Tim McMackin

timothymcmackin@gmail.com
linkedin.com/in/timothymcmackin
timothymcmack.in

Summary

I simplify complicated software suites by providing thorough, useful information that guides customers through their tasks.

I lead teams that provide complete information services for software products.

I work directly with developers and technology by implementing information systems and researching computer systems in a hands-on manner.

Experience

Shutterstock (Remote): Information Engineer IV	2022
Senior Information Engineer	2017-2022

– Drove a culture of information sharing and introduced technical documentation processes as Shutterstock's first technical writer. Hosted writing classes and working sessions to guide teams to make documenting their work part of their processes.

– Developed and wrote documentation for [Shutterstock's public API, SDK, CLI](), and [UI widgets](), using a pipeline to merge OpenAPI spec files with manually written examples and task-oriented content. Reduced average partner integration time from 3 to 1.2 months. Partner feedback indicates that documentation is a major factor in getting integrations working quickly.

– Developed and maintained a modular documentation container that internal teams use to publish documentation. Coded the container, deployment code, and tests using Gatsby, GraphQL, React, GitHub Actions, asynchronous JavaScript, and other open-source tools. Onboarded documentation for 5 internal services in 2 months and eventually 13 systems.

– Built a diagram of Shutterstock's internal architecture, gathering information from each department and merging it into a format that makes sense across all departments. Departments across the company use this diagram to diagnose outages and other urgent situations.

– Documented Node.JS services and APIs to promote innersourcing and accelerate onboarding.

IBM (Durham, NC): Advisory Technical Writer/Team Lead　　　　　2004-2017

– Led a seven-person team providing documentation for IBM UrbanCode software and its 70-person development team, including documentation, education, videos, white papers, customer forum response, and support response. Covered a wide range of realistic customer DevOps scenarios, such as blue-green deployments, rolling deployments, dark launches, continuous delivery, and mainframe deployments.

– Documented a wide range of technologies and platforms, including programming languages, distributed software, mainframe software, diagramming tools, and cloud systems.

– Researched and wrote custom documents for our largest customers and for critical needs. Contributed directly to sales deals in the millions of dollars.

– Collaborated with support teams to identify customer needs and to focus efforts on preventing support calls. Reduced average time to documentation error resolution from 8 days to 2 days.

Lohre & Associates Advertising (Cincinnati, OH): Copywriter　　　　　2000-2003

– Wrote magazine articles, press releases, client communication, and research reports.

Education

M.A Professional Writing	**B.A. English Rhetoric and Literature**
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA	Xavier University, Cincinnati, OH

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Publication samples

Shutterstock API, SDK, and CLI reference

I originally built this API reference documentation with Widdershins and Shins but later wrote a custom Node.JS and Nunjucks program to generate it. It merges handwritten examples and task-based information about using the API with generated examples and endpoint reference from an OpenAPI source file.

Shutterstock developer portal documentation

This documentation covers many of the same topics as the API reference but is aimed at decision-makers and architects. Along with information about using the API, JavaScript SDK, and CLI, I've added a tutorial and information that helps Shutterstock's enterprise clients allow their employees to access Shutterstock through single sign-on.

Tutorial: Using the computer vision features of the Shutterstock API

This tutorial covers using the reverse image search and keyword suggestion features of our computer vision services. It includes end-to-end instructions on setting up a free API account, installing the Shutterstock JavaScript SDK, and writing straightforward Node.JS programs to analyze user-submitted images.

Performance characteristics of IBM UrbanCode Deploy

I planned, wrote, and typeset this white paper based on testing data from our product development teams. I consulted with the performance testers about what the test results meant and with the customer-facing teams that needed to explain the performance of the product to current and potential customers.

Rollback scenarios in IBM UrbanCode Deploy

This video addresses customer confusion that I learned about from support requests. It demonstrates techniques for reversing problems automatically, and it teaches customers about a common misconception about the product at the same time. Our internal support call analysis showed significantly fewer customer issues in this area after I delivered and promoted the video.