

Sam Havens

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Senior Machine Learning Engineer

Technical professional using machine learning and automation to solve real-world problems.

Creative strategist and innovative thinker offering 10+ years of experience in both hands-on and technical leadership roles. Analytical by nature with a knack for design and development of applications. Trigger new insights by building predictive and statistical models. A self-starter and valuable team member; communicating cross-functionally to achieve goals on time with no compromise on quality. Inspiring team leader with experience hiring, training, and motivating staff to tackle challenges and exceed expectations. Fluent in English, conversational in Spanish, with knowledge of Japanese and French.

Core Competencies:

- Natural Language Processing Techniques
- Statistical Analysis/ Mathematical Modeling
- Machine Learning
- DevOps/Site Reliability Engineering
- Prototyping/Production
- Application Development
- Team Leadership, Training, Collaboration

Professional Experience

Qordoba — Remote

Director of Data Science, 2/2019 - Present

NLP is at the core of what Qordoba does, and this role is responsible for that functionality and team. Lead the team writing Python-based NLP microservices in a Kubernetes/PubSub architecture. Also responsible for service deployment and maintenance, as well as growing and leading the NLP team. Work closely with marketing and product to align the NLP roadmap with customer expectations.

Key Achievements:

- Reduced mean service latency from >1.5s to <200ms.
- Grew team from 2 to 6, while improving onboarding effectiveness (time to first commit: from weeks to < 1 day)
- Responsible for the core functionality behind all new products/features, including a state of the art Grammar Error Correction model and models to measure and correct: gender bias, (in)formality, and Plain Language using PyTorch, SpaCy, scikit-learn, Numpy, Tensorflow, gensim, flair, and other cutting edge ML and NLP tools, as well as ops tools like PubSub, Kubernetes, nvidia-docker, and Jenkins.

CarLabs — Calabasas, CA

Chief Technology Officer (CTO), 4/2016 - 1/2019

Ensure seamless technical operations and direct a team of 15 engineers, offering guidance and mentorship toward common goals. Write code and assist with technical sales initiatives while applying machine learning tools including FastText, scikit-learn, and Tensorflow. Develop front ends with React and Redux and create back ends with Node.js, Elixir or Python. Perform automation with Jenkins, ElasticBeanstalk, Docker, and others. Cultivate positive and collaborative workforce dedicated to continuous improvement.

Key Achievements:

- Promoted to CTO after building prototype that became focus of the company; steered strategic direction and teams while performing hands-on technical tasks.
- Triggered team expansion and growth by recruiting, hiring, and mentoring sixteen new staff members, taking team from two to eighteen individuals.
- Improved knowledge sharing and expedited issue resolution by implementing technical "lunch and learns" focused on sharing knowledge within the team.

Continued...

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- Generated 25% of projected 2019 revenue by performing statistical analysis of conversation logs and identifying new product.
- Established NLP team from current software engineers and led them to increase accuracy of business-critical classification model by 3% within two sprints.

Full Stack Developer, 9/2015 - 4/2016

Improved user experience by creating UIs and APIs for car comparison shopping. Developed web application using React, ES6, Webpack, and MaterialUI. Built conversational UI using ES6, Hapi, Docker, Python, NLTK, and machine-learning services. Applied HTML/CSS/JavaScript for chat window.

Key Achievements:

- Secured and won contract worth over \$1M in revenue by designing, building, and pitching product.
- Doubled ticket velocity by leading transition from PHPS to Node.js v4 with no disruption to operations.

RevMaker — Remote

Software Engineer, 4/2014 - 9/2015

Served as software engineer collaborating with team across stack and performing mathematical modeling to create high-impact software experiences for automotive research and comparison shopping. Used PHP and MySQL to build lead-scrubbing tool used to evaluate likelihood of legitimate contact information.

Key Achievements:

- Created web application using Yii, MySQL, jQuery, and d3.js, enabling users to express preferences and see real-time updates to recommendations.
- Expedited lead scrubbing by 1000 times through automating process via implementing probabilistic model.
- Increased search rankings from second page of Google Brazil to top three by implementing SEO strategies and automatically generating sitemap for dynamic pages.

Technical Proficiencies

Machine Learning: Python, PyTorch, Jupyter, scikit-learn, fastai, TensorFlow, RStudio, Julia

Web Development: Node.js, Express, React, Hapi, Flask, Sanic, Unicorn, NGINX

SRE: GCP (GKE, ML Engine), AWS (Neptune, Lambda, RDS, Kinesis, EKS), Docker, Kubernetes, Jenkins, Bash

Programming Languages: Python, Javascript, Elixir, PHP, R, Julia, Ruby

Education and Credentials

Master of Science in Mathematics | CSUN

Honored with Bianchi Outstanding Graduate Student award for research related to inflationary cosmologies

Named IRIS Fellow in mathematics with Interdisciplinary Research Institute for the Sciences

Bachelor of Arts in Physics | University of California, Santa Barbara

LEAPS Fellow

Service Leadership

Topanga Mountain School -- Topanga, CA

Board Member, 1/2014 - Present

Generated two-fold decrease in attrition by planning and implementing staff benefits plan. Increased application leads by 15% by researching and launching first Facebook advertising campaign. Introduced new technology and led programming club.