

JJ Kahrs

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SUMMARY

Fullstack Software Engineer, 20+ years. Tech lead on live-service games and enterprise logistics.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Hijack Poker

05/2024 - 06/2026

Technical Lead

- Led Unity and game server teams on a multiplayer online poker app.
- Built monitoring and observability tooling that cut incident detection time from minutes to seconds
- Spearheaded technical debt reduction that enabled architecture changes from [Socket.io/NodeJS](https://socket.io/) servers to AWS Lambda functions allowing support of a 400% increase in player base and simultaneous tournaments of 1000+ players.
- Built stress-test tooling to measure accurate round-trip times of player actions to received state updates. This gave visibility to actual player-facing performance and ensured round-trip times were under game service tick rate (950ms).
- Defined agentic guardrails, verification gates, and review standards to address ad-hoc and inconsistent adoption of LLMs to SDLC.

Misfits Attic Games

07/2022 - 11/2022

Gameplay Programmer

- Collaborated with team building sequel to Duskers, a 2D strategy game.
- Prototyped game mechanics using the Unity game engine. Collaborated with game designers to create rapid iterations of new gameplay systems.
- Ran weekly code reviews with the 4-person engineering team. Allowed rapid prototyping while managing technical debt.

Clinwiki

12/2020 - 06/2021

Software Architecture Consultant (Part-Time)

- Advised on architecture for updating tech stack for Clinwiki, an open source search engine for medical trials. This resulted in a re-engineering of approximately 75% of the existing code base over a period of 6 months.
- Wrote critical components and mentored a team of 4 junior developers.

Blue Wizard Labs

06/2019 - 07/2022

Founder & Software Engineer

- Created StarMech, a single-player 2D bullet-hell rogue-like game using Unity. Completed all game design, coding, shaders, art, animation, music, and sound design.
- Optimized performance to handle AI and physics across 1000+ entities.
- Wrote frameworks for messaging bus, execution state management, and dependency injection.
- Created Cetacean, a writing SaaS for novelists using a MERN stack SPA deployed on AWS.

Farmhouse

07/2017 - 05/2019

Lead Developer

- Led a team of 3 engineers for Sweetspot; a logistics bidding startup for spot freight.
- Designed and developed React, Java Spring Boot, MySQL app. Went from greenfield to production MVP in 3 months.
- Primary frontend developer and sole backend developer for private client. Delivered React-Native mobile apps for Android/iOS, along with a React SPA, and AWS managed NodeJS / MongoDB backend.

Sabbatical

03/2016 - 06/2017

MercuryGate

10/2007 - 03/2016

Software Architect

- Took ownership of carrier management system and executed redesign to scale under a single server. Rewrote 90% of the application in 3 months that resulted in a performance increase of more than 500%.
- Led an engineering team and oversaw mentoring, code reviews, and task assignments.

Senior Software Engineer

- Proposed and prototyped a completely overhauled GUI system for flagship TMS. Migrated the legacy JSP app to a modern Javascript SPA.

EDUCATION

BS in Computer and Information Science, University of Mississippi

MS in Computer Science, University of Mississippi

SKILLS

- **Languages:** JavaScript, TypeScript, C#, Java, Python, HTML, CSS
- **Frameworks:** React, React-Native, NodeJS, Redux, Express, Spring, Socket.io
- **Software:** Unity, Godot, Git, PlasticSCM
- **AI:** LLM Tooling, Claude Code, Opencode, Agentic Workflows
- **DevOps:** Pulumi IAC, MongoDB, Oracle, MySQL, ELK stack, CI/CD, Docker
- **AWS:** Beanstalk, EC2, Lambda, RDS, ElastiCache, DynamoDB, S3, Cloudwatch