

Sterling McKinley

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Site Reliability Engineer

Site Reliability Engineer with 15+ years of progressive experience collaborating, architecting, implementing, and maintaining highly scalable and high-availability (HA) systems. I am a great communicator, committed to continuous learning and mastering emerging technologies. I focus on optimization, resiliency, reliability, monitoring/observability, infrastructure, and end-to-end CI/CD pipelines to maximize developer productivity and drive robust operational excellence, resulting in superior customer experience.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Capital One

01/2023 – Present

Platform Engineer/Site Reliability Engineer

- Served as the key liaison between a major line of business (IFX) and the executive office (Chief of Staff), ensuring seamless information flow and project prioritization.
- Managed a portfolio of 500+ applications within the Intelligent Foundations & Experiences line of business, ensuring high resiliency and compliance
- Spearheaded the definition and implementation of comprehensive SLOs/SLIs across critical AWS services for 8 applications, resulting in 93% SLO attainment and a 40% reduction in critical incidents by proactively managing Error Budget consumption via burn-rate alerting
- Host Post-Mortem meetings for blameless root cause analysis
- Engineered and provisioned scalable AWS cloud infrastructure (EC2, VPC, IAM, S3, RDS)
- Diagnosed and resolved AWS service issues, achieving a 30% reduction in downtime within 4 months by implementing systematic troubleshooting protocols.
- Identify and remediate CI/CD pipeline issues, bottlenecks, and service disruptions
- Led applications, services, and infrastructure evacuation (disaster recovery), reducing failover duration by 30-50% utilizing failover runbooks

PNC Bank

07/2019 – 01/2023

Infrastructure Configuration Consultant

- 3rd shift/overnight support & on-call support
- Diagnosed and resolved complex failures within the Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery (CI/CD) pipeline, leveraging specialized knowledge of Jenkins and IBM UrbanCode Deploy
- Maintained, optimized, and administered middleware and application server platforms, including OpenShift, WebSphere Application Server, JBoss, Tomcat, and supporting operating systems (RHEL and Windows Server/IIS).
- Reduced Production incidents by 20% by investigating application heap dumps to identify the root cause.
- Partnered with diverse engineering groups to perform deep-dive root cause analysis (RCA) on recurring critical system and infrastructure issues and implemented permanent architectural fixes to enhance system stability.

Peraton (formerly Perspecta)

07/2018 – 08/2019

Application Integrator

- Served as primary technical support resource for Federal Reserve Bank of New York – Auction Reporting (TAAPS) application
- Integrated several software products and/or systems into the Auction Reporting application/environment
- Installed, managed, and monitored applications hosted on IBM WebSphere Application Server ND v8.5.5.x & IBM HTTP v8.5.5.x platform

Hyatt

11/2017 – 07/2018

Operations Analyst

- Serve as the primary point of contact for inquiries related to operational processes and issues concerning Hyatt's global World of Hyatt Loyalty Management System (LMS).
- Provide expert support for third-party vendor software, LMS code deployments, and maintenance releases, acting as a liaison between hotel locations, application development teams, corporate partners, and external vendors to effectively triage LMS issues.
- Develop and maintain comprehensive documentation, including solution requirements, use cases, user acceptance criteria, and training materials.

Sigma Systems

03/2017 – 11/2017

Technical Account Manager / Technical Support Analyst

- Primary technical contact for clients in Caribbean markets. (Miami, Barbados, Bahamas, Jamaica, Trinidad, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Grenada, India)
- Manage and support Sigma Systems' proprietary software (SaaS)
- Install, configure, administer, and support Java applications/systems hosted on Linux operating systems utilizing middleware technology (WebLogic Application Server and JBoss Application Server)

Blue Cross Blue Shield (HCSC)

07/2011 – 03/2017

Sr. Software Systems Programming Specialist

- Oncall Support
- Middleware support for a portfolio of 400+ distributed applications/systems
- Installed and configured IBM WebSphere Application Server in both vertical and horizontal clustered environments.
- Migrated applications hosted on Linux from WebSphere version 6.x to 8.5.x, as well as from version 7.x to 8.5.x.
- Managed deployments, administration, configuration, upgrades, maintenance, and troubleshooting of J2EE applications in WAS using JAR and EAR formats within multi-clustered, high-availability environments.
- Defined and configured Application Servers, JVMs, Virtual Hosts, Web Applications, Web Resources, Servlets, MQ, JDBC Providers, and data sources for connectivity to various SQL, DB2, and mainframe databases.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science – Management Information Systems

Eastern Illinois University

Charleston, IL

Site Reliability Engineer (Apprenticeship)

Kura Labs

07/2022 – 12/2022

The 500+ hours of live interactive instruction from leading industry practitioners entail extensive individual and group-based workstreams building automated deployment pipelines for enterprise software applications and scalable cloud infrastructure.

Key Competencies Include:

- Establishing proficiency in Linux environments with extensive use of BASH and Python to automate core processes involving resource provisioning, monitoring, security, and scaling.
- Building and scaling automated software deployment (CI/CD) pipelines using Git, GitHub, Jenkins, Docker (ECS), and Kubernetes (EKS), to provision microservice applications.
- Monitoring, troubleshooting, and remediating application and infrastructure issues and incidents using DataDog, CloudWatch, and Splunk.
- Building, securing, and deploying N-tier micro-service infrastructure and VPCs (multiple AZs, subnets, gateways, load balancers, APIs, application servers, databases) using Terraform, CloudFormation, and Ansible

CERTIFICATIONS

Fundamentals of Red Hat Enterprise Linux Red Hat	07/2025
Site Reliability Engineering: Measuring and Managing Reliability Google	05/2025
Google AI Essentials Google	04/2025
AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner Amazon Web Services	01/2022
KCNA: Kubernetes and Cloud Native Associate The Linux Foundation	01/2022

PROJECTS

Alert/Notification System

Configured an alert system that sent real-time updates to users via email and SMS. Tools used: AWS SNS, AWS Lambda, AWS EventBridge, AWS IAM, External API

DataLake

Configured a datalake for Analytics Tools used: AWS S3, AWS Glue, AWS Athena, AWS IAM, External API

CICD Pipeline

Enhanced software delivery by engineering and deploying a comprehensive end-to-end CI/CD pipeline, fully automated with testing and deployment of applications. Tools used: Git, GitHub, Jenkins, AWS EC2, Terraform

Flask App Deployment

Deployed a containerized Flask application into AWS infrastructure via IaC (Terraform) Tools used: Git, GitHub, Jenkins, AWS EC2, AWS ECS/Fargate, Docker, Terraform

SKILLS

Site Reliability: Disaster Recovery, Error Budget, Incident Management, Monitoring Systems, MTTA (Mean Time To Acknowledge), MTTR (Mean Time To Detect), MTTR (Mean Time To Recovery), Observability, On-call Experience, Service Level Indicators, Service Level Objectives

Operating Systems: IBM AIX, Linux (Red Hat, Ubuntu, Amazon Linux, OpenSuse), Windows (IIS)

Version Control: BitBucket, Git, GitHub, GitLab

Cloud Platforms: Amazon Web Services

Automation & Orchestration: Docker, GitHub Actions, IBM UrbanCode Deploy, Jenkins, Kubernetes

IaC: Ansible, CloudFormation, Terraform

Programming & Scripting: Bash, Python

Monitoring & Logging: Datadog, DynaTrace, Grafana, New Relic, Observe, Prometheus, Splunk

Middleware Technologies: IBM WebSphere Application Server, IBM WebSphere Portal Server, JBoss Application Server, Tomcat, WebLogic Server

Other Tools: Confluence, Jira, PagerDuty, ServiceNow, Veritas Cluster Server