

Harper Reed

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Harper Reed is a seasoned technologist and entrepreneur currently leading 2389 Research, where he explores the agentic future of AI and its applications in commerce and beyond. With a track record spanning two decades, Harper has driven innovation at the intersection of technology and culture through roles at PayPal, Modest Inc., the Obama 2012 campaign, and Threadless.com. His work has shaped e-commerce, political technology, and crowdsourcing. Harper's commitment to education and collaboration is reflected in his advisory board roles at institutions including Pardee RAND, the Royal United Services Institute, and Illinois Institute of Technology.

blog harper github harperreed linkedin harperreed

SKILLS

STARTUP EXECUTIVE	Accomplished Startup exec with over two decades of experience
NETWORKING	Very broad and diverse network
FUNDRAISING	Raised millions of dollars for various companies
LEADERSHIP	Managed teams from 1 to 100s of people (hard)
PRODUCT LEADERSHIP	Built products from zero to millions of users
TECHNOLOGY LEADERSHIP	Very technical ;)

EXPERIENCE

2389 Research

CEO Jul 2024 - Present

Cofounder and CEO of 2389 Research.

- Focusing the agentic future
- Building a team of amazing people
- AI is wild

General Galactic Corporation

CEO Jul 2019 - Jul 2023

Cofounder and CEO of General Galactic Corporation.

- Built a team of amazing people to build amazing products

- Raised 10.5 million dollars in a pre-seed and seed round
 - Built a handful of products that helped guide users within crypto and fintech
 - Shut down the company in 2023 due to regulatory uncertainty
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US Japan Leadership Fellowship

Delegate Jul 2019 - Jul 2023

- Worked with Japanese and American entrepreneurs to help build bridges between the two countries
 - Learned from our Japanese hosts about the culture and business practices in Japan
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MIT Medialab

Director's Fellow May 2018 - May 2020

- Worked within the various groups at Medialab
 - Worked with the E14 fund to help their entrepreneurs
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Paypal, Inc

Senior Director, Software Development Aug 2015 - Apr 2018

- Helped establish and define contextual commerce and an emergent commerce function.
 - Did research about commerce in South East Asia
 - Helped facilitate build engineering teams and Braintree, Venmo and PayPal
 - Focused and fostered diversity efforts at the Chicago office of Braintree and PayPal
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Modest, Inc

Founder / Chief Executive Officer Dec 2012 - Aug 2015

- Built a platform that enabled retailers to launch and support mobile buying apps.
 - Hired an amazing team
 - Launched beautiful and highly converting apps into the iOS app store
 - Sold company in late 2015 to PayPal, Inc
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Obama for America

Chief Technology Officer Apr 2011 - Oct 2012

- Hired world class technology team to build the technology platform for the reelection campaign.
 - Worked with team to help define and architect the solutions that helped reelect the president.
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Rackspace Hosting

Customer in Residence Oct 2009 - Apr 2010

- Worked with professional services department to help clients find the right solution.
 - Worked with executive staff to help define better customer experience
 - Represented Rackspace at conferences and small events.
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skinnyCorp, LLC

Chief Technology Officer Aug 2005 - Oct 2009

- Acted as technology leader for a company of ~60 people with revenue of ~20-30M
 - Worked in a close team to design, execute and manage community websites
 - Lead the technology to support Threadless.com growth.
 - Grew Threadless.com from 2 barely functioning servers to over 45 devices.
 - Helped bridge the gap between the internet and reality with 2 retail stores.
 - Spoke about our technology at various events and conference, representing skinnyCorp and the Threadless vision.
 - Managed a small team of engineers to handle the day to day maintenance and projects.
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Squidoo

Summer Intern Jun 2005 - Aug 2005

- Worked with Seth Godin and an amazing team to help build and design the initial version of Squidoo.
 - Helped define initial vision and technology for Squidoo before core staff was hired
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Cramer and Krasselt

Web Programmer Oct 2004 - Jul 2005

- Lead technologist and technical liaison to account management and creative staff.
 - Lead architect for client web applications. Worked with clients Airtran.com, Careerbuilder.com, and Barton Beers. (PHP, MYSQL, LINUX)
 - Lead engineer on full life cycle of Super Bowl viral campaign, Yeknominc.com. (PHP, MYSQL, LINUX)
 - Managed legacy operations for client web application management. (Perl, Navitaire SkyLights, JAVA)
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World Book Publishing

Security and Software Engineer Jun 2001 - Oct 2004

- Lead development staff and managed offshore engineering team. Worked to develop and maintain World Book Publishing's client facing web presence. Helped usher in new technology and standards - moving from AIX, DB2 on IBM hardware to Solaris, Oracle on Sun Hardware. Introduced open source technology and solution. (Solaris, JAVA, DB2, AIX, XML)
- Wrote desktop content management utilities to aid in management of XML content by non-technical staff. (C#, PHP)
- Developed practices to insure content accessibility and data portability. (JAVA, XML, XSLT, C#, DB2)
- Helped develop a solid software security plan. Worked with system engineers to architect a secure production environment. Deployed production servers using open source software to meet budget constraints. (LINUX, NMAP, NESSUS, SOLARIS, AIX)

VOLUNTEERING

RAND School of Public Policy

Board of Governors Jan 2020 - Present

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Negaunee Music Institute Board Member Jan 2020 - Present

Royal United Services Institute

Advisory Board Jan 2017 - Present

Illinois Institute of Technology

Computer Science Advisory Board Jan 2017 - Jan 2019

Keeper Security

Board Member Jan 2013 - Present

House of Cards (Netflix)

Technical Consultant Jan 2014 - Jan 2016

Cornell College

Board of Trustees Member Jan 2016 - Jan 2024

EDUCATION

Cornell College

Jan 1997 - Jan 2001
Bachelor of Arts - Computer Science and
Philosophy

AWARDS

Net Vision Honorary Mention
undefined NaN
PRIX ARS ELECTRONICA

Awarded for the audreyhacking.com community. The audreyhacking.com community was a community of people who hacked the 3Com Audrey, a linux based internet appliance. The community was a place for people to share their hacks and ideas around the 3com Audrey.

Data Innovation Awards
undefined NaN
MCIC

Awarded for hacking the Chicago Transit Authority Bus API

40 under 40
undefined NaN
Crain's Chicago Business

Awarded for being under 40 and for the work at Obama for America, Threadless, and the tech community

Breakout of the Year
undefined NaN
Webby's

Awarded for the work at Obama for America

CTO of the Year
undefined NaN
Moxie Awards

Awarded for the work at Obama for America

Young Alumni Achievement Award
undefined NaN
Cornell College

Awarded for the work at Obama for America

LANGUAGES

English
Native

INTERESTS

Hacking

- Hardware
 - Software
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Programming

- Python
 - Go
 - Javascript
 - Rust
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Photography

- Film
 - Digital
 - Travel
-

Music

- Hip-Hop
 - Classical
 - Hyperpop
 - Metal
-

Reading

- Science Fiction
 - Fantasy
 - Non-Fiction
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Travel