Adam Stankiewicz | Principal Software Engineer

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SUMMARY

Principal Software Engineer with 8+ years of experience in full-stack product development with a focus on frontend architecture, design systems, and user experience. Led Paragon, an open-source design system and React component library for Open edX, serving 50M+ learners. Proven expertise in building scalable, accessible UI components and aligning technical strategy with business goals to deliver high-impact, user-focused solutions. Published author and former HCI researcher, contributing to peer-reviewed work on a collaborative video-based learning platform.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2U / EDX	**Cambridge, MA / Remote, NH**
Principal Software Engineer	**Apr 2023 - Present**
Senior Software Engineer II	**Jan 2022 - Apr 2023**
Senior Software Engineer I	**Aug 2020 - Jan 2022**
Software Engineer II	**Jan 2018 - Aug 2020**

- Spearheaded development of Paragon, an open-source design system and React UI component library adopted across 40+ projects across Open edX, serving 50M+ learners worldwide. Partnered with designers to deliver accessible, cohesive, and extensible UI components, balancing design intent with technical flexibility across diverse product and user needs.
- Directed a contractor team to extend and modernize Paragon, delivering a new theming system (CSS variables transformed from design tokens via Style Dictionary), internal tooling (CLI, playgrounds, usage insights), and a redesigned documentation platform (500+ MAUs), improving scalability, usability, and developer experience across the Open edX ecosystem.
- Shaped frontend and design system strategy as a leader in the Open edX Frontend Working Group, championing architecture improvements, accessibility standards, and scalable design best practices.
- Maintained and evolved core JavaScript libraries underpinning 30+ micro-frontends, driving improvements to modularity, shared authentication, and platform-wide extensibility.
- Early engineer with edX for Business, building a 0-to-1 enterprise learning platform for onboarding, course enrollment, and subsidy management, supporting 1.2M+ enterprise learners and admins (50k+ MAUs).
- Architected and implemented React SPAs and Django REST APIs, delivering key enterprise features, supporting strategic partnerships that generated ~$15M in additional revenue.
- Collaborated with cross-functional teams to rapidly prototype, iterate, and deliver high-quality, user-centered solutions informed by data and user feedback.
- Led architectural migrations and UX optimizations, reducing page load times by 70% and improving client-side caching with React Query and route loaders to support a seamless, performant user experience.
- Mentored engineers, fostering a collaborative culture through code reviews, pair programming, and knowledge sharing across the engineering organization and the broader Open edX community.

GROUND SIGNAL	**Boston, MA**
Software Engineer	**Jul 2017 - Jan 2018**

- Crafted reusable Ractive.js components for a B2B web application, collaborating with a UX designer and product manager to revamp the dashboard with fuzzy search, venue filtering, and CSV export functionality.
- Implemented scripts for real-time social media data ingestion, enhancing the product's analytics capabilities and delivering more timely insights.

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY	**Pittsburgh, PA**
Graduate Research Assistant / Ph.D. Student	**Aug 2015 - Jul 2017**

- Developed a model for browser-based conversational turn detection in video communication (e.g., Google Hangouts) using Python and JavaScript, analyzing 392 Coursera discussion groups (1,027 users, 800K+ conversational turns) to assess dominant behavior in multi-party video conversations.

- Designed and prototyped an embeddable JavaScript library for peer-to-peer advice exchange, leveraging insights from Amazon Mechanical Turk experiments to understand user behavior and preferences related to advice-giving and mentorship.
- Transitioned voluntarily from the Ph.D. program to pursue a career in software engineering in industry.

UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD   **West Hartford, CT**
Undergraduate Research Assistant   **Sep 2012 - May 2015**
- Spearheaded the design and development of a collaborative video-based learning platform from concept, facilitating threaded discussions integrated within video lectures, used by ~5,000 learners across three universities.
- Conducted user interviews, mixed-methods evaluations, and analytics instrumentation to inform iterative product development and feature prioritization.
- Co-authored peer-reviewed publications and contributed to securing a $448k National Science Foundation grant (IIS-1318345).

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD   **West Hartford, CT**
B.A., Web Design & Development   **2011-2015**
- Minors: Computer Science, Psychology
- University Honors (research thesis)

HONORS & AWARDS

- **Strive for Excellence (Honorable Mention)**, "No Back Row" awards at 2U   **2023**
- **Honorable Mention**, National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship   **2016**
- **Junior/Senior Regents Honor Award**, University of Hartford   **2014-2015**
- **First Place Team**, Hartford Startup Weekend - Education   **2014**
  - Led the full product development lifecycle to validate and build a prototype application.

SKILLS

- **Frontend Development:** JavaScript, TypeScript, React, State Management, CSS, Sass, HTML5, Webpack
- **Design Systems & UX:** Component Libraries, Accessibility (a11y), Figma, UX Design, User Research
- **Backend & Infrastructure:** Node.js, Python, Django, MySQL
- **DevOps & Tooling:** Git, Docker, GitHub Actions, Jenkins
- **Methodologies:** Open Source, Agile Development, Engineering Leadership
- **Miscellaneous:** Private Pilot & Aircraft Owner (Cessna 172K), Former Member of the U.S. Boomerang Team

PUBLICATIONS

- **Stankiewicz, Adam** (2016b). Supporting Learners with Distributed Mentorship Teams in Massive Online Classes. In CSCW and the "Sharing Economy": The Future of Platforms as Sites of Work, Collaboration, and Trust (CSCW '16 workshop).
- **Stankiewicz, Adam** and Kulkarni, Chinmay (2016). $1 Conversational Turn Detector: Measuring How Video Conversations Affect Student Learning in Online Classes. In Proceedings of the Third ACM Conference on Learning @ Scale, pp. 81–88.
- Dazo, Suzanne L., **Stankiewicz, Adam**, Gibbs, Robert M., and Dorn, Brian (2015). The Evolution of TrACE: Integration of a Collaborative Learning Platform in Flipped Classrooms. In Proceedings of the 11th International Conference on Computer Supported Collaborative Learning.
- Dorn, Brian, Schroeder, Larissa B., and **Stankiewicz, Adam** (2015). Piloting TrACE: Exploring Spatiotemporal Anchored Collaboration in Asynchronous Learning. In Proceedings of the 18th ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing, pp. 393–403.
- Dorn, Brian, **Stankiewicz, Adam**, and Roggi, Chris (2013). Lost While Searching: Difficulties in Information Seeking Among End-user Programmers. In Proceedings of the 76th ASIS&T Annual Meeting.