

Alan J. Kay

Des Moines, IA 50392

contact@alankay.net

About Me

I am a passionate, self-driven engineer who delivers customer-oriented outcomes. I achieve this by combining empathy with a curious mindset while pushing myself and those around me to embrace diversity, continually question the status-quo, and never give up on improving.

Skill Summary

- Practices: DevOps (including code development & review, unit testing, test driven development, continuous integration, and continuous deployment), and lean engineering
- Platforms: Amazon Web Services – AWS (including S3, SQS & SNS, Lambda, and CloudWatch), GitHub, Azure DevOps, Mule ESB, and SQL Server
- Languages: Python, TypeScript, and C# (including MVC and Web API)
- Infrastructure As Code: Terraform, CloudFormation, and AWS CDK
- Limited Experience: Java, Visual Basic.NET (VB.NET), Visual Basic 6, Markit EDM, Docker, and HTML
- Effective communicator, both with technical audience and others; able to explain technical matters in a way that resonates with non-technical stakeholders
- Collaborative team player, well regarded by other team members, business unit leads, and project sponsors
- Proven technical leadership, with a track record of successful problem troubleshooting and resolution

Professional Experience

Principal Financial Group – Des Moines, IA

Sr. Software Engineer (PFG Cloud Platform Engineering – Platform & Ops)

April 2021 – Present

Software Engineer (PGI Talent & Organizational Competency)

March 2019 – April 2021

- Evolve Principal's AWS, GCP, and Azure cloud foundations (including their landing zones and account vending solutions), providing internal customers a secure, seamless experience when requesting cloud accounts and related shared solutions
- Provide and administer critical software delivery platforms (including GitHub and Azure DevOps) through infrastructure as code (IaC) and automation, thus empowering engineers to deliver cloud solutions more easily while attesting to required regulatory and security controls
- Assess potential employees through a pair programming technical interview exercise to increase the quality and retention of new hires
- Engage with other teams to construct and deliver a minimum viable product (MVP) through assessing business partner needs & teaching technical skills and practices.
- Enable rapid organization adoption of AWS: discover and eliminate barriers, build and guide the engineering culture, and enhance the developer experience
- Practice and demonstrate lean engineering through pairing, mobbing, and consulting to assist teams in delivering higher quality products for their customers
- Combine experience, theory, and practice to grow and evolve the engineering community through creating enterprise partnerships, solutions, and documentation

Application Developer (PGI DESTination Program)

May 2014 – March 2019

- Key contributor in the DESTination program – a project to redefine the technological future vision of the business unit and implement the steps to reach that future vision.
- Designed and implemented framework to facilitate loosely coupled integrations between systems, allowing for agility when adding, replacing, or removing those systems
- Executed multiple proof of concepts to analyze new technology options including MongoDB and Mule ESB
- Balanced production enhancements with project innovations using both scrum and kanban agile methodologies

Application Developer Intern (Multiple Teams)

May 2012 – May 2013, May 2013 – August 2013

- Assessed and enhanced existing processes and related documentation to improve performance, reliability, and supportability
- Created new solutions to help generate, modify, and send critical data between key systems
- Fulfilled existing and incoming production support requests regarding operational data source information
- Communicated, organized, and executed roll out schedules for enhancements to team jobs and processes
- Collaborated with a team of differently skilled interns to develop a mobile application for interns

Drake University – Des Moines, IA

Systems Administrator Assistant (CBPA), Support Technician (OIT)

Fall 2011 – Fall 2013

- Maintained faculty and classroom computer systems, including setting up new machines
- Solved issues regarding computer hardware and software
- Upgraded over 250 student's computers from different operating systems to Windows 7
- Assisted students with general technology questions, network connectivity, and application support

Leadership & Recognition

- Removed a long-standing distrust of information technology from a chief accounting officer by leading a team of engineers to create a product I defined, and delivered it on time without any defects while simultaneously training the engineers on how to use AWS with industry-leading engineering practices
- Repeatedly praised by the director of engineering for my continual focus on improving the entire enterprise while specifically addressing the needs of the various engineering teams
- Valued by multiple information technology leaders for going above and beyond to create solutions for projects which would otherwise be blocked and have to shift schedules
- Lead various architecture design sessions outside of my area and my normal job role, including recently helping a team create a solution to track process state between multiple systems, granting transparency to their business partners
- Presented in numerous training sessions, including the Des Moines AWS community meet-up, Principal's Cloud Day, and taught an hour session at Drake.
- Created a standard framework for production releases which reduced production migration defects in various projects and teams

Education

Drake University – Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

- Information Systems and Marketing Major, Computer Science Minor
- Cumulative GPA: 3.67/4.0 – Cum Laude, Departmental Honors
- Graduation: May 2014

Personal Hobbies

- Exploring hardware solutions and developing related software, including creating and contributing to various open source projects
- Automating computer setup, including building docker images for software development, creating development virtual machines, and documenting setup instructions for others
- Investigating and implementing new home networking solutions, including creating network wide ad blocking, network segmentation, and playing with different router operating systems