

Work History

for Robert Kuropkat

<https://robert.kuropkat.com/>

<https://linkedin.com/in/robertkuropkat/>

Security Clearance: Top Secret/SCI (*expired*)

Director of Interactive Systems

Z88.3FM (Z Ministries)

June 2021 – March 2023

Effort focused on modernizing legacy systems. Due to the age of the hardware, this became our initial focus. Approximately 30TB of data and virtual machines needed moved around to free up hardware in need of invasive maintenance. As hardware was freed up, drives, memory, CPU, controller cards, etc. were tested and replaced as needed to increase capacity, consistency and reliability. As part of the redeployment, hardware was configured for as much redundancy as possible (e.g. RAID, multiple NICs), cold spares were stocked and backplane managers were enabled. Services were then redeployed to the hardware making use of modern replication, redundancy and backup methodologies as possible with a longer term goal of redeveloping software and data solutions for increased failover options at a later date.

Senior Systems Technical Specialist

Walt Disney World

February 2017 – December 2020

Led effort to build a team test lab. During my time there the lab was used in a variety of capacities including a “Maker” type lab where other team members could pull components to test proof of concept or targeted troubleshooting, hosting initial build out of systems for a new attraction, pre-deployment build out for attractions aboard the Disney Cruise ships, proof of concept for cyber security options as well as initial work on larger, coordinated efforts with other departmental test labs. Work included assessment of lab capacity and capabilities such as power, cooling, space, etc. as well as coordinating end of life efforts for hardware no longer needed.

Senior Cloud Systems Engineer

Spaceflight Industries (*formerly Black Sky*)

August 2016 – February 2017

Although the job title says Cloud Engineer, I ended up doing very little of that. Many of the folks here knew me from past jobs. So when they needed an automated deployment system, they asked me to take the lead on it. The development was all done in AWS, but the initial deployment would be on bare metal. It was my task to deconstruct the AWS environment and develop a strategy to easily and reliably deploy it to the initial target system. Because this was to be one of many systems, the process needed to be automated.

Network Security Engineer

Quotient

May 2015 – August 2016

Work with the DNS Hardening team to validate DNS related policies and security concerns in support of the g.root authoritative name servers. Activities include infrastructure feature testing, vulnerability validation, new feature review and architecture enhancement.

Senior Programmer and Doer of Stuff

Thermopylae Sciences and Technology

July 2009 – May 2015

While I did some web programming for TST, most of my experience has been in System Integration and Process Automation. Lately, there has been a lot of fine tuning of Jenkins, Maven, Kickstart as well as a bit of Puppet and FitNesse. Most of my work is in the early prototyping, proof of concept and introduction of these tools into the project's mainstream integration process.

IT Manager

SAIC

November 2007 – July 2009

It would seem life was trying very hard to push me into management. This was the third job I took that was not a Management position when I applied for it, but became one after my interview. Over achieving in the interview apparently has its downside. In this position, I dove deeper into the many aspects of System and Network Administration. While my System Administration work in the past was mostly in support of Software Development Teams, this was live Production Support. Fortunately this group was still small enough to allow me time to learn about Switches, Firewalls, Email, Phones, UPSes and everything else that goes into keeping a small to midsize division running.

IT Manager

Thinkgeek.com

July 2007 – November 2007

While my time here was short lived (I really did not want another job with “Manager” in the title), I did introduce some basic bug tracking and documentation (Trac Wiki) to open up communication between the IT staff and stakeholders. The wiki lasted longer here than I did.

Test Lab Manager

SAIC

November 2004 – July 2007

As Test Lab Manager (Latin for “he who is awaiting his Clearance”) I took a joke position considered a corporate place holder and a room full of junk hardware and turned it into a critical part of the business. I eventually maxed the capacity of the room to the point only a \$250,000 HVAC upgrade would allow me to continue growing it.

Contract Programmer

The Armada Group

February 2004 – November 2004

(Client: Cisco Systems)

Working again for Cisco Systems, I worked with internally developed software used in a variety of processes. This time, the tools were primarily web based using PERL and Javascript. I always enjoyed working for Cisco.

Senior Programmer/Analyst

McKesson, Corp.

September 2003 – February 2004

This was a fun job and one of the few it seems where I actually got to do the job I was hired for with no distractions. It was a homegrown Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) system written in PERL. As a senior programmer I was able to spend considerable time cleaning up old code, updating it to modern standards and generally stabilizing the sometimes finicky code. This included tracking down years old bugs that happened too rarely to be hunted down by the production team.

Consultant

NetSource, Inc.

February 2001 – July 2003

(Client: Ross Stores)

This contract not only introduced me to the world of Software Configuration Management, it allowed me to use my diverse skills in *nix System Administration and Oracle Database Administration while continuing my long time obsession with product installation and automation. My diverse skills allowed me to be the “go between” and facilitate project communication and advancement.

Jr. Systems Architect

ReleaseNow (formerly Client Server Designs)

Contract Programmer

Chen & McGinley

November 1998 – February 2001

(Client: ReleaseNow, formerly Client Server Designs)

April 1999 – February 2001

This was a contract position converted to full time and another “break out” role for me. CSD did legit code generation. They worked with the client to capture business requirements using UML diagrams and from those diagrams generated code automatically. Hired initially to do PERL code generation, my employer realized I could be taught the subtle skills of Business Analysis, Requirements Gathering and Software Architecture. As a junior architect, I spent much of my time in Visio designing software in UML.

(Client: Bank America)

November 1998 – April 1999

Hired as a Java programmer, I never got to do any Java programming. The team was actually nearing completion and had put off the entire reporting system. Unfortunately, their chosen product would not work in the way they had hoped. I had to demonstrate this, then bring in a new product to develop the reporting system they wanted.

Programmer/Analyst

Silicon Graphics, Inc

Contract Programmer

IT&E, Corp

January 1997 – November 1998

Working primarily with PERL, HTML and Oracle based Applications I helped create internal Decision Support Systems for internal customers as well as tools specifically to help our team manage our own portfolio of applications. It was on this job I first started digging into the world of Object Oriented code. It was also at this job I made my first connection between requirements, design, development and operations. This fueled my personal drive to gather data and meta-data from these steps to automate the transitions between these phases and seek to provide real accountability from code back to requirements. It was with great pleasure as I watched the industry over the years develop what is now generally referred to as DevOps. As those frameworks emerge and develop, I am finally able to realize the vision I developed here.

Contract Programmer

National Software Associates

January 1996 – January 1997

(Client: Cisco Systems)

Originally hired as a C programmer to maintain an internally developed system while another team converted it to a newer, document management system. However, after many delays converting its sister product, it was determined the current systems needed several feature upgrades. Upon reviewing the scope of the upgrades, I realized I could convert the smaller application I was in charge of faster. Management took me up on my proposal and I switched to PERL to extract, clean and transform the data. To this day, I consider this one of my proudest achievements as I actually restored management confidence in the conversion project as a whole and put myself out of a job.

Software Developer

Database Administrator

IFS North America (formerly Avalon Software)

May 1992 – December 1995

While not my first foray into enterprise product installation, it was one of the larger ones and introduced me to a process that needed to run on a vast array of *nix like Operating Systems. I continued to use and refine that product installer to increase the testing and integration capacity of the product development team. When I took over the position, the team was capable of effectively managing only about 5 databases. When I left the position, I was managing approximately 50.