Yao Adzaku

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Engineering / Program Manager with a strong sense of business needs. Bootstrapped an operations-intensive business to profitability. I have managed teams in companies of different sizes (from scrappy startups to mature institutions), and developed production services for performance and growth.

I care about how things are built, how they look, how they feel, and how they function.

Experience

FOUNDER & MANAGING PARTNER, PINELOOP, 2019 - PRESENT

Advise early to mid-stage startups on product strategy/management, monetization, engineering and go-to-market strategy. Coordinating directly with sales and clients in organizations around the world.

Developed developer tooling (SDKs, dev toolkits) for Berlin-based VC-backed blockchain FinTech startup (Upvest). Interviewed candidates, conducted technical tests , and screened candidate CVs.

PROGRAMMER / STARTUPS, 2006 - 2018

Early-hire for this startup (Saya Mobile) building mobile messaging for feature phones in emerging markets. I helped design, build, operate a high-availability messaging server with Erlang. TechCrunch Disrupt SF 2012 finalists. Acquired by Kirusa.

Ran a small consultancy with a local and distributed team developing a payment system for transfer of funds across major mobile networks and banking institutions in Ghana. Navigating a whole lot of ambiguity: complex payment architecture with cross-border acquiring + local/x-border payouts.

Joined Octopus Labs, an internal digital agency of Octopus Investments in London ($8B AUM); Core platform team, backend and customer-facing services in a micro-service setting, on an asset-backed peer-to-peer lending product. Left to start a restaurant delivery and logistics business in Lagos, Nigeria.

Education

University of Cape Coast – 2009 - 2013

University of London - Economics, uncompleted

Skills

- Familiar with most modern programming languages, specifically Python, Erlang/OTP, Elixir, Go, C, Bash. Web programming, including Javascript, CSS and common frameworks/tools such as Django, Rails, Flask, Compass, SASS and JQuery. Comfortable with basic UNIX system administration.

- Business analysis and strategy. Generalist in all areas of technical and non-technical operations

- Tools: Sketch, Figma, Tableau, MySQL, Excel, Balsamiq Mockups and more as needed.