Michael Kovacs

Founder at LendingKarma.com

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Summary

Technology strategist that is a practical, hands-on, hardworking team player. I enjoy finding solutions to problems that strike the correct balance of benefit for today vs. the future. My goal at this point is to continue to grow the business and marketing side of my skill set to compliment my technical skills. I'm a technical person that draws his energy from being around others so a role in product management, evangelism, or even sales engineer are interesting to me. A role as an engineer on a team, unless I'm leading the team, would have to be something really unique and special at this point for me to consider it as an option because it's not really likely to take me where I want to go long term.

Specialties

Ruby on rails, Product strategy/management, Team leading, Java, WebLogic Server and Workshop

Experience

CEO at LendingKarma.com
January 2009 - Present (7 months)

LendingKarma is an online service that helps people lend money to the people they already know by providing tools to document and track their loan. My role as the sole founder is simply put to do everything. I'm responsible for all aspects of the business including copywriting of content, google ads, managing adwords campaigns, creating marketing videos, UI design, development, deployment, customer service, business development, and operations.

CEO at Cable Car Software
July 2006 - Present (3 years 1 month)

My role at Cable Car has been mostly helping startups realize their vision and get their web based applications up and running. I am a generalist that can help with the creation and launch of a software product with the right features and with quality. All projects that I work on use agile techniques such as short iteration cycles and favor lightweight processes to enhance the development process. Previous projects include: Helping PitchWire (http://pitchwire.com) get up and running from concept to production. Working with eBay to launch MicroPlace (http://microplace.com), a micro lending site that was built using ruby on rails. Helped DogTime (http://dogtime.com) add features to their existing portal as well as the creation of a Facebook application. Helped New Relic (http://newrelic.com) with their initial product creation, launch, and post-launch activities. Created an opensocial application called Sociable Pet (http://sociablepet.com), (for Cable Car Software not a client) that was deployed on both MySpace and Hi5's application platform launch day. Recently helped Algentis (http://algentis.com/) with

technical strategy by acting as their CTO and helping decide how to improve their processes with development of custom software.

3 recommendations available upon request

Co-Founder, CEO at PitchWire

July 2006 - Present (3 years 1 month)

Co-founder of pitchwire.com. Responsible for all technology aspects of the site as well as UI usability, product strategy, and like most startups whatever needs doing (support, speaking, networking, promoting, blogging, etc)

Co-Founder, CTO at LoanBack Inc.

October 2005 - November 2006 (1 year 2 months)

Co-founded and was sole resource in charge of designing, developing, launching, and maintaining http://www.loanback.com. Work with my partner to determine what products to build, where to target marketing/PR, and overall company direction.

Product Manager at BEA Systems

May 2005 - July 2006 (1 year 3 months)

Responsible for determining product direction for WebLogic server. Evaluating open source strategies, possible acquisition strategies to enhance WLS (Was the driving force along with my boss, Steve Hess, behind the acquistion of Solarmetric), developer tooling, as well as providing the high level guidance for JEE specs.

1 recommendation available upon request

Senior Software Engineer at BEA Systems

January 2001 - April 2005 (4 years 4 months)

Engineer for WebLogic server and WebLogic Workshop. I joined BEA (for the 6.1 release) as part of the server tools team. On that team I worked on the web based admin console that was introduced in 6.0. For 7.0 I helped create a new deployment/descriptor editing tool for the server, WebLogic Builder. For 8.1 I was part of the WebLogic Workshop team where I helped create the EJB abilities of the IDE. For the 9.0 release I have continued with some of the EJB Workshop work and have moved on to working on the EJB team as well as working on EJBGen.

1 recommendation available upon request

Senior Software Engineer at Carstation.com

May 2000 - January 2001 (9 months)

At Carstation my responsibilities were to facilitate the transfer of a software product that was designed and implemented by a contractor to our inhouse staff. The transfer included my coming up to speed on the software and mentoring a team of 2 engineers to offload alot of the work that needed to be done. At the end of the day it was my responsibility to ensure that the product deployment cycles were successful so I would take on many of the harder tasks. It was also my job to work as part of the team that was to create the next generation of the company's product suite. From this design work came an example chapter in a JMS book.

The topic was the creation of a distributed logging framework that used JMS.

Java Engineer at OnStation.com
2000 - 2001 (1 year)

Java Engineer at Computer Task Group
October 1999 - April 2000 (7 months)

I was CTG's first "Java consultant" on staff. My first, and only assignment, was with KeyCorp. I was tasked with collecting requirements, design, and implementation of a java application that facilitated stock trades from the in house mutual fund traders to the mainframe computer in real time. I was able to deliver in the time constraint (1 month) a system that solved their problem, 1/12 of the time quoted by an inhouse engineer.

Software Engineer III at Bell & Howell
February 1998 - October 1999 (1 year 9 months)

Software Engineer II at Gtech
September 1996 - February 1998 (1 year 6 months)

Education

University of Dayton
BSEET, Electronic Engineering, September 1991 - December 1995
Activities and Societies: Engineering Fair 93-95,
Intermural football and softball 91-95

Interests

Mac, Ruby, Guitar, Java, Snowboarding, Softball, Photography, Camping, Hiking

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Linked in ®

5 people have recommended Michael

"Michael is both curious and conscientious - the two key ingredients for building great software. Working with him as a developer, I saw that he knew how to get things done and always got them done well. He continued to display those traits as he moved into other roles as product manager and later in founding a startup. Michael is adaptable and consistently shows great attention to detail. Moreover, he's a fun guy to hang out with. I'd happily work with Michael again, and would definitely recommend him to anyone who needs help delivering quality software."

— Patrick Calahan, *Senior Software Engineer, WebLogic, Inc. / BEA Systems*, worked directly with Michael at BEA Systems

"Michael has one of the most rare combinations: deep technical expertise and practical business judgment. Michael was very quickly able to use his technical skills to develop a sound technical architecture for our project. I was very impressed with his CTO-level skills and further impressed when, without hesitation, was willing to get down into the details to make sure that the developer was following best practices, especially with regard to documentation. There is no question that Michael is technically gifted. However, what I most admire is that Michael is able to couple these technical skills with practical business judgment. Too many technologists want to build and build and build disregarding the actual business needs and associated cost. Michael is very keenly aware of incorporating cost/benefit and was able to talk through the alternatives along the spectrum of technological sophistication. I feel very comfortable in saying that Michael played a critical role in the success of our project. Thank you Michael. I whole-heartedly recommend Michael and will definitely continue to look to Michael as a key advisor and practitioner for our business."

— Brian Helmick, was Michael's client

"Michael brought a deep understanding of the technology and had a good sense of it's relevance to customers. I trusted his judgement in making product and roadmap decisions on the sub-systems of WebLogic Server for which he was Product Manager."

— Arvind Jain, *Director of Product Management, BEA Systems*, managed Michael indirectly at BEA Systems

"Michael is a Ruby on Rails guru, with extensive production experience to back up his knowledge and expertise. While working with us on microplace.com project, Michael provided solid

deliverables and valuable advice at all stages of the process and on a wide range of technical topics. Michael also has a great personality and was an easy team fit, settling into our process and team culture very quickly and helping us achieve our goals as a group."

— **Scott Brown**, was Michael's client

"Michael and I worked together for a brief period, while he was helping us get MicroPlace off the ground. I was impressed with his knowledge of Ruby on Rails and software development in general, and learned loads from him. Michael is one of those rare people who are software geniuses and at the same time are fantastic with people. I would recommend Michael to any team that needs an expert-level engineer, but don't want to deal with the usual oversized ego that's associated with gurus."

— **Julio Santos**, *Principal Software Engineer, MicroPlace*, worked directly with Michael at Consulting

Contact Michael on LinkedIn