

Richard Dillman

Hands-On Tech Leadership | Scaling Teams & Systems

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I love building fast, reliable products, and helping others grow while I do it. I'm passionate about SEO, Page Speed, and clean, scalable code. At The Muse, I lead with curiosity, clarity, and care, bridging tech and business. Nearly a decade later, my code still powers ads on sites like Vogue, GQ, Wired, and The New Yorker.

Work Experience

The Muse

Remote • 12/2018 - 09/2025

Senior Director of Engineering

Full-time

Skills

- Accessibility
- Ad Tech
- agile web development
- APIs
- Atomic design
- AWS
- Book Binding
- Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)
- Claude Code
- color theory
- Cross-browser Compatibility
- Design
- Documentation
- Egyptology
- Elder Scrolls Online
- Figma
- FrontEnd
- Gardening
- GIT
- Google Publisher tags (GTM)
- Graceful Degradation
- HTML
- JavaScript
- JIRA
- LLM
- MMORPG
- NextJs
- node.js
- progressive enhancement
- React
- restful webservices
- SCSS
- Section 508
- Software Development
- SQL

I lead engineering at The Muse, where we build sites that help people find jobs they actually want. My work spans long-term technical planning, mentoring, hands-on architecture, and whatever's needed to keep the team moving and the site performing.

I collaborate closely with Product, Design, and leadership to shape our roadmap and make sure we're shipping the right things at the right time. On the technical side, I help guide decisions across a modern stack (Next.js, React, TypeScript, Python) with a focus on performance, maintainability, and developer sanity.

I've formalized Claude's role as a structured contributor, to where Claude can independently handle GitHub issues, do basic code review, and much more. I'm happy to discuss the details.

I care a lot about mentorship. That includes working with junior engineers, senior ICs, and even AI Agents like Claude—who can be fast and helpful but still needs tight direction and thorough review. I've built experimentation into our workflow so we can measure the impact of what we ship, and I keep a close eye on the basics: performance (Web Vitals, Lighthouse), observability (Datadog, GA), and code quality (linting, typing, testing, and formatting with DX pipelines like ESLint, Mypy, Prettier, Jest, and PyTest).

More on my profile at The Muse -

<https://www.themuse.com/profiles/themuse/person/richard-dillman>

- **Led the final Muse project:** transitioned Python/Tornado/CoffeeScript systems to Next.js/TypeScript/SCSS with Claude Code, reducing build times from 45+ minutes to 75 seconds
- **White-labeled a Multi-tenant Job Search site** that has a projected revenue of: \$153K-\$230K/year/tenant
- **Replaced infinite scroll with paginated search**, improving Google crawlability and indexing depth, resulting in a 74K/month increase in SEO-driven visits.
- **Migrated to a new ad partner** with improved layouts, richer ad formats, and more relevant content. This boosted revenue by 15%.
- **Enhanced Search Engagement** with Personalized Features, increasing searches per user by 13%.

Staff Engineer, Director of Application Development

Full-time

- TypeScript
- Unit Testing
- Usability
- user experience
- web applications
- web development
- web typography

Led engineering strategy and product delivery across The Muse. Set architectural direction, guided roadmap priorities, and worked closely with product, design, and growth teams to deliver reliable, high-impact features. Mentored engineers, raised code quality standards, and improved development velocity across the organization.

- **Ran UX experiments**, resulting in a 22% increase in CTR.
- **Launched Trending Search module**, increasing job search conversions by 13% through end-to-end design and implementation leadership.
- **Spearheaded integration of display ads**, owning every aspect of development and vendor coordination, resulting in \$994K in annual revenue growth.
- **Drove engineering consistency** by standardizing linting (ESLint) and testing (Jest) across all teams, reducing bugs and improving code review velocity by 30%.
- **Modernized multiple page templates** by extracting functionality from legacy Tornado/Python codebases and rebuilding them as scalable microservices, leading to faster iteration and improved performance.

Staff Engineer

Full-time

- **10× increase in organic SEO traffic** through deployment of structured data (JSON-LD) and performance refactors
- **Improved Core Web Vitals to 90%+ green**, directly boosting rankings, conversion rates, and job seeker engagement
- **Cut build times from 45 min → 75 sec** by modularizing monolithic repos and overhauling CI/CD pipelines
- **Reduced site load by 4 seconds sitewide**, resulting in measurable LCP and conversion improvements
- **Scaled engineering team delivery velocity** through standardization (ESLint, Jest, Puppeteer, CLA) and mentorship
- Partnered with Product, Design, and Engineering leadership to set platform roadmap, architectural direction, and cross-team velocity standards
- Owned full-stack performance monitoring (Web Vitals, GA, SEO, Datadog) and collaborated across teams to diagnose and remediate sitewide bottlenecks
- Championed engineering quality through test automation, linting standards, and CI/CD enforcement — increasing delivery confidence and cutting regression bugs by 30%+
- Mentored engineers and led high-stakes refactors of legacy Python/Tornado and CoffeeScript systems into modern **Next.js / TypeScript architectures**

Senior Application Engineer

Full-time

Worked closely with the Director of Engineering to shape technical strategy, extend core platforms, and lead the development of new products. Focused on modernizing legacy systems and enforcing engineering consistency across teams using Node, React, Python, AWS, and Postgres.

- **Drove engineering consistency** by standardizing linting (ESLint) and testing (Jest) across all teams, reducing bugs and improving code review velocity by 30%.
- **Replatformed the CMS and article renderer** using KOA, React, and Docker, cutting deployment times in half and reducing infrastructure-related incidents.
- **Built a reusable repo template** (Next.js, KOA, Docker, CircleCI) adopted org-wide, enforcing baseline standards for testing, linting, and Web Vitals performance budgets.
- **Modernized job search, article rendering, and homepage experiences** by extracting functionality from legacy Tornado/Python codebases and rebuilding them as scalable microservices—leading to faster iteration and improved performance.

Condé Nast

New York City Metropolitan Area • 07/2015 - 11/2018

Senior Software Engineer, Ad Tech, Monetization

Full-time

Led ad-platform modernization across Condé Nast's premier brands (*Vogue*, *The New Yorker*, *Wired*, *GQ*...) where every millisecond of latency impacted global revenue and user trust.

- **Rebuilt cross-brand ad delivery infrastructure** for 30+ global publications, improving ad viewability from **45% → 85%**
- Optimized monetization pipelines across **229M+ monthly unique users** and **1B+ monthly video views**, increasing inventory fill and yield
- Removed legacy jQuery dependencies and reduced bundle size, accelerating ad render times and improving page performance
- Standardized testing and documentation org-wide, achieving **80%+ coverage** and reducing integration defects
- Led code reviews, mentored junior engineers, and coordinated with major ad vendors and programmatic exchanges
- Designed shared UI tooling and plugin architecture adopted across multiple editorial brands and dev teams
- Authored technical RFCs, migration plans, and build modernization efforts, supporting continuous platform evolution

Everyday Health

New York City Metropolitan Area • 01/2012 - 07/2015

Front End Engineer

Full-time

Built and optimized consumer health platforms reaching **30M+ monthly unique users**, delivering performance, accessibility, and monetization improvements across editorial and ad-driven products.

- **Reduced page load time by 54%** and cut total network requests by **53%**, improving user engagement and Core Web Vitals
- **Increased ad click-through rate by 86%** while reducing impressions by 29%, driving higher-value programmatic yield
- Engineered responsive, mobile-first architecture using **SASS (BEM), Bootstrap, and modular JavaScript**, accelerating delivery across product teams
- Developed internal tools used across Product, Design, and Content teams to standardize UI and ad delivery workflows
- Led integrations with key monetization partners (Google, Swoop, Taboola), ensuring performance compliance and ad targeting fidelity
- Mentored junior developers and presented emerging frontend practices in internal engineering forums and guilds

CatalpaSoft

Indianapolis, Indiana Area • 01/2003 - 01/2012

Sr Software Engineer / CEO

Full-time

Founded and led a software firm specializing in digital solutions for foster care and child welfare agencies. Designed and delivered web platforms adopted statewide and across the Midwest, replacing paper-based workflows and improving placement, training, and communication systems for government and private agencies.

- **Cut statewide foster/adoption processing time by 50%+**, accelerating placements for *12,000+ children across 3,000 foster households*
- **Saved \$400K+/year in administrative labor costs** by eliminating manual paperwork and replacing 10+ data-entry roles with automated digital systems
- **Expanded adoption of child welfare platforms across state lines**, powering recruitment, training, and behavioral assessments for state agencies and contractors
- Built **5+ enterprise systems** (parent recruitment tracking, child placement tracking, training compliance, mentorship forums, developmental evaluation tools) replacing paper, email, and spreadsheets

- Built a web-based developmental assessment system used by clinicians to standardize behavioral evaluations, improving early intervention for high-risk children.
- Implemented secure single sign-on (Exchange/ColdFusion) and encrypted remote access, allowing field staff to operate safely from rural and mobile environments years before modern cloud platforms.
- Collaborated with state leadership to increase foster parent recruitment, contributing to a measurable rise in public inquiries and community awareness initiatives.