

LUKE BLANEY BSc (HONS)

Email Address: cv@lukeblaney.co.uk

Technical leader with expertise across a range of domains, most recently in Cyber Security. Have particular experience managing teams which are either new or have recently been through an organisational change.

Key Skills: Technical Leadership & Strategy, Technical Communication, Incident Management (Operational & Security), Technical Architecture

Employment

- Financial Times: February 2023 - present

Cyber Security Director

Setting strategic direction for cyber security at the FT

- Defined the vision and set the strategy for IT Risk and Cyber Security.
- Senior stakeholder management - acting as a bridge between business colleagues and engineers.
- Introduced and oversaw a new process for renewing and refreshing technical policies across the organisation.
- Responsible for security incident management and contributed to wider crisis management.
- Spent 3 months on secondment to the FT's parent company, Nikkei, in Tokyo. Helped with their product security function and building closer ties between the two companies.

- Financial Times: April 2022 - January 2023

Interim VP of Cyber Security

Leading the company's cyber security function through a period of organisational change.

- Built a central cyber security function, combining a number of teams which had previously reported into different parts of the organisation.
- Line managed a team of a dozen people from different disciplines, including Engineers, Risk Analysts and those in IT governance roles.
- Steered the direction of Security work across the technology department, and the organisation as a whole.
- Worked with a third party consultancy to build a strategic roadmap and help prioritise security initiatives.
- Involved in recruitment of a permanent VP of Cyber Security.

- Financial Times: September 2021 - March 2022

Principal Engineer - Observability, Edge Delivery & Cyber Security

Working on the strategic direction in three key areas across the FT's technology department.

- Responsible for line management of 2 in-house engineering teams, plus the relationship with an off-shore 3rd party engineering team.
- Worked on vendor management of key suppliers within relevant domains and set the direction of the FT's relationships with them.
- Steered changes to the department's approach to tracking security risk with an aim to make it more outcome-focused.
- Analysis of how observability and security tooling is being used across the company and putting in place strategic plans for these, including end-of-life roadmaps for tools which give minimal value.

- Financial Times: September 2020 - September 2021

Principal Engineer - Cyber Security

Leading the engineering function of the FT's cyber security team.

- Acted as tech lead and line manager for engineers in the cyber security team
- Managed security incidents across the business; collaborated with Operations team to improve process.
- Took responsibility for shaping the team's roadmap and seeing projects through to completion.
- Contributed to group-wide strategy, ensuring security was well represented.
- Worked on the democratisation of security data, to enable engineering teams to make better decisions around their own risks, beginning with an aggregated view of vulnerability data.
- Advised on security related concerns across all the FT's engineering teams.

- Financial Times: February 2018 - August 2020

Principal Engineer - Reliability Engineering

Running a new team, set up to improve reliability of systems and reduce duplication of effort across technology teams at the FT.

- Formed a brand new team whose members had backgrounds in a variety of different domains.
- Jointly led the team, taking on line management responsibilities for half its members.
- Supported engineers from other teams joining us on three-month secondments.
- Actively involved in the full recruitment process for new members of the team.
- Represented the Product & Technology department in planning the move of our company headquarters, working to ensure the 300+ people in our area could make the move seamlessly.
- Oversaw the delivery of several core technical tools, now used extensively across the company, including a monitoring aggregation platform, tech migration tracker and change management system.
- Worked with engineering teams throughout the department to build a clearer understanding of our estate (including bespoke software, enterprise systems and SaaS solutions)
- Liaised with procurement team for all suppliers under our cost centre. Handled renewals, ad-hoc licence increases and taking new contracts through the full procurement process.

- Financial Times: October 2016 - February 2018

Architect - Content

Worked on our Universal Publishing Platform, which delivers Content & Metadata from a range of editorial tools to our websites, apps and third-party B2B clients.

- Responsible for architectural decisions across a whole programme of work (6 dev teams, in 2 countries)
- Collaborated with Editorial Tech team to design and build a metadata management tool for the newsroom.
- Worked closely with stakeholders from Editorial, B2B and Technology departments.
- Successfully repositioned our relationship with an existing supplier so they'd take on operational responsibility for the software they were building.
- Devised a framework for tracking progress on a multi-year project to decommission a suite of legacy software, in a way that made sense to both delivery managers and engineers.
- Took on line management responsibilities for integration engineers in our team.

I think my proudest accomplishment here was transforming a team heavily reliant on having an architect to one where engineers felt empowered to make their own architectural decisions.

- Financial Times: December 2015 - October 2016

Platform Architect - Operational Intelligence

Technical lead for a new team responsible for observability tools used across the company. We replaced the organisation's CMDB with a tool which better bridged the gap between Engineering and Operations teams. My role included:

- System design, development and backlog prioritisation
- Upskilling a team from disparate backgrounds and recruitment of junior developers
- Moving the team's processes to a kanban agile delivery workflow
- Stakeholder and supplier management

- Financial Times: January 2015 - November 2015

Integration Engineer - Mobile Apps

Led the migration of the FT's mobile apps from on-premise to cloud-based infrastructure in AWS.

- Adapted existing workloads to run on cloud
- Recruited a contractor to assist with the migration
- Architected & developed a cloud-native zero-downtime deployment pipeline

Earlier Career

- FT Labs - **Labs Developer**: December 2011 - December 2014
- Assanka - **Web Developer**: November 2010 - December 2011
- Edinburgh University Students Association, Entertainments Crew - **Lighting Technician**: 2007 - 2010
- J Sainsbury plc - **Customer Services Assistant**: May 2005 - Dec 2005

Talks & Panels

- **Panel: Building security into your engineering workflow — LeadDev 2021**
Moderated an online panel about improving cyber security across engineering organisations.
- **Panel: Observability Strategies for Distributed Systems — InfoQ Live 2020**
Discussed approaches for observability when using microservices at this one-day online conference.
- **Monitoring All the Things: Keeping Track of a Mixed Estate — QCon London 2020; Continuous Lifecycle 2020**
Spoke about effectively monitoring the tech estate of a company which uses a variety of different technologies and monitoring approaches. Was also on a panel about the value of microservices at the QCon event.
- **Creating a multi-factor authentication solution — Varnish Summit & Awards, Los Angeles 2016**
Spoke about how the FT used varnish to protect our estate with MFA and tackle phishing attacks. Also collected the Varnish Innovation Award at the same event.

For a full list of Talks & Panels I've done, see <https://lukeblaney.co.uk/talks/>

Education

- Edinburgh University: 2006 - 2010

BSc (Hons) Computer Science and Physics

A joint degree, with an emphasis on Computer Science, covering specialist areas such as Distributed Systems, Multi-Agent Semantic Web Systems, Computer Security and Communication & Networking.

Publications

A Single-Significant-Digit Calculus for Semi-Automated Guesstimation
Jonathan Abourbih, **Luke Blaney**, Alan Bundy and Fiona McNeill
IJCAR 2010

- Lagan College, Belfast: 1999 - 2006
 - **A-levels:** Maths (A), Irish (A), Physics (B), Chemistry (C)
 - **GCSEs:** Maths (A*), Science (A*A*), Irish (A*) + 1 A, 4 Bs and 1 C.