Job Description: https://job-boards.greenhouse.io/tailscale/jobs/4443896005

Role: Platform Engineer (Software Engineer)
Location: Remote (United States)
Company: Tailscale

Job Description

We're an early-stage and fully remote company, well succeed with these sorts of goals:

  Work as part of a team of engineers to design and build core backend software components
  Analyze and improve efficiency, scalability, and stability of various system resources
  Set direction and goals for the team regarding project impact, product quality and engineering efficiency
  Develop features that support a broad range of sign-on options, such as SSO, OAuth2, SAML, and WebAuthn
  Develop and maintain features to synchronize users and groups from IdPs

Requirements:

  Experience with distributed systems
  Experience with one or more SQL databases
  Familiarity with authentication/authorization protocols and frameworks such as OAuth2, OIDC, SSO, SAML, and vendors such as Okta/Auth0
  Familiarity with networks (IP addressing, routing, etc.)
  Ability to give and process constructive feedback, as well as work independently
  Flexibility to adjust to the dynamic nature of a startup
  Ability to join an on call rotation, after becoming familiar with the platform
  Most of the non-front-end portions of the system are developed in the Go programming language. Experience with Go is a plus.

September 15, 2024
[Hiring manager contact info]

Dear [hiring manager],

My name is Casey Burhoe and I am very excited about the technology that Tailscale is developing. The principle of secure-by-design is important to critical programs and infrastructure, especially in the domain of networking where leaving security as the responsibility of an end user could have dire consequences. I believe I would bring a valuable perspective to Tailscale through a combination of my experience using security products in a business enterprise environment, my college coursework in computer privacy and security, and my familiarity with Tailscale's products as an end user.

In my current job, I work on a systems administration team providing technical support to university finance staff. In this role, I have learned about the network architecture and security practices at an enterprise such as Johns Hopkins, where we use technology such as Imprivata for SSO, Microsoft Authenticator for MFA, and Ivanti Secure Access VPN. I have also developed PowerShell scripting tools to handle repetitive tasks, freeing up the time of myself and my team to be able to focus on more nuanced tasks.

As an example, I was once tasked with figuring out a method for collecting information about the status of software upgrades to our latest approved versions. I had to work with my team to figure out the scope and expected behavior of the desired tool. I also had to consult the documentation of the software in question, as well as the scripting language I was using. Using this information, I wrote, tested, and revised a script to collect the information and handle and report edge cases such as when a computer was unreachable on the network. This tool has since become a crucial part of my team's software deployment workflow and improved the time it takes us to execute software deployment campaigns. Additionally, the process of developing this script taught me to consider the needs of end users when developing tools and features, how to consult documentation to find information I need, and the principles of test driven development.

If you have any questions about my candidacy, please feel free to reach out to me by phone at [phone number] or by email at casey.burhoe@gmail.com. I thank you for your time, and look forward to speaking with you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Casey Burhoe

CASEY BURHOE

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Baltimore, MD 21218   Linkedin: @casey-burhoe

OBJECTIVE

Goal-oriented software engineer with network and application security experience, eager to help develop networking software that is secure-by-design.

EDUCATION

Johns Hopkins University   Baltimore, MD
B.S. in Computer Science and Cognitive Science   May 2025
Coursework in Security and Privacy in Computing, Computer Systems, Data Structures
Hands on security experience with SEED Security Labs, built a basic C++ chat server

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Johns Hopkins Financial Systems Administration   Baltimore, MD
Computer Desktop Support   March 2023 – Present
- Troubleshoot help desk inquiries for ~200 financial services staff
- Collaborate with systems engineers to test and validate software products for deployment (Microsoft Office ProPlus 2021, M365, Windows 11)
- Manage computers and peripheral hardware
- Collect and validate inventory data including location of hardware, user information, model numbers, software versions, etc.
- Develop PowerShell scripts for automating software version information gathering during update deployments

Allergy & Asthma Associates of Maine   Portland, ME
IT Support Intern   June 2021 – August 2021
- Provide swift support turnaround times for ~20 medical and administrative staff while taking the needs of patients and providers into account
- Implement a patient waiting room self-service kiosk for appointment check-ins
- Consult medical device and software documentation to assist staff with their use
- Enable providers to access medical records stored in legacy EMR software

LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY SERVICE

Ancient Baltimore Lodge #234 AF&AM   Baltimore, MD
Junior Deacon   November 2023 – Present
- Assess and select scholarship applications for our annual college scholarship awards
- Coordinate with local Good Shepherd UMC to host 4 annual free community meals, serving over 30 members of the community per meal

Johns Hopkins Men's Rugby F.C.   Baltimore, MD
Match Secretary, Treasurer   November 2021 – December 2023
- Organize home and away matches with 6+ teams in the Mid-Atlantic conference
- Manage and increase club budget to purchase new player kits, balls and contact equipment for practices, pay a professional coach, and pay for transportation to matches

SKILLS

C, C++, Python, PowerShell, Batch, Assembly, Linux-based operating systems, Windows operating systems, Excel, Word, networking, VirtualBox, concurrency frameworks, data structures and algorithms

Template base:

To: Professor Cara Dickason
From: Casey Burhoe, Undergraduate Computer Science Student
September 15th, 2024
Subject: Job Documents Reflection

The following is a review of my methodology while preparing my job application documents. I am hoping to share the research I did and the resulting considerations I took into account.

My application documents are tailored around applying to a platform engineering position at Tailscale, a tech startup concerned with networking that emphasizes a dedication to security and user friendliness. Their guiding principles are empathy driven problem solving, maintaining small development teams, and maintaining system reliability. Their commitments are to putting people first, supporting open source [technology], and protecting user privacy. Finally, their company mission is to develop network technology that is scalable to increase connectivity, secure by design, and reduces the overhead of typical software defined network tails.

I include 5 sections in my resume: An objective statement, education, professional experience, leadership and community service, and skills. My resume begins with an objective statement which directly states that I have network and security experience, and conveys that I want to use this experience in my work at Tailscale. Next, I only list my college education because that is where I gained the majority of my experience in software engineering and security. I list my courses that are relevant to computer science and security, and some projects I have done during those courses to show that I have directly applied what I have learned about cybersecurity and low-level software development.

For work experience, I list two relevant professional roles I've had which were both in IT and systems administration. The responsibilities I list demonstrate both technical and soft skills which would be of interest to Tailscale as a tech company, such as scripting, software documentation review, team collaboration, etc.

I include two non-professional experiences to further demonstrate my soft skills of collaboration, leadership, and organization, which address the need for those in the job description. These experiences also reflect my dedication to contributing to the community outside of work, addressing one of Tailscale's previously mentioned commitments.

I begin my cover letter by expressing my excitement about the work they do, and acknowledging the importance of the technology they are developing. I state how my

multifaceted experience with software development and implementation, and security would bring value to the Tailscale. The next two sections focus on my professional experience, which I think highlights my technical and soft skills the best. The first relates my current work experience to the security frameworks mentioned in the job description, adding to my overall qualifications. In the next section, I use the STAR method and share a time from my most current job which demonstrates several soft skills related to developing software tools and functions.

I would appreciate any feedback you have on my job application documents. Your feedback will help me to better prepare myself as a candidate for the jobs I hope to apply to in the (very) near future.