

# Leif Singer

## Curriculum Vitae

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### Overview

**Engineering & Product Manager:** Continuously experimented with light-weight practices and processes that make it easier to collaborate. Used design sprints, qualitative and quantitative user research, analytics, and market trends to triage, prioritize, and tightly scope upcoming projects. Communicated priorities, rationale, and research results to team. Specified projects and assisted team with development. Created wire-frames to guide implementation. Worked with support and marketing to coordinate efforts and gather data.

**Developer:** Started developing for the Web in 1996. Worked as an employee, contractor, and co-founder. Experience with a range of languages, frameworks, libraries, and practices. Implemented projects from ideation to maintenance. Worked on deployments with dozens of millions of users.

**Writer:** Authored 25+ academic papers. Blogger. Science fiction writer. Passionate about language.

**Speaker:** Presented at academic conferences. Invited talks at, e.g., Audi and Microsoft Research.

**Mentor:** Coached and mentored developers, software architects, Ph.D. students, and computer science students. Topics: specific technologies, frameworks, engineering practices, research methods.

### Education

2008–2013 **Dr. rer. nat. (PhD)**, *Computer Science*, University of Hanover, Germany.

2005–2008 **M. Sc.**, *Computer Science*, University of Hanover, Germany.

2002–2005 **B. Sc.**, *Computer Science*, University of Hanover, Germany.

### Professional Experience

since 2015 **Full-stack Developer & Engineering Manager**, *Automattic*, remote.

Engineering lead and software developer for WordPress.com.

- Lead a team of three to six developers and designers. Introduced practices like Kanban and retrospectives.
- Helped create a framework for guided tours on WordPress.com to introduce users to relevant features at the right time.
- Conducted and used qualitative and quantitative user research for project and task prioritization.
- Used design sprints, wireframing, user testing, and other practices to plan and explore projects. Wrote project briefs and helped create the roadmaps for two development teams.
- Used analytics and A/B tests to assess the impact of implemented changes.
- *Technologies:* JavaScript, React, Redux, PHP, SQL, CSS, HTML.

2014–2015 **Full-stack Developer & Product Manager**, *iDoneThis*, remote.

Product management in a B2B SaaS product focused on making team collaboration better.

- Helped double recurring revenue and cut monthly churn from 10% to 3%.
- Used product vision and user research (surveys, interviews, analytics) to decide what to work on next and aggressively cut scope.
- Decided for, scoped, and specified the Slack integration (90+% of paying teams used it).
- Introduced and refined a light-weight road-mapping and project process.
- Implemented sub-projects in both front-end and back-end development.
- *Technologies:* Python, Django, CoffeeScript, Backbone, Stripe API, Heroku, memcached, SQL, Bootstrap, Ruby, JavaScript, CSS, HTML.

- 2013–2014 **Postdoctoral Fellow**, *CHISEL Group, University of Victoria*, Victoria, Canada.  
 Researcher in collaboration tools and processes for software developers. Partly remote.
- Initiation, lead, and collaboration on several studies (e.g. *How Software Developers Use Twitter*<sup>1</sup> or *Kinds of Links Shared on Stack Overflow*<sup>2</sup>); designed and implemented tools and scripts for research.
  - Mentored PhD students, wrote academic papers and blog posts on my research, gave talks in academia and industry (e.g. Microsoft Research).
  - *Technologies*: Java, Ruby, SQL, JavaScript, d3.js, CSS, HTML.
- 2008–2013 **Researcher**, *Software Engineering Group, University of Hanover*, Germany.  
 PhD student conducting research on developer collaboration and adoption of engineering practices.
- Initiation and lead of international collaborations and studies (qualitative and quantitative), e.g. *Testing Practices on GitHub*<sup>3</sup> or *Gamification of Version Control*<sup>4</sup>.
  - Wrote academic papers, blog posts on my research; talks in academia and industry (e.g. Audi).
  - Designed and implemented tools and scripts for research, teaching, and experiments.
  - Managed, supervised, and coached students in several courses and student theses.
  - Coached and mentored developer teams from industry (e.g. Volkswagen).
  - PhD thesis: *“Improving the Adoption of Software Engineering Practices Through Persuasive Interventions”*<sup>5</sup>.
  - *Technologies*: Java, Ruby, SQL, Python, JavaScript, CSS, HTML.
- 2002–2008 **Freelance Developer**, *several clients*, Hannover, Germany.  
 Contracting and consulting projects financing my university studies.
- Conducted and documented requirements interviews with diverse clients.
  - Implemented projects from start to finish.
  - Sample projects: inventory management for a mechanical engineering company, calendaring system for an even management company, work roster system for a medical company.
  - *Technologies*: Java, PHP, SQL, JavaScript, CSS, HTML.
- 2001–2002 **Software Developer**, *A&L GmbH*, Hannover, Germany.  
 Designed and implemented a Web application that allowed its users to create their own Web applications by configuring and nesting generic components.
- Designed and implemented a generic component architecture together with a colleague, initiated application of practices like refactoring, pair programming.
  - *Technologies*: Apple WebObjects, Java, SQL, HTML, Mac OS X Server.
- 1999–2001 **Co-Founder and Developer**, *wap3 Technologies GmbH*, Cologne, Germany.  
 Product and software development focused on the early mobile Web: *“Geocities for WAP”*.
- Raised venture capital together with two of the other founders.
  - Created the front-end for our site and helped grow it to 40,000+ users.
  - Wrote an ad server in Perl.
  - *Technologies*: Perl, PHP, SQL, JavaScript, HTML, Apache Webserver, Linux.

*References available upon request.*

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<sup>1</sup><http://blog.leif.me/2013/11/how-software-developers-use-twitter/>

<sup>2</sup><http://leif.me/papers/Gomez2013.pdf>

<sup>3</sup><http://blog.leif.me/2012/09/github-testing/>

<sup>4</sup><http://blog.leif.me/2015/02/nudging-novices-persuasive-patterns/>

<sup>5</sup><http://blog.leif.me/2013/02/dissertation-published/>