

DEAN CASALENA

DEAN.CASA LINKEDIN/CASALENA SAN FRANCISCO

I am a software engineering player-coach. My experience has been at fast, do-or-die companies, where I've established cultures of quality and ownership. With unwavering focus on ambitious outcomes for the business, I've built innovative tools and working environments that yield success.

Through continual learning *and unlearning*, I've honed a philosophy that supports product growth and stability, cleaning up legacy systems and debts, and building in flexibility for the future - tuning for human readability *and* AI expansion. Read on for specific impacts, awards, patents and press.

FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY PARTNERS

SAN FRANCISCO. Advisor to some of the largest deals in FinTech including Finicity's 1B sale to Mastercard, Bilt Rewards' 200M financing, and Revolut's 1.25B raise.

VP of Engineering

MAR 2021 - PRESENT

Engineering Manager

DEC 2019 - MAR 2021

- Built an in-house CRM, and then a full scale proprietary ERP, overhauled every department's operations into a powerful centralized application and database
- Hired and retained a talented team. Established a complete engineering process - roadmap, sprints, docs, reviews, deployments, tests, observability, +
- Built a Deal Tracking application - Python / Django Rest Framework API with a modern single-page-app interface in TypeScript / Vue (and then React)
- Untangled and replaced massive legacy systems - Salesforce APEX and PHP, allowing them to be fully shut down. Moved from Angular and Vue2 to React and TypeScript
- Steered the expansion of our AWS cloud services, and integrations with Azure
- Led development of early AI LLM-enabled RAG functionality in 2023, and extended to agentic approaches in 2024-25
- Directed, mentored and collaborated with on-site and remote engineers

QUIP

NEW YORK. A direct-to-consumer dental subscription product (not the other quip) with a proprietary web store, configurator and recurring subscriptions and billing.

Director of Engineering

APR 2019 - AUG 2019

Senior Software Engineer

MAY 2018 - APR 2019

- Doubled sales funnel conversion rate year-over-year on initially small team of 4 engineers, by reducing friction from the checkout flow to help the company reach over 1 million active subscribers
- Helped define our engineering hiring process and scale from 4 to 13 engineers
- Harnessed A/B tests frequently to make data-driven design decisions based on user behavior, steering users toward profitable product purchases and upsells
- Refined onboarding, trained and mentored engineers, and facilitated internal mobility and career development
- Led a team of engineers in overhauling the web app's 200+ application and marketing pages, and content management back-end; refactoring everything into concise re-usable modules leveraging coding standards I developed for the company based on industry best-practices
- Led accessibility (ADA compliance) audit and overhaul of the site

M/H

SAN FRANCISCO & NEW YORK. A creative and digital agency. Small Agency of the Year in 2014, sold to VCCP Group in 2016. Aka MUH-TAY-ZIK HOF-FER.

Director of Technology

AUG 2014 - APR 2018

- Led engineers and vendors in creating highly robust and monitored campaign websites for clients including Netflix, HP, and AAA
- Owned the executive function of engineering thought leadership and ambassadorship. Circulated a technology newsletter internally
- Earned awards for the agency including a [Silver Pencil \(The One Show\)](#) for Netflix's "Spoil Yourself" campaign microsite (one I built personally) which achieved instant virality, reddit front page and over 1 million views in the first 24 hours (without a hitch)

THISMOMENT

SAN FRANCISCO. A content management platform for brands with a focus on tools for collecting user-generated content from tagging their social posts, or direct submission.

Director of Engineering, Production

MAY 2013 - AUG 2014

Senior Custom Solutions Developer

NOV 2012 - MAY 2013

- Led a team of 13 engineers to build custom applications for a large number of premium brands on our content platform
- Provided hands-on development in some of the more high-profile executions for brands including Procter & Gamble, Coca-cola and Hilton
- Assisted in developing Doritos' 2014 Crash the Super Bowl contest, where thousands submitted commercials for a \$1M prize

XDN

SAN MATEO, CA. A content delivery network (CDN) that allowed clients to re-sell their off-peak capacity. Acquired in 2012. Aka 3Crowd Technologies.

Senior Software Engineer

DEC 2009 - NOV 2012

- Built a video analytics prototype that helped secure \$6.6M in funding
- Provided extensive full-stack development as a founding employee
- Played a central role in product development, hired and managed a UI designer
- Contributed to the conception of proprietary load-balancing algorithms

BITGRAVITY

BURLINGAME, CA. One of the first to bring HD live video streaming to the web. Vimeo and Bloomberg were customers. Acquired by Tata Communications in 2010.

Software Engineer

OCT 2007 - DEC 2009

- Co-invented technologies relating to video streaming. Listed on 3 patent applications, one granted: [US9,754,627B2: Dynamically adjusting stream quality level](#). This was licensed to Sling Media, a company that [sold for \\$380M](#)
- As an early employee, wrote the entirety of the frontend tooling provided to video publishers, including a feature-rich Flash video player, a configuration wizard (before Adobe and JW Player had one), and a video metadata analyzer

B.Sc Mathematics

University of Cape Town, South Africa

University of California: Berkeley, CA, USA