

Chris Cortez

Technologist and Engineering Leader | Portland, Oregon

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Summary

Innovative Engineering Leader with extensive experience building and scaling high-impact engineering teams and mentoring and developing people. Proven track record in balancing business delivery with engineering quality, driving initiatives, and creating robust software platforms. Deep expertise in AI/ML frameworks, cloud platforms, and modern engineering practices. Produced the award-winning documentary "No No: A Dockumentary," gaining valuable experience in film production and collaboration with creative teams. Passionate about leveraging technology to enhance storytelling and production capabilities.

Skills

- **Engineering Leadership:** Building high-performing teams, developing senior leaders, fostering a culture of innovation and technical excellence.
- **Media Technology & Film Production:** Familiarity with film production, VFX pipelines, CG animation, and integrating machine learning into film production.
- **AI and Machine Learning:** Experience with AI/ML frameworks (PyTorch, TensorFlow), model management, and applying AI solutions to media and production challenges.
- **Cloud & Infrastructure:** Proficient with AWS and GCP, containerization (Docker, Kubernetes), and infrastructure as code (Terraform, CloudFormation).
- **Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC):** Strong understanding of SDLC concepts, CI/CD pipelines, and version control discipline.
- **Project & Product Strategy:** Skilled in project planning, budgeting, and aligning technical capabilities with business and artistic goals.
- **Collaboration & Communication:** Ability to work collaboratively with cross-functional teams, excellent communication and presentation skills.

Professional Experience

PostCredit | CTO

September 2023 – May 2024

- **Innovative Media Solutions:** Led the development of an orchestrated AI workflow for processing complex documents (purchase receipts), leveraging GPT-4, Google Cloud Vision, and NLP APIs.
- **Startup Leadership:** Directed a contract team to deliver a production-ready platform under tight timelines, achieving first customer onboarding and revenue within six months.
- **AI Research & Exploration:** Explored strategies for ingesting and processing intricate legislative content, utilizing techniques like fine-tuning, adapters, embedding, and Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG).

Forma | Vice President of Engineering

June 2021 – May 2023

- **Organizational Leadership:** Built and led an engineering organization of 40+ across six teams, fostering a high-velocity, quality-focused development culture.
- **Scalability & Innovation:** Scaled the platform to support 10x growth, integrating advanced technologies to meet enterprise customer needs.
- **Cross-Functional Collaboration:** Partnered with product, design, and sales teams to align technical capabilities with business objectives customer needs

Apex Fintech Solutions | Vice President of Engineering

June 2016 – May 2021

- **Pioneering Innovations:** Developed industry-first APIs for fractional trading and portfolio rebalancing, contributing to Apex's \$5B valuation.
- **Rapid Growth Management:** Scaled the engineering team from 10 to over 100 members, implementing robust hiring and development programs.
- **Organizational Excellence:** Fostered a diverse, high-performing team culture focused on innovation and continuous improvement.
- **Operations at Scale:** Supported Robinhood's meteoric growth, alongside other rapid growth stores in fintech brokerage, while maintaining best-in-class security and reliability

Cascade Energy | Director of Engineering

January 2013 – May 2016

- **Edge Computing & IoT Solutions:** Led the development of SENSEI, a cloud-based Energy Management Information System with real-time data analysis capabilities.
- **Project Management:** Managed project plans including staffing, budgets, schedules, and integration strategies, ensuring alignment with organizational goals.

Independent Film Producer

2005 – 2016

- **"No No: A Dockumentary":** Produced the award-winning documentary that premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2014

Previous Leadership Roles

Director of Engineering at Xerox, Pop Art, Schematic, and Polycom

- Directed the development of mobile products, interactive experiences, and global telecommunications solutions.
- Collaborated with cross-functional teams to integrate emerging technologies into existing pipelines.

Leadership Skills

- Building High-Performing Teams
- Engineering Quality and Delivery
- DevOps Culture and Practice
- Software Methodology at Scale

Product Management and Strategy

- AI and ML Integration
- Organizational Development
- Cross-Functional Collaboration
- Strategic Roadmapping

Technologies and Tools

- Programming Languages: Python, JavaScript, C#, Java, Swift
- Frameworks: PyTorch, TensorFlow, Keras
- Model Management: Ollama, Transformers, Datasets, Weights & Biases
- Cloud Platforms: AWS, GCP
- Containerization & Orchestration: Docker, Kubernetes
- Infrastructure as Code: Terraform, CloudFormation
- VFX & Animation Tools: Familiarity with industry-standard VFX and CG animation software
- Fintech Solutions: Banking APIs, Fractional Trading, Portfolio Rebalancing, Transaction Processing

Education

Bachelor of Arts

Southern Arkansas University, 1992

