Personal Profile

1. My core values are honesty, hard work and lifelong learning. I trust people easy and like helping people, especially in sharing knowledge or helping in any technical aspect where I can.
2. Energetic, people-person, friendly, not the best public speaker, positive, optimist, likeable once you know me (might seem a little unapproachable when you don’t know me), extremely competitive. I am a calm and very patient person, and very dedicated at what I do. Once I start something, I will not easily quit.
3. I love to be physically active. I do CrossFit as a sport, have competed at several international competitions. Beyond that, have tried almost all other sport types available. I am currently into running and training a lot to run marathons. I also love classical music, have played classical piano throughout my entire school career. I like playing board games of any type, and have a chess rating of around 1300. I like designing as I started my professional career as an architect, and spend my free time building timber decorations/planning interiors for my own house, which I like to do. Like spending quality time with my wife Sanri (born 1994) and my golden retriever Travis.
4. When facing stress or challenging situations, I am good at keeping my cool, however if some situations get the better of me, I usually blow off steam by training. I always come back with a clear mind, and I know that when I’m stuck in something, I will look at it with a fresh outlook after some physical exercise.
5. Playing piano from a young age has taught me to not give-up easy, and stick something through that you start. This mentality has helped me a lot through life, and helped me to complete things even if it got tough. I have also studied to a full masters degree in architecture which has given me a passion for design, but has made me realize that I have a great interest in logical and strategic thinking as well, after which I went on to study Computer Science. I got married to Sanri van Renssen on 19 March 2022, my wife that is my best friend and strongest supporter of everything I do.
6. Strengths: Logical and critical thinking. Thinking outside the box to find solutions. Ability to perform under pressure. Very fast learner. Completing what I started. Multitasking  
   Areas to improve: Public speaking, General admin, cleaning

Professional Aspirations & Experience

1. I worked for a few years in the architecture industry, and became a bit bored with just designing and drawing. I love designing, but I like being involved in technicalities and a bit more logical work. I started my XR experience by taking an architectural project, teaching myself how to code through a bunch of Udemy courses, and converting the architectural project into a mobile VR application where the client could walk through the building in VR and pick finishes on walls, floors etc. I kept on teaching myself more and more code, and soon founded XRai with a partner – a AR and VR startup that branched out into more than just architectural projects focusing on providing custom solutions to various clientele. After quitting Architecture in 2021, I was focusing full-time on the business. I also then decided to get a formal education in programming, and enrolled at the University of Essex Online for my Post Graduate Certificate in computer science. After this I just kept learning, and started a full-time job as a mid-level developer at dotxml in 2022 alongside my XRai business, where I’m currently a team lead and lead developer of an insurance online platform project.
2. I tried several architectural side-projects, especially in the AR and VR space as there is a great overlap of 3D modelling and AR/VR. Architects in general in South Africa did not have much interest, as it is an industry that is already oversaturated and architects/developers did not want to pay for these type of ‘nice-to-have’ software. The adaption rate in South Africa in general is quite low when it comes to new technology, that’s why I decided to look a bit further than just AR and VR when in comes to programming. I have also written some plugins for architectural software programs as well as parametrical design tools and macros.
3. One of my most interesting projects (besides this chatbot) was a proof-of-concept project for Laing O’Rourke, a big construction company in the UK, that wanted to build prefabricated modular houses. I built an application that runs in Microsoft Hololens 2, that projects the 3D model of a prefabricated panel (these houses were built up of panels) on the assembly line so the user knows exactly what to place where, by overlaying the real 3D object on top of the digital twin’s hologram. It connected to a real-time database that gave the user wearing the headset all the plans, materials, tools and steps required to assemble the panel in the correct order, and he/she could navigate the steps by using gesture or voice commands.
4. Being an architect in South Africa was challenging, especially with our economy before and during the COVID pandemic. Even though I had a masters degree, jobs were not easy to come by, and I sometimes went through consecutive months of working and not getting any salary as the clients did not pay. I overcame this by ensuring that I do not keep all my eggs in one basket, and thus started the AR/VR firm that generated an additional income at that time to keep me afloat.
5. In the next 5 years, I want to be in a higher management position at a software firm in the Netherlands. I still have a lot to learn in the software industry and feel that I am capable of being a good manager with the team lead position that I currently have. I want to be working at a company that does some interesting software applications, but more importantly, where I can grow as a software developer and keep adding to my software toolbox.
6. I see myself as a visionary in my leadership style. I’m good at seeing the bigger picture, and not always the best in getting stuck into the smaller nitty-gritty details.
7. The most significant technological advancement in my field would have to be the current upward trend of AI (stable diffusion, GPT models etc.). I think the recent breakthrough in public adoption of this has gained massive traction, and even though it poses great dangers, there are an unbelievable number of use-cases to be discovered with this technology. Combining this with digital twins or IoT can also create disruptions in the industry.

Skills & Achievements

1. Python – it is a very logical and high-level programming language that is easy to read and easier to code. It is also universally available and supported, and has a very large base of libraries to use for any problem imaginable. Converting pseudo code into python is extremely straight-forward, and the speed of which I can iterate ideas in python from scratch is amazing.
2. I’m planning on sometime in the near future extending my Post Graduate Certificate in Computer Science to a full Masters degree – and planning on doing this part-time through the university of Essex online. There are various tracks and modules that are quite interesting and up-to-date with the latest advancements in the software industry.
3. No awards or recognitions in my software career…. Yet…
4. I read a lot, and am in constant conversations with peer developers that keep me up-to-date on advancements in the industry. Also am subscribed to quite a few newsletters that I get via email, and follow various software pages on social medias like reddit.

Work Culture & Environment

1. I thrive in a busy environment, but my recent job is fully remote – which I also learned to like. I am constantly in touch with my co-workers and team members via slack and discord, so it never feels like I am alone even when working from home.
2. I tend to keep quiet at first in conflicts and am generally a very patient person. I seldomly get worked-up, and always try to see things from another person’s perspective/opinion. That being said, I do have strong opinions on certain matters, and can stand my ground if required. When team members in my team have disagreements, I have learned that being honest and open no matter how difficult it might get sometimes, works quite well in the long run
3. Adhering to deadlines, and delivering on promises. Beyond that, I value team communication a lot, and always make sure that communication happens smoothly in my team. If someone is not going to make a deadline for example, it helps a lot if this is communicated in advance, so that I as team lead can help out or shift around resources to ensure that the deadline is met to the best of the team’s ability.
4. I got promoted to team lead on the project that I am currently working on in dotXML. I have successfully delivered a large stage of our insurance project, and am still technical lead of that project, even though I have less coding experience than most of the people in the company.

Vision & Outlook

1. I have co-founded an AR/VR business, XRai, where I am still involved and gives me the opportunity to play with technology (new headsets for AR and VR, as well as implementing and staying on top of the latest software trends in this field)