layout: default title: Max Spevack

Max Spevack

Engineering Leader & Organizational Architect

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Senior leader with 20+ years of experience bridging deep Linux engineering and high-level product strategy. Specializing in high-stakes engineering leadership, organizational turnarounds, and building the teams that power the cloud at hyperscale (Google, AWS) and open-source pioneers (Red Hat).

Experience

CIQ

(July 2025 - Present)

Senior Principal Linux Architect
Chief of Staff to the CTO

Acting as the strategic "fixer" for the CTO, re-architecting the engineering organization for velocity and accountability.

- **Organizational Transformation:** Architected and executed the reorganization of Linux Engineering into "Core Distro" (OS) and "Release All Things" (Build Automation & Delivery), clarifying accountability and accelerating release velocity.

- **Turnaround Leadership:** Assumed control of the stalled "RAT" unit to resolve critical delivery failures. Restructured the team composition to establish a high-performance culture, unblocking pipelines and drastically reducing image build cycles for Rocky Linux from CIQ and Google Distributed Cloud. Handed over a stabilized, high-velocity organization to permanent Director.
- **Strategic Planning:** Led 2026 resource planning and prioritization, implementing AI-driven reporting frameworks to provide executive visibility into engineering output.

Google
(July 2021 - July 2023)

Senior Manager, Google Compute Engine (Fleet)

Directed the 50-person engineering organization responsible for the lifecycle and stability of the entire global GCE fleet.

- **Culture Change:** Transformed the engineering culture toward proactive reliability by conceiving and implementing the "Mandatory Experiments" policy, significantly reducing fleet-wide regressions and rollback incidents.
- **Enterprise Product Growth:** Designed and launched the "Stable Fleet" product line, securing key enterprise workloads by guaranteeing reduced change rates and managed maintenance windows.
- **Customer Engineering:** Established a "White Glove" engineering tier for ultra-high-value customers, directly intervening to resolve complex kernel/virtualization blockers.

Amazon Web Services
(July 2019 - June 2021)

General Manager, Amazon Linux & Open Source

Recruited to overhaul the Amazon Linux organization and OSPO. Scaled the team to 100+ engineers and product managers while redefining the product roadmap.

- **Product Turnaround:** Delivered the roadmap and PR/FAQ for Amazon Linux 2023, defining the next generation of AWS's core operating system after a period of stagnation.
- **Innovation:** Launched Bottlerocket GA, a purpose-built open-source OS for container orchestration, capturing new workloads on EKS/ECS.

- **Lifecycle Management:** Engineered the extended support plan for Amazon Linux 1, retaining critical legacy customer workloads while driving automated migration paths to Amazon Linux 2.
- **Open Source Strategy:** Transformed the OSPO from a compliance bottleneck into a strategic enabler by launching the "Open Source Champions" program and automating legal reviews, reducing cycle time for code releases.

Google
(February 2016 - June 2019)

Senior Manager, Google Compute Engine (Virtualization)

Led three engineering teams (KVM, Kernel Performance, Customer Experience) responsible for the core virtualization technology powering Google Cloud.

- **Hardware Enablement:** Partnered with Intel/Nvidia to launch GCE support for Skylake/Cascade Lake CPUs and Tesla V100/T4 GPUs, unlocking new ML/AI revenue streams.
- **Crisis Response:** Led the engineering response to Spectre/Meltdown and L1TF, patching the massive GCE fleet with minimal customer disruption (Awarded Google "Feat of Engineering").
- **Feature Engineering:** Delivered Nested Virtualization and SAP-certified large-memory instances (ultramem), removing blockers for enterprise cloud migration (Awarded Google "Feat of Engineering").

Amazon Web Services
(August 2011 - January 2016)

Manager, Linux Kernel & Operating Systems

- **Foundational Engineering:** Built and maintained Amazon Linux 1 during its explosive growth phase, owning the kernel, security updates, and package repositories.
- **Platform Launch:** Led the qualification/testing teams for major EC2 instance launches (T2, C4, D2), ensuring day-one stability for new hardware families.

Red Hat
(August 2004 - August 2011)

Manager, Open Source Community Architecture (Feb 2008 - Aug 2011)

Fedora Project Leader (Feb 2006 - Feb 2008)
Linux Systems Engineer (Aug 2004 - Feb 2006)

- **Community Leadership:** Led the Fedora Project (2006–2008). Governed the global open-source community, serving as the primary public figurehead and liaison between Red Hat engineering and community contributors. (Media: LWN, Slashdot, Ohio Linux Fest)
- **Strategy:** Founded the Open Source Community Architecture team, establishing the Open Source Way as a corporate standard for productizing community software and founding the Teaching Open Source community.

Verisign

(October 2002 - August 2004)

Quality Assurance Engineer

Education

Stanford University

(September 1998 - June 2002)

BS Computer Science