Akash Sarayanan

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WORK EXPERIENCE

Applied Research Scientist

Jan 2023 - Present Toronto, Canada

Georgian Partners

- Utilized graph-based machine learning techniques for applied research projects.
- Upgraded a two year old multimodal machine learning toolkit to support latest libraries.
- Developed a framework to preprocess & combine different text-to-speech (TTS) datasets.
- o Tech Stack: Python, PyTorch, Pytorch Geometric, Tranformers, GCP, Git

Graduate Research Fellow

May 2021 - Dec 2022

Edmonton, Canada

University of Alberta

- o Meta Discovery for Game Balance: Designed a reinforcement learning system to evaluate game balance.
- **Debiasing Language Models:** Developed a framework, as a team of 3, to debias transformer models (BERT).
- Pixel VQ-VAE: Introduced a novel model to learn pixel art embeddings for image generation & transformation.
- o Tech Stack: Python, PyTorch, Tensorflow, Transformers, Git

Machine Learning Engineer

Aug 2019 - Nov 2020

Chennai, India

Mad Street Den (Vue.ai)

- Trained Transformer models (BERT, XLNet) for classification, entity extraction and language modeling problems.
- o Created an end-to-end config-driven framework for rapid prototyping of production-ready NLP models.
- Upgraded existing systems using ML to boost precision by 15% & optimized the codebase to reduce latency by 40%.
- \circ Developed an experimental Sequence-to-Sequence model to generate retail product descriptions.
- o Tech Stack: Python, PyTorch, Tensorflow, Keras, Transformers, Django, Javascript, AWS, GCP, Git

Engineering Intern

May 2019 - Aug 2019

Mad Street Den (Vue.ai)

Chennai, India

- \circ Extracted keywords from 37 million retail products using a custom algorithm that combined NPMI and TF-IDF.
- Implemented Word2Vec over 2 million retail product descriptions.
- o Tech Stack: Python, PyTorch, scikit-learn, AWS

EDUCATION

University of Alberta

Jan. 2021 – Dec. 2022

Master of Science (Thesis) in Computing Science; CGPA: 3.75/4.0

Edmonton, Canada

• Thesis: Visualizing Characters and Evaluating their Balance in Competitive Video Games.

Anna University (Sri Venkateswara College of Engineering)

Jun. 2015 – Apr. 2019

Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Science and Engineering; First Class.

Chennai, India

• Thesis: Natural Language Generation using Generative Adversarial Networks (Awarded grant of INR 10,000)

PROGRAMMING SKILLS

- Languages & Databases: Python, MySQL, SQLite, MongoDB, HTML, CSS, Javascript, Markdown, C, C++.
- Frameworks & Libraries: PyTorch, Tensorflow, Keras, Transformers (HuggingFace), NumPy, Pandas, scikit-learn.
- Tools & Technologies: Git, LaTeX, Amazon Web Services (AWS), Google Cloud Platform (GCP)

Publications

- FineDeb: A Debiasing Framework for Language Models: Co-first author. AI4SG Workshop, AAAI 2023.
- Pixel VQ-VAEs for Improved Pixel Art Representation: First author. EXAG Workshop, AIIDE 2022.
- Facial Emotion Recognition using Convolutional Neural Networks: First author. AICV 2018.

SELECTED PROJECTS

- Homebrew Helper: Developed & deployed a Discord bot for online role-playing games with database connectivity.
- [Open Source] Multimodal Toolkit: Updated 2-year old codebase, added tests, resolved bugs & 10+ issues.
- [Open Source] poke-env: Identified & fixed several bugs, added example code.