GARETH POWELL

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Profile

Seasoned Principal Software Engineer with 20+ years of end-to-end delivery across JVM ecosystems, cloud platforms, and secure, regulated environments. I've led the design, build, and modernisation of mission-critical systems—from bespoke CRM and finance integrations at Which? to large-scale government services at Companies House—owning everything from data, APIs, and batch to UI and infrastructure. Deep hands-on expertise in Java/Kotlin, Spring Boot, Integration & Batch, Gradle (incl. Kotlin DSL), Terraform, Docker, and AWS (VPC/EC2, SQS/Lambda, Elastic Beanstalk, multi-account SRA). Proven track record migrating legacy estates to cloud, instituting CI/CD and quality gates, and hardening platforms for compliance and reliability.

A pragmatic, security-minded engineer and mentor who champions clean code, static analysis, and automation, I bring a product mindset, cross-functional collaboration, and a focus on measurable outcomes.

Skills

- Core: Java/Kotlin, Spring Boot, Spring Integration & Batch, Hibernate
- Platform/Cloud: AWS (VPC/EC2, Lambda, Elastic Beanstalk, multi-account SRA), Docker, Terraform, Ansible, AWS CDK
- Build/CI: Gradle (Kotlin DSL), Maven, TeamCity, GitHub Actions, SonarQube/Qodana, Nexus/CodeArtifact, Flyway, Testcontainers
- Data/Integration: SQL Server, MySQL, SQS, JMS, ActiveMQ

Experience

Principal Developer, Mosaic Island — 2010-2025

- End-to-end build and launch of a bespoke CRM on JVM (Spring, Hibernate, Tomcat), delivering MVP rapidly and progressing from contractor to permanent Principal Developer post go-live.
- Delivered cross-functional features:
  - Verifone payment processing service.
  - Customer communications: web letter authoring, storage, and PDF rendering (HTML, Apache POI).
  - Order-fulfilment rules engine ensuring accurate product allocation.
  - Full-stack delivery from SQL Server through JSP/WebFlow UI.
- Stabilised a critical finance system by introducing robust integration tests with BA and Finance leads; resolved numerous defects and maintained 10+ years of stable, accurate accounting.

- Modernised delivery: migrated repos to GitHub; established CI with TeamCity; adopted Kotlin DSL; integrated Flyway and Testcontainers for reliable DB migrations and integration tests.

- Cloud migration lead from legacy data centre to AWS: designed secure VPC/EC2 architecture; automated provisioning with Ansible; implemented blue/green deployments for instant cut-over/rollback.

- Containerisation and platform uplift: promoted Docker; moved runtime to Elastic Beanstalk; managed infrastructure with Terraform; applied AWS SRA for multi-account governance; simplified stack by replacing Mule & ActiveMQ with Spring Integration & SQS.

- Security & compliance: built a PCI-DSS validated Secure Card Repository (2014) with Spring Boot and Docker, using multi-tier key management.

- Build/DevX: championed Gradle (Groovy → Kotlin DSL), authored internal plugins, stood up Nexus (later AWS CodeArtifact), enforced static analysis (SonarQube → Qodana), and kept platforms current (Java 9 → 21).

- Data & integrations:
  - CDC-based sync from CRM to Salesforce (Kotlin, AWS CDK, Spring Integration, SQS).
  - Paywall integration via Spring Boot + SQS + Lambda.
  - Batch scheduler/monitor (Spring Batch/Boot/Thymeleaf) and multiple optimised batch pipelines, including file-triggered jobs with Spring Integration.

- Observability/quality: daily website health checks with Playwright via GitHub Actions.

- Innovation: prototyped an MCP server using Spring AI/Spring Boot integrated with CRM (connected to Anthropic Claude).

- Outcome: platform ran reliably through 2025 on Java 21, with reduced operational complexity, faster deployments, and a strengthened security posture.

Senior Developer, Companies House — 2006-2010
- Joined the large-scale replacement of the 20-year-old STEM system with CHIPS (WebLogic/Java/JVM/Oracle/JSP); integrated rapidly with the architecture and senior dev team.

- Promoted to Senior Software Engineer; became a go-to for complex issues.

- Delivered the Insolvency & Liquidation form processing system; corrected critical design/requirements misinterpretations inherited from a prior consultancy.

- Cross-functional delivery of CAP (Companies Act 2006) changes, partnering closely with BAs and QA to ensure regulatory compliance and quality.

- Mentored junior developers in Java/JVM practices and the software delivery lifecycle, improving productivity and code quality.

- Supported recruitment through CV screening and technical interviews.

- Championed and led adoption of agile practices across the organisation, improving delivery cadence and stakeholder engagement.

Senior Developer, LocaVista — 1999-2006
- TriNet IMB → LocaVista (Vodafone JV) → BlueFinger (acq. 2003) — Backend Software Engineer

- Built and maintained backend services for a vehicle telematics/tracking platform within a small cross-functional team.

- Championed adoption of Java and early J2EE; early adopter of IntelliJ IDEA, Spring, and Hibernate.

- Co-developed a Java web application using EJBs, exposing an XML-RPC interface.

- Led development of a GPRS communication server integrating with Vodafone's SMS network.

- Co-developed a ColdFusion web application for asset tracking and management.

- Administered and maintained Oracle and PostgreSQL databases.

- Retained post-acquisition and relocated to Wells, Somerset, to continue product development.

Education
Lancaster University — Comp Sci with Software Eng BSc. 1999
Following my BTEC in Information Technology Applications (achieved with distinction), I was accepted to study Computer Science with Software Engineering at Lancaster University. The university had recently partnered with Sun Microsystems, gaining access to SPARC workstations and incorporating Java programming into the curriculum. This introduced me to object-oriented programming, building upon my foundation in Pascal and COBOL from my BTEC studies.

During my three years at Lancaster, I gained extensive experience with early Java implementations and modern software development practices. I graduated with a Bachelor's degree, having learned valuable lessons about project scope and time management through my final year dissertation experience.