



Alex Merkher

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Chief Information Officer | Executive Vice President | Executive Director

SUMMARY

Strategic technology executive who drives technology solutions and policies to ensure increased competitiveness and profitability. Proven track record of getting the job done on time, on budget, and with exceptional quality. Strong technical leader with broad technical knowledge across a wide range of architectures, who is able to optimize business processes for cost and efficiency through automation and selection of the right tools: from rapid custom application development, to Software as a Service (SaaS) cloud and third-party solutions. Emphasis on building structured, high-performance technical cultures that promote best-in-class quality and productivity for complex IT designs.

SKILLS

Executive Leadership – CIO and CTO
Budgeting and Forecasting
Big Data Analytics
IT Project Management
Technology Change Management
Telecommunications
Financial Services and Banking
Business Intelligence

Enterprise IT Strategy
Cloud Architecture
IT Infrastructure
Information and Network Security
Business Process Improvement
Salesforce.com and SugarCRM
Google Cloud Platform (GCP)
Mentoring and Leadership

Software and Application Development
Collaboration and Consensus Building
Risk Management
Business Continuity and Risk Planning
Agile Methodologies
Technology Management
Microservices and Containerization
Amazon (AWS)

EXPERIENCE

EVP, Systems Development – Star2Star Communications, Sarasota, FL

2016 - Present

Recruited as an Executive Director for this leading channel-based Full Spectrum Communications provider with a YoY double-digit growth, to stabilize the Internal Systems Development. Promoted to EVP in 2018, after transforming the department into an enterprise-class, high performing organization with the responsibilities for Ordering, Provisioning, Accounting, Billing, CRM, IT, and QA systems.

- Standardized software development tools and processes across all teams: adopted cloud-based development tools (Jira and BitBucket) and migrated most of the development environments from a hosted data center into the Google Cloud Platform (GCP) with Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery capabilities.
- Implemented Agile methodology across all development projects resulting in greatly improved productivity.
- Helped define and implement company-wide online security and privacy policies to comply with HIPAA, GDPR, and CCPA
- Implemented Automated Testing on selected projects,
- Established cross-team design reviews to promote best practices and better communications through collaboration
- Led the design, development, and deployment of the new Ordering system that replaced a 3rd party CPQ (Configure, Price, Quote) tool and all other legacy ordering systems – oversaw the production roll-out with zero user issues and 90%

VP, Release Management – Merrill Lynch/Bank of America, Hopewell, NJ

2009 - 2016

BAC/ML Domestic Advisory has one of the largest and most advanced implementations of Salesforce.com's cloud-based CRM solutions for Financial Advisors.

- Developed, implemented, and managed the Release strategy, processes, tools, and methodologies for deployment of internally developed modifications for the Salesforce CRM system.
- Extended the planning horizon for the Release schedule from 4 months to a year.
- Improved the efficiency of the Release Management team by introducing weekly off-cycle releases, allowing CRMS to deliver a significantly larger number of products to business.
- Helped on-board a new QA testing team and trained them in CRMS functionality, environments and tools.
- Championed and piloted Agile development methodology, greatly improving development velocity and team productivity.
- Managed the development of the Data Warehouse of key compliance data.

Received numerous awards and commendations, among them a BAC Global Recognition Platinum Award, and a personal recognition from CIO of Technology and Operations.

EXPERIENCE

Director of Web Operations – Achieve 3000, Lakewood, NJ 2007 - 2009

Achieve3000 is a leader in web-based differentiated learning, serving K-12 Schools in over 30 states. While at Achieve 3000, I oversaw the Web Delivery and Hosting operations of its SaaS learning platform.

- Oversaw the selection of a new hosting provider for our infrastructure, and managed the transition of the environment.
- Designed and implemented infrastructure enhancements for scalability and redundancy requirements.
- Selected and deployed Akamai CDN solution for Web performance enhancement – Improved end-user performance by 30% and reduced hosting bandwidth requirements and number of servers by 40%.
- Implemented a Release planning and deployment processes: Implemented Version Control tools and provided training to development team.
- Managed the day-to-day operations of our hosted data centers to ensure 100% availability during business hours.
- Hired QA Lead and implemented a QA process.
- Led the implementation of NetSuite CRM into the organizations. Assisted with designing NetSuite-based operational processes for all areas of the business – Sales, Implementation, Accounting, etc.

Engineering Manager/VP – M5 Networks, Inc., New York, NY 2006 - 2007

M5 Networks Inc. was a leading NYC Hosted VoIP company and a provider of “Voice as a Service” solutions (currently Mitel). While reporting to CTO, managed the Engineering department, including operations, service delivery, network and systems infrastructure, monitoring and alarming, applications development, and support.

- Managed the day-to-day operations of two Data Centers: improved monitoring capabilities, power footprint, failover capabilities, and bandwidth utilization. Accountable for maintaining 99.999% systems uptime.
- Responsible for establishing strategic direction, prioritizing and delivering solutions for all support systems (sales, provisioning, technical support, billing and reporting), customer facing applications, and advanced solutions.
- Implemented a series of development lifecycle and release management process improvements: through establishing regular development schedule and introducing integration testing and QA procedures, significantly reduced downtime of support systems and improved the quality of delivered applications.

Director of Development/Director of Operations – XpertUniverse Inc., New York, NY 2001 - 2006

XpertUniverse Inc. was an Application Service Provider Start-Up that offered Internet-based, real-time expert location, collaboration and business intelligence solutions. As a member of the executive team of XpertUniverse:

- Participated in the initial planning stages of the business inception: product definition, marketing strategy, operational infrastructure, scalability plans, competitive analysis, etc.
- Conceived, designed and implemented the technical and operational infrastructure of the organization to support the Application Service Provider (ASP) model, consisting of multi-vendor hosting (two outsourced and one in-house data centers), blended in-house and outsourced (offshore) development, and two contact centers.
- Developed and deployed: staffing plan, business requirements, development needs statement, Technical and Customer Support functions, Release Deployment processes, and vendor relationship procedures. Established the operational processes for all business Operations functions: customer support, production support, provisioning and configuration, systems monitoring and alarming, etc.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

- Manager of Software Development – Systems/Link, Cranbury, NJ (currently FICO)
- Product Manager, Project Manager, Systems Engineer – AT&T, Bridgewater, NJ
- S/W Dev. Manager/Senior Systems Analyst – Federal Reserve Bank, New York, NY
- Software Engineer/Electrical Engineer – Grumman Aerospace Corporation, Bethpage, NY

EDUCATION

Stevens Institute of Technology	Hoboken, NJ	MS – Technology Management
Polytechnic Institute of Technology (NYU)	Brooklyn, NY	BS – Computer Engineering