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BEN HANKINS

Solutions Engineer | Infrastructure Specialist | Pre-Sales Technical Consultant

SUMMARY

Solutions Engineer with 5+ years driving technical sales, customer success, and enterprise implementations across cloud infrastructure and container platforms. Successfully contributed to $10.1M deal closure as technical lead on 11-month client engagement. Proven ability to translate complex business requirements into scalable technical solutions through consultative pre-sales engineering, proof-of-concept delivery, and post-sales implementation support. Currently seeking full-time Solutions Engineering roles after strategically deepening infrastructure and DevOps expertise. Founded Sproutflow web design agency (Nov 2024) as side business, demonstrating entrepreneurial initiative and customer-facing skills. Combines strong stakeholder management and technical presentation skills with hands-on expertise in Kubernetes, multi-cloud architecture, and enterprise platform solutions.

SKILLS

Customer Engagement & Pre-Sales: Technical discovery, solution architecture, POC delivery, product demonstrations, stakeholder presentations, objection handling, consultative selling, technical workshops

Technical Expertise: Kubernetes/OpenShift, multi-cloud platforms (AWS, IBM Cloud, GCP), containerization, infrastructure-as-code, CI/CD pipelines, GitOps workflows, service mesh architecture, security & compliance

Leadership & Enablement: Team mentorship, technical enablement, customer training, documentation development, cross-functional collaboration with sales, product, and customer success teams

Modern Development: TypeScript, Next.js, React, Node.js, full-stack web development

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

DEVOPS ENGINEER   Jan 2025 - Sept 2025
Prove AI   *Remote*

Note: Contract role undertaken to deepen technical expertise in production environments before returning to customer-facing Solutions Engineering.

- **Production Platform Operations:** Built comprehensive GitHub Actions workflows for multi-cluster Kubernetes deployments, reducing deployment time by 80% across 4 production environments while achieving 99.9% uptime with zero security incidents
- **Security & Compliance Leadership:** Led SOC 2 Type II readiness initiative from 34% to 100% compliance, establishing control frameworks and comprehensive documentation that enabled successful audit completion, directly applicable to enterprise customer security requirements
- **Observability & Performance:** Redesigned logging pipeline using Vector and OpenSearch, reducing mean time to detection for production issues by 60%, strengthening ability to demonstrate operational excellence in customer engagements
- **Technical Enablement:** Created automation tooling and comprehensive runbooks that reduced new developer onboarding time by 50%, demonstrating documentation and knowledge transfer skills critical for customer success

FOUNDER & CEO   Nov 2024 - Present
Sproutflow Studio (Side Business)   *New Orleans, LA*

Note: Founded during career transition, paused during Jan-Sep 2025 contract, relaunched Sept 2025.

- **Customer Solutions & Delivery**: Manage full customer lifecycle from discovery and requirements gathering through design, development, and launch using TypeScript, Next.js, and modern frameworks
- **Entrepreneurial & Customer-Facing Skills:** Demonstrates consultative discovery, technical scoping, project management, and stakeholder communication—directly applicable skills for enterprise Solutions Engineering roles

CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE ENGINEER   March 2022 - Aug 2024
IBM   *Remote*

- **Enterprise Customer Solutions & Technical Advisory:** Served as technical advisor for 12 enterprise clients across energy, financial services, and healthcare sectors. Architected multi-cluster Kubernetes solutions tailored to specific business requirements, managing full customer lifecycle from technical discovery through production deployment and ongoing optimization

- **Revenue-Generating Solution Delivery:** Served as technical lead for 11-month CenterPoint Energy engagement that directly enabled $10.1M SAP RISE contract closure. Led daily client calls and technical workshops, designed repeatable Terraform automation that reduced environment deployment time by 85%, creating competitive differentiation during sales cycle
- **Multi-Cloud Architecture & Implementation:** Designed and deployed scalable infrastructure solutions across 20+ enterprise environments. Implemented advanced networking with Istio service mesh, custom resource definitions, and network policies. Translated complex business requirements into technical implementations through consultative engagement with client stakeholders
- **Customer-Facing Technical Delivery:** Partnered with Solutions Engineers and client success teams throughout sales cycles and post-deployment phases. Led technical discussions with C-level stakeholders, delivered architecture workshops, and provided ongoing technical guidance that ensured customer success and expansion opportunities

SENIOR SOLUTIONS ENGINEER (PROMOTED FEBRUARY 2021)   Feb 2021 - Feb 2022
IBM   *Austin, TX*

- **Technical Pre-Sales & Customer Success Leadership:** Promoted to senior role after 14 months. Led enterprise customer engagements throughout full sales cycle and implementation lifecycle. Delivered 15+ technical presentations and product demonstrations to C-level executives and technical teams, driving purchasing decisions and accelerating customer adoption across manufacturing, telecom, and energy sectors
- **Team Leadership & Mentorship:** Led two cohorts of 4 junior Solutions Engineers each (Spring and Fall 2021). Conducted weekly stand-ups, provided technical guidance on customer engagements, facilitated knowledge-sharing sessions, and supported career development. Received excellent feedback from management on team outcomes and individual development
- **Enterprise Container Platform Solutions:** Architected and deployed Kubernetes/OpenShift environments with integrated microservices and GitOps workflows using Argo CD and Tekton. Reduced client proof-of-concept build times by 40% through standardized deployment patterns and reusable automation, accelerating sales cycles
- **Integrated Platform Engineering:** Designed and deployed comprehensive solutions including Cloud Pak for Applications, Data, and Security across multiple client environments. Conducted discovery calls and objection handling to understand business challenges, then architected hybrid cloud solutions integrating compute, storage, networking, and security services
- **Technical Consultation & Stakeholder Engagement:** Acted as trusted technical advisor to client IT teams and business stakeholders. Translated complex business requirements into scalable technical solutions, provided architecture guidance, and ensured successful customer outcomes through consultative engagement approach

SOLUTIONS ENGINEER   Dec 2019 - Jan 2021
IBM   *Austin, TX*

- **Technical Pre-Sales Engineering:** Served as primary technical resource for enterprise prospects throughout sales process. Delivered technical presentations, product demonstrations, and hands-on proof-of-concept environments that drove purchasing decisions. Supported customers from initial discovery through production implementation
- **Container Platform Demonstrations:** Built and deployed OpenShift clusters with integrated microservices for customer demonstrations and POCs. Implemented GitOps workflows and automated deployment pipelines that showcased platform capabilities and addressed specific customer use cases
- **Customer Success & Onboarding:** Provided post-sales technical support and customer enablement. Conducted training sessions and workshops to ensure successful platform adoption. Worked cross-functionally with sales, product, and customer success teams to ensure seamless customer experience
- **Rapid Career Growth:** Promoted to Senior Solutions Engineer after 14 months based on exceptional customer feedback, technical expertise, and contribution to team success

EDUCATION

B.A., COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES   2014 - 2017
Mississippi State University

SOFTWARE ENGINEERING BOOTCAMP   2018
General Assembly

CERTIFICATIONS

NETWORK+
CompTIA - 2021

CLOUD PAK FOR APPLICATIONS V4.1
IBM - 2021

RED HAT CERTIFIED
Red Hat - 2022