

Steve Sparks

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“Steve is the guy you hire to lead a team that’s going to build something cool.” — Jon Lohr

SUMMARY

Seasoned software architect and engineering leader with two decades of experience building systems that scale — from early-stage startups to enterprise platforms serving millions. Known for transforming vague ideas into shipped products, fostering strong engineering culture, and mentoring teams through ambiguity. Hands-on across cloud, mobile, and distributed systems. Passionate about small, focused teams where creativity and craftsmanship drive results.

CORE STRENGTHS

Architecture & System Design • Full-Stack Development • Backend / Mobile / APIs • Cloud (AWS) • Leadership & Mentorship • Technical Vision • Rapid Prototyping • User-Centered Design • Team Building

EXPERIENCE

Capital One — *Technical Lead • Nov 2024 – Oct 2025* - Responsible for the **Loyalty Points Platform**, a large-scale distributed data system underpinning Capital One’s customer rewards program.

- Responsible for a **25TB database** sustaining **tens of millions of writes per hour**.
- Maintained services written in Java (Spring Boot), Node.js, and Python.
- Navigated and utilized Capital One’s internal CI/CD and deployment systems within a tightly controlled cloud environment.
- Conducted comprehensive audits of database usage to identify and reduce cloud costs.
- C1’s complex architecture offered great opportunities to showcase my diagramming skills.

Stellar Elements (an Amdocs Company, formerly Big Nerd Ranch) — *Senior Software Architect • 2011 – 2024*
Led architecture and delivery for client and internal products across mobile, desktop, and cloud.

- Guided 70 engineers across 15 projects through technical strategy, resource planning, and cultural alignment.
- Architected systems used by 100M+ users for clients including Apple, Peloton, and Honeywell.
- Turned struggling projects into wins by identifying root causes — process, skill, or expectation — and rebuilding trust between teams.
- Championed TDD, peer reviews, and collaborative delivery.
- Winner and multi-year finalist of *Clash of the Coders* 72-hour build competition.

Pivot Originals — *VP of Technology • 2020 – Present* - Joined award-winning director Bryan Barber to launch an urban-oriented OTT streaming network.

- Selected and deployed full platform stack; integrated CMS, billing, and streaming infrastructure.
- Led development of internal content-management tools and investor documentation.
- Oversaw IT and engineering operations for cloud video platform from concept to launch.

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Pannr, Inc. — *President & Inventor* • 2015 – Present

- Conceived and built iOS app that captures panoramic video via compass-based camera triggering.
- Awarded **U.S. Patent #9,979,885** for the technology (2018).

PGi / Accucast, Inc. — *Solutions Consultant, Staff Engineer* • 1998 – 2009 - Founding engineer at Accucast, building an enterprise email marketing platform from zero to acquisition.

- Led architecture, development, deployment, and support teams.
- Platform grew to 300 enterprise customers before acquisition by PGi (January 2006, \$15 MM).
- Provided sales-engineering and technical support for major clients.

Delta Air Lines — *Staff Engineer* • 1995 – 1998 Built and deployed the first dynamic applications on **delta.com**, driving \$4 MM/day in early online ticket sales.

- Created mainframe integration libraries still in use years later.
- Key developer of the SkyMiles rewards program apps.

United States Air Force Security Forces — *Security Specialist* • 1987 – 1991 Asset security, law enforcement, and operations support. Desert Storm veteran, Honorable discharge.

EDUCATION

Alfred University — B.A. Computer Science

Alfred State College — A.S. Electromechanical Engineering

Certifications: AWS Certified Solutions Architect (2024 – 2027), Capital One Certified Secure Software Engineer (2025)

SELECT PROJECTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Clash of the Coders Champion & Finalist (2012–2023):** 72-hour team hackathon producing production-quality apps and hardware integrations. Projects included a forest fire fighting app (2021), an in-app debugger for iPhones (2013), a cloud-based security system for our office (2016), and an Apple Watch-based mockup platform (like InVision but native, 2019.)
- **Patent #9,979,885:** Compass-triggered camera system for smooth panoramic video capture.
- **Delta.com Launch Team:** Built core libraries that processed \$20 B in ticket sales over their lifespan.

STYLE & APPROACH

Builder first, team player always. I thrive in small, high-trust teams where the distance between idea and execution is short, and where the code, product, and team are all improving continuously. I also cheerfully embrace drudge tasks because I believe one enjoys their success on the mountaintops, but they earned that success in the valleys.

TECHNOLOGIES

Environments: AWS lift-and-shift, AWS serverless, iOS/macOS/tvOS/watchOS, IoT (cellular, wifi, BTLE)

Tech Stacks: AWS CDK, Java, JavaScript, Swift, Objective-C, C, SQL, CQL

Tools: Git/Github, CI/CD, Shell scripting, video production