Chad Walker

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Summary

Staff-level backend and platform engineer with over 25 years of experience. Twice the first engineering hire at a startup, architecting and building backends from nothing through production and acquisition — service architecture and schema design, cloud infrastructure and CI/CD, native C++ internals, and the frontend when it needs me.

Core Technologies

- **Languages:** TypeScript, JavaScript, C++, C, Python, Bash, SQL
- **Backend:** Node.js, Next.js, GraphQL, REST, WebSocket, microservices, Prisma, custom ORMs
- **Messaging:** RabbitMQ, ZeroMQ, SNS/SQS, TIBCO Rendezvous
- **Data:** PostgreSQL, MySQL, MongoDB, Redis, RDS
- **AWS:** EC2, ECS, Lambda, S3, RDS, ALB/NLB, Route 53, IAM, CloudFront, CloudWatch, SNS/SQS, Elemental MediaConvert, AMI creation, Spot management
- **Infrastructure & CI/CD:** Terraform, Docker, GitHub Actions, Jenkins, GCP Cloud Run, VMware, multi-environment staging and production
- **Systems:** Linux (primary platform for 30 years), Solaris, SunOS, Domain/OS
- **Media:** libav/ffmpeg, libopenshot, video transcoding pipelines, native Node.js addons
- **Also:** federated login and SSO, security and privacy compliance

Experience

Mozilla — Staff Software Engineer | Mar 2025 – Aug 2026 *Small Business group, New Products organization*

- Architected the backend and database schemas for Postful (postful.ai) and wrote over 95% of the implementation — Next.js, Prisma, PostgreSQL
- Designed the social media account connection abstractions, unifying multiple third-party provider integrations behind one internal interface
- Owned all DevOps: preview deployments on GCP provisioned via Terraform, GitHub Actions pipelines, and custom Cloud Run jobs
- Built client-side state management and the API-call subsystems, hardening request paths against transient and partial failures
- Retired long-standing technical debt in the Solo backend following Postful's shutdown

RFA Engineering — Sr. Embedded Software Engineer | Dec 2023 – Mar 2025

- Managed CI/CD systems supporting multiple engineering groups in the Construction and Forestry division
- Embedded software development onsite at John Deere Dubuque Works

Montra — Sr. Software Engineer | Mar 2023 – Aug 2023

- Streamlined the video transcoding process, removing latency from the pipeline
- Designed architectural improvements to the platform
- Mentored junior engineers

Roblox — Sr. Software Engineer, IC4 | May 2022 – Jan 2023

- Joined through Roblox's acquisition of Athenascope
- Migrated endpoints off a monolithic architecture and onto microservices
- Improved customer service management with a secondary database

Athenascope — Sr. Software Engineer | May 2018 – May 2022 *First engineering hire; company acquired by Roblox*

- Sole architect of the backend and author of over 95% of its code — React, GraphQL, WebSocket, MySQL, Redis, and a custom ORM
- Wrote custom Node.js modules in C++ to implement libav (the library behind ffmpeg) and libopenshot (the engine behind the OpenShot video editor)
- Orchestrated CI/CD and maintained multiple staging and production environments
- Built internal tooling to extract data and diagnose production issues

Grokker — Sr. Software Engineer | May 2012 – May 2018 *First engineering hire*

- Architected the backend and wrote over 95% of it, including a custom React-like Node.js framework with server-side rendering and a WebSocket connection for server-initiated updates
- Built on MongoDB and Redis behind a custom ORM
- Implemented federated logins and single sign-on
- Implemented a secure REST API serving mobile and set-top applications
- Oversaw security and privacy compliance

Education

Cornell College — Bachelor of Arts, Computer Science and Philosophy | 1995 – 1999

Earlier Experience

- **Wild Needle** — Sr. Software Engineer, iOS games | 2011 – 2012
- **A Bit Lucky** — Contract Engineer, Facebook and iOS games | 2010 – 2011
- **AR startup** — Co-Founder, augmented reality gaming | 2010
- **Xfire** — Lead Engineer, instant messenger for PC gamers | 2004 – 2010
- **Yahoo!** — Software Engineer, Yahoo! Games | 2000 – 2004
- **Space Systems/Loral** — Software Engineer, satellite manufacturing | 1999 – 2000