

Justin Zealand

Technology Executive | AI Transformation | Product & Engineering Leadership

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SUMMARY

Technology executive with 20+ years building and scaling organizations, products, and platforms from startups through Fortune 500 companies. Led global teams of 100+, multimillion-dollar budgets, platform transformations, and technology supporting \$300M+ recurring-revenue businesses. Executive and board partner connecting technology, product, operations, and go-to-market strategy to measurable business results. Combines deep engineering leadership with practical AI and agentic-systems experience, viewing AI as a fundamental shift in how organizations build, operate, and create value. Focused on leading that transition in emerging and established organizations.

EXPERIENCE

- **Technology & AI Advisor**
Independent | Reston, VA | Jan 2025–Present
Following a planned career sabbatical, focused on developing practical AI fluency and testing its implications for software delivery, engineering leadership, governance, and operating models.
 - Advised an early-stage AI-first travel venture on technology strategy, product architecture, and practical application of AI.
 - Designed and operated a private AI-native engineering lab spanning Claude Code, Codex, OpenClaw, LangGraph, and local models, directing AI agents to implement governed software and workflows.
 - Architected multi-agent orchestration, persistent objectives, human-in-the-loop approvals, and cross-model review; redesigned a multi-LLM review system, with 97.6% of 211 measured reviews successfully evaluating generated work and returning a verdict.
- **VP of Engineering**
PrePass – Phoenix, AZ | Jun 2023–Jan 2025
Tolling technology provider serving 800K+ commercial vehicles. Recruited by former Uproad CEO post-merger to restore platform velocity, modernize the technology stack, and expand AI adoption.
 - Led 50+ person organization and \$4.3M budget; modernized mobile, real-time tolling, Azure, and Databricks platforms supporting a \$300M+ recurring-revenue business.
 - Briefed executives and board on technology strategy and delivery; re-architected mobile and API portfolio for market differentiation.
 - Accelerated roadmap delivery ~20% by restructuring technical silos into cross-functional product value streams, improving focus and predictability.
 - Championed organization-wide Copilot adoption and AI upskilling, with pilots indicating ~10% productivity gains; used experimentation and hackathons to accelerate adoption.
 - Established Responsible AI guardrails addressing privacy and intellectual property as adoption expanded.
 - Reduced operating costs through vendor consolidation, contract renegotiation, and strategic insourcing while accelerating new products through partnerships.
- **VP of Engineering & Operations**
Uproad – McLean, VA | Apr 2022–May 2023
Technology-forward B2C tolling venture. Promoted to VP of Engineering & Operations with company-wide

responsibility for product, technology, go-to-market, and P&L during national expansion under aggressive investor timelines.

- Directed a 100+ person global organization and \$4M+ budget; launched a transponder-free tolling app achieving a 67 Net Promoter Score.
- Advised executives and board on product and technology roadmap, go-to-market, growth, and churn.
- Implemented an Objectives and Key Results (OKR) framework, increasing quarterly technology goal attainment from ~30% to 60%.
- Shipped mobile and backend improvements driving 16% YoY Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) growth.
- Led global teams through COVID and war in Ukraine while preserving delivery velocity and cohesion.

- **Director of Engineering**

Uproad – McLean, VA | Oct 2018–Mar 2022

- Scaled Engineering, Product, and Support organizations from 0–50+, building a delivery-driven, globally distributed culture with a \$3M budget.
- Deployed a high-reliability cloud-native tolling platform delivering 99.99% uptime with 24/7 support.
- Led vendor evaluations and build-versus-buy decisions, including Datadog adoption to improve observability and reduce Mean Time to Recovery.
- Reduced Amazon Web Services (AWS) infrastructure costs ~15% through autoscaling, performance tuning, and cloud cost optimization.
- Established ISO 27001-compliant data governance.

- **Director of Engineering**

Prolific Interactive – San Francisco, CA | Feb 2016–Oct 2018

Bay Area mobile agency. Recruited to modernize mobile and API delivery for Fortune 500 clients including Gap and Sephora.

- Delivered scalable mobile products for Gap, Sephora, and CrossFit focused on growth, retention, and engagement.
- Supported \$1B+ in commerce through scalable API/backend architecture and third-party integrations.
- Helped win strategic accounts and RFPs through technology strategy aligned with product and user experience.

EARLY CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Shipped Walmart's first native mobile applications, reaching 300K+ users (2010–2012).
- Developed Wells Fargo's next-generation small-business banking portal serving 2M+ customers (2002–2007).
- Enabled 30% faster claims processing at Delta Dental through service-oriented architecture (2007–2010).
- Launched high-performing mobile applications at StumbleUpon (2013–2014) and Madison Reed (2014–2015).

EXECUTIVE EXPERTISE

AI Strategy & Transformation • AI Adoption & Engineering Productivity • Agentic Systems & Automation • Product & Engineering Leadership • Org Design & Scaling • Executive & Board Leadership • P&L & EBITDA • Product Strategy • GTM Alignment • Platform Modernization • Cloud Architecture • DevOps & Site Reliability • Security & Responsible AI • Data Governance • Vendor Strategy

EDUCATION

West Virginia University | MM and BM in Music Performance