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**CONTRIBUTION**

[Github](#)

[RubyGems](#)

[StackOverflow](#)

## Who I Am

I'm a lifelong autodidactic polyglot software junkie.

I logged into my first UNIX account in '89, I read my first usenet newsgroup in 1990, I hacked together my first Perl script in 1991, I joined my first IRC channel in 1992 and in 1993 I downloaded Mosaic 1.0 and wrote my first web page.

At the end of 1993 I dropped out of university when they told me that most graduates would end up working in a bank writing COBOL. I worked hard for the next year before taking a job with a small startup that went on to become the largest ISP in Australia with over a million subscribers. I've been creating elegant solutions to complex problems ever since.

As well as working in two ISP startups and many other contract roles, I've started two businesses myself, both prepared me well for my eventual transition to VP Engineering in 2009.

Still very hands on, I now also create cohesive teams of loyal, passionate, productive engineers. I inspire people to reach beyond what they think they're capable of, to find their true calling, and to lead authentic lives.

I love mentoring people so much that I do it in my spare time too: helping strangers with the technologies that I love on IRC, StackOverflow, as well as a number of forums and user groups. I've also published a handful of Ruby gems.

## What Drives Me

I want to love *what* I do, *whom* I do it with, and *how* I do it.

I want to create great products and a rich culture of innovation. One that accepts mistakes as a key part of the creative process, one that recognizes and rewards team members based on their contribution, and one that values reason over popularity, tradition and authority.

I want to empower my team with the responsibility, commitment and motivation that comes from sharing the vision of the company and feeling a sense of autonomy and ownership for the products we create.

I want a company that understands the value of releasing fewer features, of focusing on the 20% that deliver 80% of the value, and of delivering quality over quantity.

I want to be proud of what I accomplish.

## How I Keep Busy

Use the links in the sidebar if this is a soft-copy, but here are the full links if printed:

- GitHub <http://github.com/smathy>
- RubyGems <http://rubygems.org/profiles/43806>
- StackOverflow <http://stackoverflow.com/users/152786/smathy>

## Skills Cloud

This is just like a tags cloud. The size represents my experience and the tone represents how recently I've used that skill (the darker, the more recent). You can see an online copy with tooltips [here](#).

Agile AJAX Apache ASP awk bash  
backbone.js Batman.js C C++  
Capistrano CGI CSS Chef  
CoffeeScript CouchDB Cucumber CVS  
Delphi Debian Ferret gentoo git haml  
heroku HTML HTTP IMAP IIS IRC  
Java Jade JavaScript jQuery  
JSON lighttpd Linux Mason merb mod\_perl  
mod\_rails MongoDB Mongrel mSQL MSSQL  
MySQL nginx node.js NNTP OLE Oracle  
OSX Passenger Perl PHP POP3  
PostgreSQL prototype Puppet redis  
regex REST RMI rspec  
Ruby on Rails scss/sass Scala  
Scrum sed SMTP SOAP Sphinx SQL  
SQLite3 Stylus Sybase TravisCI Test::Unit  
Ubuntu VBA Visual Basic WinAPI  
Windows WSDL XHTML XML XP  
xUnit

# Experience

JANUARY 2015 – NOVEMBER 2015

*PeerStreet, Inc. (30 employees, real estate debt marketplace)*

**Senior Software Engineer**

I was the 4th programming hire and so my time with PeerStreet has been spent both building out new features in preparation for launch (in November 2015) as well as a lot of clean up and maturing of prototype-quality code.

JUNE 2009 – DECEMBER 2014

*International Education Services - t/a "Amco" (500 employees, education, ESL)*

**VP of Engineering / Lead Software Engineer**

When I started with Amco there was an in-house development team that had grown without direction, lots of "copy-and-pasters" rather than programmers, there was a culture of walk-ups (by the Founder/CEO), hacking things in situ (in production) with very loose processes.

I reformed the IT program at Amco, implementing a training and assessment program, replacing those team members who weren't able to demonstrate satisfactory progress, instigating change control, testing, backups, logging, analytics, issue tracking and numerous other processes to bring quality up to an acceptable level.

I leave Amco with a thriving IT group, a culture of innovation, creativity, mentorship and teamwork. Hosting has been migrated to a scalable cloud-based platform, security vulnerabilities have been fixed, error handling and overall code quality massively improved.

JULY 2004 – JANUARY 2009

*Handle IT (my own company)*

**Senior Software Engineer, Consultant, Sales & Team Leader**

I led a small team of mostly remote developers in a bunch of small web projects. Perl, Javascript and Ruby on Rails development. In our spare time we built Freedraw, a Rails app with a stack of JavaScript in the front end, to make it easier for our remote team to exchange visual ideas – especially with designers. I also provided IT strategy consultation services to a few local companies with Ruby on Rails as my preferred technology.

JULY 2007 – MARCH 2008

*Optus (6000 employees, telecommunications & ISP)*

**Senior Software Engineer**

I came back to the same Internal Applications team at Optus and developed an AJAX interface for customer support teams to adjust the Speed Profiles of a customer's ADSL modem by talking to the live SOAP (WSDL) interface on the modem control server. Also produced a report system sourcing data from Postgres DBs and producing the reports in fully formatted, multi-worksheet Microsoft Excel files (not just CSVs).

FEBRUARY 2007 – JUNE 2007

*News Digital Media (50 employees, digital media division of News Limited, online content delivery)*

**Senior Software Engineer**

A short project for News to rewrite some very high profile legacy applications that were failing with no notification. The first of these was the data processing app for the live sports scores on [foxsports.com.au](http://foxsports.com.au). I developed a robust Perl app called *Ingestor* which had logging and alerting built into it. It was an extensible framework which allowed me to extend it quickly with a new input filter module to deliver the next project: a system to process User Generated Content (UGC) that the public would send in via SMS and MMS from their phones and which would then be fed into the [news.com.au](http://news.com.au) CMS for review, approval and potential publication.

Showing the full flexibility of the system, I then added another input and output filter in order to ingest a SOAP feed from WebSideStory (aka HBX, now owned by Omniture) to create the *Most Popular* list of news and blogs across all the mastheads.

JULY 2006 – JANUARY 2007

*Optus (6000 employees, telecommunication & ISP)*

**Senior Software Engineer**

Working in the Internal Applications team I made a number of enhancements to the Perl, mod\_perl, Mason based customer support tools. I implemented a new VoIP provisioning system, an on-demand data migration system, and a number of other enhancements.

FEBRUARY 2004 – JUNE 2006

*Unwired Australia (30 employees, startup wireless ISP)*

**Senior Software Engineer**

I was with Unwired during their startup phase, from pre-launch to around 20,000 customers. The development team grew from 5 to 12. I developed the wireless service qualification tool in mod\_perl (for significant cost savings over the commercial services available at the time), the reseller provisioning interface in PHP and XML-RPC, mail interface for single-password in PHP, and restructured the Money Back Guarantee system to implement new billing processes.

JANUARY 2001 – MAY 2003

*Telstra (46,000 employees, telecoms & ISP)*

#### **Senior Systems Integrator**

Working in the business and custom hosting team, we were the development team for the high end web hosting products from Telstra. I rewrote the Perl-based hosting provisioning system cutting the running time from 36 minutes per cycle, to around 25 seconds. I then planned, prepared and implemented the migration of over 60,000 websites from an old NT4/ Netscape platform to a clustered Win2000/IIS6 platform with the storage mapped to a NAS back-end.

I also ran in-house training sessions on OO programming with Perl 5.6, and mentored the junior team members through the transition from 5.005\_03 to 5.6. Also some other smaller tasks in ASP (vbScript) and C++.

**JULY 1997 – JUNE 2002**

*Squirrel Group (my own company)*

#### **Web Developer & Managing Director**

Ran my own web development company for five years providing a number of custom solutions to various companies including: Sydney Airports, HCF, BodyScoop and TownB. This included scoping, quoting, management, leadership and training of two Perl developers, liaising with the client and providing support and maintenance to the client post-implementation.

**FEBRUARY 1998 – OCTOBER 2000**

*Ian Pridham Pty Limited (10 employees, became Alien Technology, IT development services)*

#### **Software Engineer**

Worked in a large team as one of two head developers on a number of projects in Java, Delphi, Visual Basic and C++. Was the stand-in administrator for UNIX web and mail hosting as well as WindowsNT network and domain.

**OCTOBER 1996 – FEBRUARY 1998**

*Bigpond Consulting (10 employees, IT consulting and development services)*

#### **Technical Consultant**

Web development work in HTML, CSS and ASP. Working on a project with the National Farmer's Federation (NFF) called Farmwide. Headed the team to deliver a range of internet based products to members of the NFF Australia-wide.

**SEPTEMBER 1995 – FEBRUARY 1998**

*On Australia (20 employees, became Telstra Bigpond, startup ISP)*

#### **Web Developer**

Was part of the original development team of 5 developers from pre-launch until 50,000 customers. I built the template-based web-hosting product in ASP, much of the MSSQL online billing system and group billing systems, mail system integration, Radius server integration, system to auto-publish chat transcripts from IRC sessions, and a number of other internal and customer-facing products and systems.

## References

I'm very proud of the [recommendations I've received from colleagues over the years in LinkedIn](#), other references available upon request.