Provisioned hardware, reconfigured networks, maintained backups, and other regular sysadmin duties.
- Coordinated a 5-month, business-critical data center migration project with the development team.

2003 to 2006

US Support Manager, Orad Inc. (New York City) – Manufacturers of high-end graphics computing clusters for virtual-reality and television.

- Responsible for all support activities for US and Canadian customer base. Extensive field installation, support, and live demo experience for cluster installations in major corporate, government, and academic institutions. Clients include the ESPN, the US Navy, and U.C. Irvine

2001 to 2003

Freelance Media Technology Consultant (New York City) – Provided expertise in digital media production and communication technology. Clients included Showtime, Liz Claiborne and Pfizer.

1996 to 2001

Multimedia Software Developer, Dartmouth College Interactive Media Laboratory (Hanover, NH) – Developers of interactive medical education and training software.

Education

1998 to present

Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH
Computer Science Department

1988 to 1990

Columbia University, New York City
Mathematics Department

1984 to 1988

Indian Springs High School, Helena, AL
A small, private school in rural Alabama