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Gregory D. Forties

Linux Administrator, Cloud Architect, Release Engineer

Summary

Seasoned Linux professional with hands-on experience to many parts of the software development lifecycle, from development and testing to hosting and monitoring, with a focus on web application architecture hosting and deployment.

Interests

Immutable infrastructure, agile development, continuous integration and deployment, systems and cloud architecture, tools and automation, configuration management, build and release management, self-repairing systems

Outside of work, I enjoy writing, recording, and performing music. Currently, I am part of the duo the Dubsayers, a reggae-based modern take on dub music. <http://www.dubsayers.com>

Experience

Principal Devops Engineer Interactive Williams Interactive | Chicago, IL
January 2013 – May 2014 (1 year 5 months)

Sole devops systems administrator for a white-label gambling website and mobile application, supporting a small talented agile development team.

Responsibilities:

- Design, automate, and support a fault-tolerant, scalable, multi-AZ AWS virtual private cloud for company's "for fun" B2B gambling websites and mobile apps (snocasino.play4funnetwork.com, aplay.play4funnetwork.com, *.play4funnetwork.com)
- Provide and support common internet and intranet services including email (postfix), git (stash), DNS (Route53), continuous integration (jenkins), database administration (mysql/RDS), python web hosting (apache, django, mod_wsgi), and cloud automation (chef)

- Work closely with developers, QA testers, and management to ensure new features are written, tested, and deployed in a timely and safe manner
- Provide leadership and direction to novice team members, give training on emerging technology, and run daily scrum meetings (in the absence of management)

Accomplishments:

- Transitioned development from SVN to git for code management
- Developed custom application for automagically managing cloudwatch alarms
- Automated deployments, including database changes and roll-back option using jenkins, chef, boto
- Provided training and support for previous position at WMS (playerlife.com) while continuing to fulfill duties at my new position
- Won WMS's 2013 "Above and Beyond" award for dedication and commitment to excellence

Senior Gaming Systems Architect WMS Gaming | Chicago, IL
January 2011 – December 2012 (2 years)

One of two senior sysadmins responsible for maintaining a classic VMware/Linux data center hosting the django-based playerslife.com website and its java/tomcat backend services.

Responsibilities:

- Support development and management with new features and environment/server requests
- Manage application deployment timeframe, communication, code deploy and mysql-cluster database
- Maintain very strict uptime for back-end java services and associated mysql-cluster (NDB) database
- Liaison with internal and customer technical staff to troubleshoot off-site client network connectivity and configuration issues

Accomplishments:

- 100% uptime for backend java service and mysql-cluster database
- Automated software deployments using Fabric (python)
- Setup Selenium Grid server for automating cross-platform browser testing
- Deployed Zabbix monitoring system
- Promoted to Principal Devops Engineer Interactive (above)

Systems Administrator I Playboy Enterprises, Inc. | Chicago, IL
September 2009 – January 2011 (1 year 5 months)

Junior systems administrator on a team with three other senior admins (two remote) responsible for maintaining a classic VMware datacenter of approximately 140 CentOS 5 nodes across 10 physical machines serving several hundred domains including playboy.com, playboyenterprises.com, clubjenna.com, and the Reality Gang properties.

Technologies supported: Apache, F5 load balancers, mysql databases, NATS affiliate tracking system, FatWire CMS, Java/Tomcat, Java/JBoss, php

Deployment Engineer thePlatform | Seattle, WA
2008 – 2009 (1 year)

- Manage, deploy, and document Java services in production and staging environments.
- Work with developers, DBAs, and sysadmins to determine hardware, software, and monitoring requirements for new services.
- Serve as production gatekeeper in weekly change control meetings to ensure proposed deployments have been properly tested and that any prerequisites are in place.
- Advise management on associated risks with deployments.
- Create and maintain Capistrano (Ruby), sh, Perl, and Windows batch deployment scripts and diagnostic tools.
- Serve as subject matter expert on many applications.

Application Support Engineer thePlatform | Seattle, WA
October 2007 – August 2008 (11 months)

Advanced technical helpdesk and NOC engineer

- Provide phone and email support to customers of varying technical skill level (None to Senior Developer)
- Monitor and troubleshoot production servers and applications
- Handle outage triage with internal staff and customers
- Write custom Java/C# applications and code examples using our custom API

Key Accomplishments:

- Help transition the company from Microsoft solutions to open-source/Linux
- Setup RHEL/Xen server for internal Linux training
- Create custom internal reports for management using standard unix tools, perl, Excel
- Promoted to Deployment Engineer (above)

Education

New York University Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Computer Science
2003 – 2007
Minors: Math, Philosophy