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Charbel Wakim

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Staff DevEx Engineer with 15+ years of experience in the full development life cycle, including architecture and development to process and people management. Highly skilled in PHP and most mainstream object oriented programming languages, with strong mentoring and collaboration skills.

Expert in e-commerce, especially Magento 1 and 2, with 10+ years of experience in the setup, monetization, and upkeep of very complex and large retailers.

Currently working as Staff DevEx engineer to complement my development career.

As I am always eager to add to my skill sets, I have started my certification towards DevSecOps.

My ambition is to eventually become a primary engineer then a CTO or a founder.

EXPERIENCE

Emma Sleep, Frankfurt am Main – Germany — *Staff DevEx Engineer*

MAY 2020 – PRESENT

- Enhancing the infrastructure using Helm, Pulumi, and Kubernetes to reduce the deployment speed and cost.
- Reduced the cost of the system by ~60% by automating the autoscaling during peak hours, integrating third parties that reduces AWS cost, removing old unused systems, changing server architectures, automating most of the manual processes, archiving backups into Glacier ...
- Reduced the down time during Black Friday to zero from a very unstable system that crashed constantly during peak hours by completely changing the caching systems, dividing the load onto multiple databases, and autoscaling the servers ...
- Co-refactored the IaC repositories to run in parallel instead of being one big monolith.
- Setup monitoring, alerting, and on call from scratch.
- Divided the OpenMage from a PHP monolith into a 3 services system that are independent (Backend, Frontend, and CRON).
- Integrated security measures and softwares to safeguard a 1 Billion EUR per year system.
- Part of the team that integrated OpenMage with the biggest retailers such as Amazon, Fnac, Walmart, Carrefour...
- Part of the team that created the logic for post sales from order creation, dispatching, returns, shipping that handles 10k+ orders per day.
- Setup best practices, tests, and constant updates for OpenMage.
- Part of the team that updated OpenMage from PHP 5 to PHP 8.
- Integrated OpenMage with third parties such as Microsoft Dynamics, Tableau, warehouses ...
- Scaled the team from 8 to 30+ developers as tech lead and system architect. Also helped nurture the new joiners as a mentor to get familiar with the very customized OpenMage system.

- Setup an automated deployment process that removed the manual work to create the version that needs to be deployed, test it, and deploy it to the server.

The Volunteer Circle, Beirut – Lebanon — *Technical Consultant*

MARCH 2017 – PRESENT

- Single handedly set up the website from scratch (PHP/Laravel) for The Volunteer Circle, the biggest volunteering platform in the middle east.
- Created a system for NGOs to approve, review volunteers as well as create and edit their profile as they want on the website.
- Integrated the website with multiple NGOs to send and receive thousands of volunteering requests into the platform per day through either CSVs or APIs.

Addbloom, Beirut – Lebanon — *Tech Lead*

JANUARY 2020 – FEBRUARY 2021

- Moved the technology stacks and architecture for the clients from self hosted to the cloud (AWS).
- Integrated and introduced GIT to the company.
- Created the backend for one of the biggest real estate agencies in the US from scratch (PHP/Laravel) that integrated with DocuSign and allowed the agent to create, send, and sign documents all online.
- Introduced Magento 2 to the company and used it to migrate their biggest retail clients from custom developed websites to Magento.

Grand Stores, Beirut – Lebanon — *Tech Lead*

SEPTEMBER 2018 – DECEMBER 2019

- Lowered the page load time by ~90% by implementing caching, lazy loading, image pre-processing, and cache warming.
- Migrated the biggest clothes retailer in the middle east from Magento 1 to Magento 2, including orders, customers, warehousing ...
- Integrated Dynamics with Magento 2 to sync customer information with customer service.
- Integrated their offline loyalty program with the website and created the online customer loyalty from scratch with the ability for the admins to customize tiers, edit points, and for the clients to spend their loyalty points on the website.

Keeward, Beirut – Lebanon — *Tech Lead*

FEBRUARY 2014 – AUGUST 2018

- Part of the team that created a machine learning process to adapt the pricing of Keeward's own book selling platform depending on the season and competitor's price.
- Created the backend on Magento for the biggest flowers retailer in the middle east (Exotica) and integrated their offline systems, and tracking software onto the website.
- Lead the e-commerce team for the agency and set up the SCRUM processes, QA, best practices, and hosting.
- Part of the team that integrated Keeward's own book selling platform with the biggest retailers such as Amazon, FNAC, Abebook, and Librairie Antoine.

Triangle, Beirut – Lebanon — *Co-Founder*

DECEMBER 2010 – December 2015

- Created the website (PHP/Zend) for Kataeb.org on the biggest news platforms in the country and helped secure it from constant hacking attempts and DDoS from competitors (~100k unique visitors per month).

- Created the platform for Virgin Radio Lebanon from scratch (PHP/Wordpress) that included the integration with their online radio and a place where the listeners can choose songs to be played on the radio.
- Created the custom content management system and content delivery system for VDL radio that allowed them to present their archive of 60+ years to the customers as VoD as well as integrated their radio online.
- Setup the technology vision, stack, and hosting from scratch.
- Co-Founded the company with a business partner and grew it to 5 tech people and 10 people in general.

SKILLS

Web Technologies: Helm, Pulumi, Kubernetes, Docker, Kibana, SOPS, JavaScript, HTML5, CSS3, Bootstrap, jQuery, LogStash, GitHub, Jira, PagerDuty, Cloudflare, Grafana.

Programming Languages: PHP, C#, TypeScript, GoLang, Python

Frameworks: Magento 1 and 2, Laravel, Symfony, Zend, Wordpress

Databases: MySQL, SQL Server, PostgreSQL, ElasticSearch, RDS, Redis, MongoDB, SQLite

Cloud Deployment: Amazon Web Services, Heroku, Digital Ocean, Vultr, Pivotal, OpenShift

Operating Systems: Linux, MacOS, Windows

LANGUAGES

English / French / Arabic - fluent

German - A2

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Speaker at Grafana ObservabilityCon: Represented Emma Sleep at the 2023 Grafana ObservabilityCon in Berlin and gave a speech on how we implemented Grafana to monitor our system.

<https://grafana.com/go/webinar/how-grafana-cloud-turned-black-friday-into-a-dream-sales-day-for-emma-the-sleep-company/>

Certifications: Certified as a Professional DevSecOps Engineer.

https://www.credly.com/badges/9f79bb9f-d0e0-46b1-8e51-851b08fe873b/linked_in_profile

Hobbies: Avid gamer and skier, Reading, Travelling.

Volunteer: Technical consultant for the Volunteer Circle NGO.