STAVROS NIAFAS

ML Engineer

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Stavros Niafas is a ML engineer and an MLflow ambassador with major in Informatics Engineering and Msc's in Data Science and in Image Synthesis & Multimedia.
As a professional ML practitioner has demonstrated experience in both R&D and production settings, from driving ML experiments and PoC's into mature codebases to support e2e ML pipelines and systems. Stavros is a results oriented individual and perceives his craft as a mean to achieve a certain goal. He keeps a high sense of ownership and he's genuinely dedicated to promote and establish a healthy AI culture within the teams and bridge the gap between technical complexity to non-technical audiences. Stavros is also actively engaged in FLOSS contributions, MLOps and systems engineering with strong foundations in Linux environments.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Machine Learning Engineer

Safesize (1yrs 5mos)

March 2024 – Today | Athens, GR

- Research, develop and launch an e2e shoe size recommendation system as a serverless service to support and replace the previous recommendation engine, increasing up to 15% the recommendation performance.
- Collaborate with engineering and infra team to design & establish MLOps infrastructure to efficiently hot-swap models in production with 0% downtime.
- Drive the implementation and delivery with diverge stakeholders (Eng, PMs, QA, AMs, C-level)
- Onboard and mentor new engineering members to team's services introducing good practices and training sessions.

Machine Learning Engineer

Convert Group (3yrs 3mos)

Nov 2020 – Jan 2024 | Athens, GR

- Developed, tuned and deployed ML powered services in computer vision, time series forecasting, NLP and LLMs.
- Streamlined the end-to-end ML lifecycle with MLOps and CI/CD, automating processes for efficient model deployment.
- Conducted A/B testing and automated analyses, delivering key performance insights for ML models.
- Collaborated with cross-functional stakeholders on PoCs for product and operational enhancements.
- Developed and maintained 4 major and provided PoCs for 6 minor company projects, reaching expected deliverable timelines in all 10 projects.
- Developed, tuned and maintained an end-to-end deep learning based image similarity service that increased up to 30% the performance in customer's content compliance and reduced up to 70% of annotation time.
- Developed a campaign sales seasonal forecasting service that increased usage and feature adoption by 50%.
- Presented technical talks, authored engineering blogs, and contributed to FLOSS, establishing thought leadership.
- Supervised and mentored data science interns, guiding them through project execution and industry best practices.

AI & Systems Engineer

DeepMed IO (9 mos)

September 2018 – May 2019

- Involved in company's project outsourced to external vendor
- Conducted exploratory data analysis, data wrangling and cleaning in within combined data schemas
- Implemented & improved image processing, machine & deep learning algorithms and models for computer vision
- Documented & presented deliverables in customer meetings
- Built, configured and maintained deep learning & networking on both on-prem/cloud infrastructure
- Tested & deployed company's projects
- Produced technical documentation and guidelines for reference and reporting

EDUCATION

MSc Data Science, GPA: 8.75

NCSR Demokritos - University of Peloponnese

2019 – 2021

Thesis Title: *Photography style analysis using Machine Learning* - Supervisors: Theodoros Giannakopoulos, Prof. Evaggelos Spyrou

MSc Informatics, Image synthesis & Graphics Design Internet & Multimedia Technology, GPA: 13.96/20

University of West Attica - Université de Limoges

2014-2016

Thesis Title: *Image Retrieval platform for building recognition in urban environments* - Supervisor: Prof. Anastasios Kesidis

BSc. Informatics Engineer, GPA: 7.33

University of Thessaly

2009-2014

Thesis Title: *Evaluation and development of Feature Extraction Methods in WCE Video* - Supervisor: Prof. Evaggelos Spyrou

CONFERENCES

Democratizing ML, Democratizing ML w/ HuggingFace (workshop)
FOSSCOMM 2022 - University of Thessaly, **link**

Real-world MLOps w/ MLFlow, MLOps in practive w/ MLFlow (workshop)
FOSSCOMM 2021 - University of Macedonia, **link1, link2**

Photography Style Analysis using Machine Learning
FOSSCOMM 2020 - University of Western Macedonia, **link**

CERTIFICATES

LinkedIn: Advanced AI: Transformers for CV
link

NVIDIA: Building Transformer-Based NLP Applications
link

Coursera: Deep Learning Specialization
link

LANGUAGES

English ●●●●◐

German ●●○○○

SKILLS

Python | SQL | DS stack | Tensorflow | Pytorch | MLflow | OpenCV | HuggingFace | GIT | Docker | AWS | GCP | Bash | GNU/Linux

Ownership | Teamwork | Proactiveness | Patience | Flexibility | Active Listening | Knowledge Sharing

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles

- E. Spyrou, D. K. Iakovidis, **S. Niafas**, and A. Koulaouzidis, "Comparative assessment of feature extraction methods for visual odometry in wireless capsule endoscopy," *Computers in biology and medicine*, vol. 65, pp. 297–307, 2015.

Conference Proceedings

- E. Mitsianis, E. Spyrou, T. Giannakopoulos, **S. Niafas**, and S. Perantonis, "Deep learned features for image retrieval," in *Proceedings of the 10th Hellenic Conference on Artificial Intelligence*, 2018, pp. 1–4.