

# Anna Shipman

## Focused, strategic and highly skilled technology leader.

Proven track record of **creating and driving technical strategy, continuous improvement, and building and leading large, diverse teams** that deliver strategic business goals. **Excellent communicator**, able to distill complex issues into clear objectives and explain technical issues to non-technical audiences. **Deep technology expertise**, with experience across the full stack: frontend, backend, mobile, platforms, infrastructure, operations and architecture. Internationally respected **speaker and writer**. Always growing, sharing what I learn, and **making things better**. I get things done.

## Current employment

### Technical Director for Customer Products *Financial Times (April 2018 – date)*

Technical director of the award-winning FT.com website and the FT iPhone and Android apps.

I work closely with the Product Director and Delivery Director to lead a team of ~110 people. My main achievements have been:

- I identified the need to create a tech strategy that changes the FT's entire technology organisation, architecture and process in order to enable our business goals, and am currently working on this: setting and implementing the strategy for how we evolve from a single to a multi-product organisation, influencing the work of 250 engineers across London, Sofia and Manila
- I created a compelling tech vision for FT.com and the apps, built the strategy to reach that vision and achieved alignment such that we brought the tech estate back on track, with a renewed focus on sustainable growth, operational reliability and performance
- Mentoring and supporting my peers in the Technical Leadership Group; particular recent focus on building a unified tech strategy; and creating the conditions to ensure platforms, enabling groups and product-aligned groups work more effectively towards shared success
- Attracting, retaining and developing a diverse, high-performing, motivated team of 80+ engineers, with an inclusive culture, and a focus on learning and continuous improvement; turning the team around from one that people were leaving when I joined, to one that is now oversubscribed within the business
- I have built a team of empowered, autonomous direct reports who are able to deputise
- Coaching and leading principal and senior engineers in the design and evolution of a distributed microservice-based system comprising around 200 microservices, and maintaining the wider ecosystem of a cloud-native, devops environment
- Building strong relationships across the FT, particularly in commercial and editorial, to ensure my technology aims remain focused on the business goals and bigger picture
- Restructuring Customer Products from initiative-based teams to stable, long-lived product teams, unlocking more strategic product development and bolder experimentation
- I have used my wide network of senior technical leaders across the industry to keep up to date with trends and best practice and ensure continuous improvement at the FT
- I am an exceptional communicator and have delivered multiple talks at high profile industry conferences about the FT and written a number of posts on our blog, and encouraged and supported colleagues to do the same. I am recognised as an industry expert.

## Recent speaking engagements

- **The difficult teenage years: setting your tech strategy after the launch** *LeadingEng London, June 2022*
- **No Next Next: Fighting Entropy in Your Microservices Architecture** *QCon London, April 2022, and QConPlus (online), May 2022*
- **The good, the bad and the tech strategy** *LeadDev Together, 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022*

## Writing & technical reviewing

I wrote a chapter about DevOps for the book *Build Quality In*. I write about tech, leadership, and technical leadership on my widely read blog <https://www.annashipman.co.uk/jfdi.html>

Technical reviewer for the O'Reilly book *Software Architecture Metrics* and the forthcoming *Enabling Microservice Success*.

## Professional training

I have successfully completed the training and exams for both Finance for non-Finance Directors and Strategy for Directors; two parts of the IoD Certificate in Company Direction, Level 9 (SCQF).

## Previous employment

### Open Source Lead *Government Digital Service (October 2016 – March 2018)*

Setting and delivering strategy on open source for the whole of the UK government.

**Identifying highest impact work** across government to make the UK a world leader in open source. **Influencing senior leaders** in GDS and across government to support delivery of strategy through **persuasion, peer support and sharing vision**. Driving opening of government code using a range of techniques; successes include high profile government services such as GOV.UK Verify, GOV.UK Pay and Register to Vote, **serving a total of 30 million users**

### Technical architect *Government Digital Service (September 2014 – October 2016)*

Led delivery to launch of a PaaS for Government, an infrastructure platform to host digital services across the UK government, including **identifying strategic criteria** for the solution and leading the **technical evaluation** of capabilities of various PaaS solutions. I was also a **senior technical line manager**, reporting to the CTO, **leading on developer culture, career paths and recruitment**.

### Senior developer *Government Digital Service (April 2012 – September 2014)*

Led development of GDS's first Open Source project, worked as web operations engineer supporting GOV.UK, worked on the GOV.UK website.

### Previous roles as a Java developer in multiple companies, since 2005.

**Previous career** Prior to starting my career technology nearly two decades ago, I had a career in publishing. This prior experience allows me to better understand the needs and perspectives of those less familiar with computers.

## Education

MSc IT (Software Systems): Distinction: Heriot-Watt University

MA honours degree Mental Philosophy. Class: 2.1: University of Edinburgh

## Other interests

I have participated in three /dev/forts, week-long development working holidays. I have volunteered for IT Can Help, a charity offering free computer support to disabled people.