

Thomas S. Counsell

CTO, Senior Python Developer, Full-Stack Web

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Summary

Slow to make promises, but relentless to deliver quality work that my team can be proud of. I favor projects that demonstrate an impact towards social good and I travel often to understand how technology is being used in the field.

For the last 4 years, I've worked in "lean startup" environments where my inspiring passion and business acumen has driven the organization's technological success. I believe in advocating first for the customer/user and maintaining that perspective in all aspects of business. This year, at Agoda, I've taken an intrapreneurial role, leading an Agile team to develop experimental products.

Methodology

- Challenge the status quo and initiate new experiments.
- Quietly lead by example.
- Promote an environment of openness and fun.
- Be first to admit being wrong or making a mistake.
- Never back down from a challenge.
- Take responsibility and make difficult decisions when others don't want to.
- Ask for help all the time.
- Give help to everyone who asks.
- Nothing is more valuable than my integrity.

Key Skills

Computer and Information Science, Full Stack Web, Application and Platform Architecture, Developer Leadership, Recruiting, AWS and cloud services, Data modeling, Database design and management, REST API design, SQL, Python, Django, Javascript, Redis, Neo4j, and release versioning.

Work History

Senior Engineer, Team Lead

Jan 2016 - current

Agoda.com

Agoda, a member of the Priceline Group, is Asia's leading and fastest growing online hotel reservation service serving over 30 million monthly active users, in 39 different languages.

At Agoda, I've taken leadership of a new team for designing and proposing system architecture changes to support the new business initiatives set by the CEO and product owners.

CTO (Chief Technology Officer)

Jun 2015 - Sep 2015

OpenEntry Inc.

Open Entry is an ecommerce platform that serves SMEs aiming to successfully transition from physical shops to online stores and marketplaces. We provide a mobile-friendly interface for posting new products, managing inventory, and fulfilling orders.

Activities and Accomplishments

- Supervised the development and management of Open Entry's entire technology stack.
- Supported legacy (custom JSP software) hosted on AWS and Google App Engine by employing a remote team in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Led the research and development effort to transition this dated infrastructure to modern technologies including a Python REST API and React JS web client.
- Recruited talented developers from the USA and Europe to relocate to our Chiang Mai office.

- Created a powerful and nimble team that could react quickly to changing requirements and work together to innovate.
- Set goals and milestones specific to each project that would both inspire the team and fit with overall business objectives.
- Used each team member's strengths to create an environment of enthusiastic collaboration.
- Flexibly aligned the IT budget to fit with the company's changing needs and priorities.
- Designed and built the Python API using Django REST Framework, PostgreSQL, Redis, and a host of 3rd party API integrations including Stormpath, Sendgrid, Stripe, Filepicker, etc.

Cofounder, Technical Director

Dec 2012 - Jul 2015

Anou

Tom led the research and software development in making commerce tools extremely easy to use and completely language free. Anou's ecommerce platform is built with Python/Django. It integrates with many other services and API's including AWS S3, Telerivet, Cloudinary, Sendgrid, Etsy, and Ebay.

Designing and building Anou's technology required living in Morocco's Sahara desert for 2 years and learning Arabic - an incredible test of perseverance and resourcefulness.

Activities and Accomplishments

- Designed and built the entire software stack using the technologies listed above.
- Used Agile Development methods and bootstrapped Anou as a Lean Startup.
- Performed human-computer interaction studies to iterate on the platform's language-free design.
- Initiated a culturally-responsive design strategy based on the cultural and environmental factors specific to rural Morocco.
- Learned Arabic in order to work alongside Moroccans across the country problem-solving systemic issues that hold them back from participating in the global free-trade marketplace.

Peace Corps Morocco Volunteer

Mar 2012 - May 2014

Figuig, Morocco

- Chosen to represent the United States of America and identify opportunities for the development of small business in Morocco, America's largest trade partner in North Africa.
- Influenced social changes through consulting and teaching in urban and rural locations.
- Built up the economic capacity of business in underprivileged and resource-poor areas.

Architect and Lead Developer

Oct 2011 - Mar 2012

Nectar, an online social job-board for Healthcare EMR IT

Activities and Accomplishments

- Directed the requirements gathering, design, and product development.
- Built the entire backend and front-end stack using ColdFusion, SQL, jQuery, CSS, and HTML.
- Collaborated with a designer to optimize the IU and UX.
- Designed an incredible matching and ranking algorithm using advanced mathematics to pair candidates with jobs. (<http://bit.ly/1vowwcc>)

Developer

Jan 2010 - Mar 2012

Bluefish Wireless

Activities and Accomplishments

- Developed web applications using Cold Fusion and Ruby on Rails.
- Led a cross-department think-tank for process improvement and future business development for the company.
- Redesigned the outgoing transactional email system for stability and scalability.
- Built tools to gather insights for data-driven improvements to marketing campaigns.
- Created a training program to empower sales staff to take more control of their account's data. The program created greater transparency between the sales and IT departments and eliminated 500 hours of busy work per year.

I've listed these accomplishments because they define the unique impact I made at Bluefish. Each of these projects were started from my own initiative to identify needs and invent solutions beyond what was assigned to me.

Education

Computer Information Science

2006 - 2009

Purdue University, Indiana, USA

Choice Focus in Human-Computer Interaction

Mathematics, Data Structures, Parallel Processing, Game Development, Machine Learning

Languages

English Language



Native speaker, American

Moroccan Arabic (Darija) Language



Limited working proficiency