

Welcome back to our deep dive into the career of David Watson.

All right, so let's jump back into David's impressive work history.

Okay,

it's not just a list of jobs. It's like a road map for how to really navigate the tech world and stay ahead of the curve.

It really is.

What are some of the things that stand out to you?

Well, his recent freelance work definitely catches my eye.

Yeah.

Since 2020, he's been working as a freelance software generalist.

Okay.

And it's really fascinating to see how he's been using this model to work with with a variety of clients.

Mhm.

Including some pretty big names like Carnegie Mellon University and Caterpillar.

It is interesting that he made that shift to freelancing.

Yeah.

Do you think that reflects a larger trend that we're seeing in the tech industry?

I think so. We're definitely seeing a growing number of tech professionals opting for freelance and contract work.

Yeah.

It offers a level of flexibility and autonomy that's really appealing, especially in a field that's constantly evolving.

It makes sense that that someone like David who seems to thrive in those liinal spaces

would be drawn to freelancing

because it allows him to constantly adapt and apply his skills to different projects and challenges and his work with these really high-profile clients.

Yeah.

Shows his expertise across a bunch of different technologies. Absolutely. So, for example, at Carnegie Mellon's Entertainment Technology Center,

Mhm.

he worked as a senior member of technical staff.

Wow.

And he was utilizing his deep understanding of C plus plus Linux and Kubernetes.

Okay.

And then at Caterpillar, he provided consulting services helping them leverage those same cutting edge technologies.

Very cool.

And actually speaking of Caterpillar,

yeah,

his previous full-time role there as a software engineering specialist

involved some pretty innovative work, right?

It did. He played a key role in assembling sensor storage for their edge network

using Python Mo and Postgress.

So not only working with all these different technologies, right,

but understanding how they can all be integrated to create these effective solutions.

Exactly.

It sounds like he was working at the forefront of edge computing

which is becoming so essential in today's interconnected world.

It is.

His work at Caterpillar really shows that he can anticipate and adapt to these technological shifts.

Yeah.

Which is so important for anyone who wants to build a lasting career in

Absolutely. And before Caterpillar,

he had a senior engineering role at Rent Jungle.

Okay.

Which was later acquired by Real Page. Wow.

What I find really interesting about this role is his focus on leadership and team dynamics.

He led these weekly retrospectives that were all about improving the team's communication and velocity and just their overall effectiveness.

It's a good reminder that technical skills alone aren't enough,

right?

Being able to collaborate effectively and lead a team is crucial for success,

especially in software development where projects often involve multiple people with all sorts of different skills and perspectives.

David's commitment to fostering a strong team environment is really clear in his approach.

It is

it's not just about writing code. It's about creating this whole culture of collaboration

and continuous improvement.

And you can see that focus on collaboration in his experience at Wbridge Health too

where he actually led a design team through the development of an Ember SPA MVP and he was working really closely with Maya Design.

So again showing that ability to work with designers, product managers and all these other stakeholders to really bring a product to life.

He understands that successful software development needs that holistic approach.

Yeah.

One that involves clear communication and collaboration across different disciplines

and his work at hire and esquire shows that he's got the skills to manage those complex projects and improve code quality.

Yeah.

As VP of engineering, he led a team through a major redesign and refactoring of their legacy Django system.

It's like he can take these existing systems and make them better, more efficient, more userfriendly

and then his experience at Forever shows his agility and ability to prototype solutions really quickly. Right.

In just two weeks, he prototyped a full stack cloud application.

Oh wow.

That really helped the company gain some market traction.

That's impressive.

It's like he thrives in those fast-paced highstakes environments

where innovation and adaptability are key. And it's interesting to see how his experience with Smash Okay.

Where he was writing conversational text systems

connects back to his interest in communication.

I see that

this was way back in the early days of chatbot technology and he was already exploring how technology could be used to facilitate communication and build relationships.

He was ahead of his time.

He even supported large text campaigns for the Pittsburgh Steelers and Miller.

Wow.



So you can see he really understood how to reach a wide audience using these emerging technologies.

That's really cool. It is amazing to think about how far chatbot technology has come since then.

Yeah.

And it's clear that David has always been interested in how technology can be used to enhance communication and connection.

Absolutely.

And that thread kind of runs throughout his whole career.

It does.

From those early days of writing conversational text systems to his more recent work building these complex software applications.

You know, it's a good reminder that our passions and interests can weave their way through our careers in really surprising ways. It's not always about following a straight path, but recognizing those connections and allowing those threads to guide us.

When we look back at all of these experiences,

yeah,

the thing that stands out to me is David's willingness to embrace new challenges

and constantly push the boundaries of his knowledge.

Definitely, he's not afraid to learn new technologies or dive into something completely unfamiliar.

It's really inspiring to see how he's combined that adaptable mindset with this deep understanding of these core principles like collaboration and communication and problem solving

to build this really successful and multifaceted career.

Absolutely. And as we head into the final part of our deep dive, okay,

we'll explore the roots of this approach going all the way back to his early experiences and that really pivotal transition from music school to the world of software development.

So stay tuned to discover how those early experiences really shaped his unique approach to technology.