Richard Ellis

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Professional Profile

An accomplished IT leader, harnessing over 20 years of experience, focussing on platform engineering, development, operations, product outcomes, and strategic leadership.

Demonstrated expertise in leading teams and spearheading strategic initiatives, successfully implementing transformative changes throughout the entire engineering lifecycle. Possessing strong business acumen, adeptly managing significant departmental budgets and forging successful partnerships with third-party vendors. I am also a highly effective communicator, regularly engaging with top-level executives (CxOs).

Skills and Expertise

- Setting the strategic approach for teams, focussed on delivering first class solutions, using the best technology and processes to enable business success
- Strong leadership skills, leading large development teams, with a positive outcomes, focused on productivity and performance
- Technically accomplished, with an excellent understanding of platform engineering, web, mobile and cloud technologies across multiple sectors
- Excellent development and testing practices and principles, including leading and mentoring of near-shore and far-shore developers and testers

Recent Accomplishments

- Achieved a Digital Transformation through DevOps, leading an operational team as they embraced full service ownership to improve agility, delivering proactive monitoring and alerting, which resulted in a reduction of service impacting outages and introduced key KPI's for business critical applications and infrastructure.
- Implemented a release-train strategy that has improved cadence by 50%, while ensuring change at scale has minimal impact, and that the business can continually achieve value.
- Led a strategic transformation of a testing team, by introducing an automation first approach, and improvements to the software testing life cycle, that has resulted in a circa 30% reduction of test effort, enabling the team to deliver change quicker with greatly improved quality.
- Led a strategic project implementing Akamai's Web Application Firewall and Site Shield to protect a major logistics brand, minimise business risk of downtime, data theft and to protect against attacks..

Employment History

Halfords Group - 2021 to July 2023

Head of Engineering

Head of Engineering leading a distributed team of Developers, Cloud Engineers, Testers, Release Managers, and Salesforce Service Cloud professionals (c26 heads) in the delivery of change. My responsibilities include:

- Setting the overall strategy for all Engineering teams and platforms, through various delivery models, from Agile to traditional waterfall
- Definition and recruitment of an Engineering TOM as part of a Digital Transformation
- Working closely with internal delivery teams to ensure resource and skills are available at the right time
- Providing governance of 3rd party suppliers, from vendor selection, through RFP to resource placement
- Cost & performance management of Azure (SaaS & PaaS), ensuring services and applications are provisioned according to usage and scalability

DPD Group UK - 2013 to August 2020
Head of Software Development and Quality Assurance (2016 - to date)
Head of Software Development and Testing at the UK's leading time-critical carrier, leading a distributed team of software developers and testers (c62 heads), delivering first class services and applications in a fast paced setting, where being first to market is essential. My responsibilities include:
- Strategic direction for a distributed team of software developers and testers, and a Salesforce team
- Cost management - achieving the company strategy of increased efficiency, demonstrated recently by renegotiating our New Relic contract, saving 30%, while ensuring this supplier continued to provide the same standards of service and value
- Leading a Digital Transformation applying DevOps principles, for the instrumentation of on-premise and cloud hosted apps, ensuring critical services are monitored 24x7
- Managing upwards, ensuring Board Directors, Senior Managers and stakeholders are kept updated with progress on business critical initiatives
- Successfully delivered first mobile app - Your DPD, including the design, development and ongoing product support of this very successful product, which to date has amassed over 4 million downloads

Software Development Team Lead (2015 to 2016)
In this role, I was responsible for leading a team of software developers, delivering first class applications to deadline. This role also included technical lead responsibilities, which involved leading large scale corporate projects, ensuring they were delivered on time and on budget.

Senior Front End Web Developer (2013 to 2015)
DPD is the leading time critical carrier in the UK, delivering millions of parcels per week. Using JavaScript based frameworks and libraries, I developed responsive customer and consumer facing websites and applications.

Jones and Palmer (2013 to 2013)
Digital Project Manager
Jones and Palmer specialise is Corporate Reporting, working with FTSE 100 and FTSE 250 companies to deliver printed and online corporate reports. My responsibilities included:
- Project management of high quality online and printed corporate reports
- Designing functional specifications for projects, from simple static sites, through to full CMS powered applications, that deliver great results for customers
- Scheduling and resource alignment for the development team, ensuring forward planning and deadlines are effectively managed

- Collaboration with stakeholders to ensure on time delivery of project milestones and events

BigJump (2012 to 2013)

Web Developer

Bigjump specialise in creating web applications for business. Working with well known brands in the automotive and telecommunications sectors. My responsibilities included:
- Managing the front-end build of sites, liaising with stakeholders to ensure the project is delivered on time and within budget
- Defining user stories with clients to ensure the delivered website retains its look and feel across browsers, while maintaining usability
- Working from wireframes and/or Photoshop files from clients to create full workable, standards compliant websites

Auto Trader/Trader Media Group 2006 to 2011

Production/Studio Specialist

Trader Media Publishing is the parent company of Auto Trader. In this role, I provided production, technical support and training to the online and offline publishing teams, ensuring they had the tools and skills necessary to deliver an outstanding product, within a highly pressured, deadline-driven environment.

Trinity Mirror Group 2004 to 2006

Production Manager

Leading a team of 18 people, designing and producing monthly and weekly print based magazines. I was responsible for the design direction of our titles, managing budgets, scheduling and forecasting for forthcoming promotions and events.

Education

St Helens College HNC in Computer Aided Art and Design
Southport College of Art and Technology BTEC National Diploma in Graphic Design
Deyes High School, Maghull, Merseyside GCSE

References On Request