# Leif Singer

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**Engineering Leader**

- Empathetic engineering leader with 10+ years of experience scaling distributed teams.
- Passionate about remote work practices, systems thinking, and helping engineers grow.
- Coach and mentor to software engineers and computer science students from BSc to PhD levels.

**Software Engineer**

- Developing for the Web since 1996 — as employee, contractor, freelancer, and co-founder.
- Built solutions from ideation to maintenance. Worked on deployments with dozens of millions of users.
- Technologies: TypeScript, JavaScript, Python, Django, PHP, Ruby, Rails, others.

**Remote Worker**

- Working remotely since 2014 in diverse organizations with colleagues from up to 93 countries.
- Shaped work environments and adjusted practices to asynchronous environments.
- Put insights from own and others' academic research on developer collaboration into practice.

## Professional Experience

**Senior Engineering Manager** **remote**
*Ghost (OSS content publishing)* *2024–present*

- Lead and coach three engineering teams (10 engineers total); defined rituals and processes including async stand-ups, rotations, and retrospectives.
- Partner with CTO and COO to shape engineering practices, values, and onboarding; apply ideas from systems thinking and flow engineering. Drive hiring and onboarding of staff engineers.
- Shape and promote engineering-wide practices for learning, continuous improvement, and team cohesion.

**Senior Engineering Manager** **hybrid**
*HERO Software GmbH (B2B vertical SaaS)* *2024*

- Led and coached team of five engineers. Supported CTO and Head of Engineering in defining and assessing roles and career levels. Coached other engineering managers.
- Led initiative to evolve office- and call-centric hybrid culture to a remote-first, better documented, and more asynchronous mode of working, culminating in a company-wide culture playbook.
- Defined and gathered developer experience metrics for measuring the health of the engineering organization.

**Staff Software Engineer (Full-Stack)** **remote**
*WooCommerce, Automattic, Inc. (OSS e-commerce solution)* *2023–2024*

- Member of WooCommerce Core team. Focused on diffusing product and process expertise and unblocking others inside and outside of the team. Led multiple emergency recovery efforts.
- Significant input on roadmap. Shipped new features, fixed defects, reviewed internal and external pull requests.
- Qualitative improvements to repository tooling supporting the WooCommerce release process and the CI pipeline, such as analysis and optimization of unit, functional, and end-to-end test suites.

**Interim Head of Developer Advocacy** **remote**
*WooCommerce, Automattic, Inc. (OSS e-commerce solution)* *2021–2023*

- Hired developer advocacy team for the WooCommerce OSS project. Developed team vision, created OKRs and other KPIs, introduced and documented team processes to increase team's leverage and resiliency.
- Developed a developer satisfaction score to regularly measure quantitative and qualitative sentiment in the WooCommerce developer ecosystem as one of our success metrics and source of customer research data.
- Built relationships and processes across organization, improving developer awareness and communication.

**Engineering Manager** **remote**
*WordPress.com, Automattic, Inc. (OSS content publishing)* *2017–2021*

- Led two teams of twelve developers and designers. Introduced and refined Kanban, retrospectives, and other collaboration practices; saved effort and increased reliability with checklists, process descriptions, and templates.
- Introduced design sprints, wire-framing, user testing, and other practices to plan and explore projects. Defined projects and created roadmaps for two engineering teams.

**Engineering Manager & Senior Software Engineer (Full-Stack)** **remote**
*WordPress.com, Automattic, Inc. (OSS content publishing)* *2015–2017*

- Led team that built a guided tours framework with a DSL for others to use, optimized for developer experience. Increased adoption by conducting workshops with members of customer support.
- Scoped and built a contextual help system for WordPress.com; used A/B tests and analytics to measure impact.

**Product Manager & Software Engineer (Full-Stack)** **remote**
*iDoneThis (B2B SaaS)* *2014–2015*

- Front-end, back-end, infrastructure, and product work in a B2B SaaS product focused on making team collaboration better. Helped double MRR and cut monthly churn from 10% to 3%.
- Used market and user research (surveys, interviews, analytics) to prioritize and scope work, e.g. an API and integration later used by 90+% of paying teams.

**Postdoctoral Fellow** **Victoria, Canada**
*CHISEL Group, University of Victoria* *2013–2014*

- Researcher in collaboration tools and processes for developers. Started, led, and collaborated on several studies (e.g., *How Software Developers Use Twitter*) with mixed-method designs; developed custom research tooling.
- Mentored PhD students, published academic papers, gave talks in academia and at companies.

**Researcher & PhD Student** **Hannover, Germany**
*Software Engineering Group, University of Hanover* *2008–2013*

- Conducted research on how developers collaborate, use tools, and adopt engineering practices.
- Started and led international collaborations; qualitative and quantitative. Built tools for research and teaching.
- PhD thesis: *Improving the Adoption of Software Engineering Practices Through Persuasive Interventions*.

**Lead Software Engineer (Full-Stack)** **Hannover, Germany**
*Freelance, Several Clients* *2002–2008*

- Interviewed customers on their problems and needs; then designed, built, deployed, and iterated on solutions.
- Examples: event planning system for *Hannover Concerts*, work roster system for *Radiologie Hannover*.

**Software Engineer (Full-Stack)** **Hannover, Germany**
*A&L GmbH (software agency)* *2001–2002*

- Designed and built a web app for creating web apps using nested, configurable, flexible components.
- Introduced practices like refactoring, unit testing, and pair programming.

**Co-Founder and Software Engineer (Full-Stack)** **Cologne, Germany**
*wap3 Technologies GmbH (B2C WAP site hosting)* *1999–2001*

- Co-founded and helped build a community site and website builder focused on the early mobile Web ("WAP").
- Helped raise 2.6 million DM venture capital and grow the site to 40,000+ users.

## Education

**PhD (Dr. rer. nat.) in Software Engineering** **Leibniz University Hannover, Germany**
*Graduated with distinction ("sehr gut" / very good)* *2008–2013*

**MSc in Computer Science** **Leibniz University Hannover, Germany**
*Graduated with distinction ("sehr gut" / very good)* *2005–2008*

**BSc in Computer Science** **Leibniz University Hannover, Germany**
*2002–2005*