DREW MCMILLEN

Hybrid Cloud | AI | IT Infrastructure | DevOps | Site Reliability Engineering | IaaS, PaaS, & SaaS

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Summary

Director with 20+ years of specialized leadership experience at high-growth technology companies. Acts pragmatically and decisively when building, scaling, and modernizing cloud and application infrastructure, often at an accelerated pace. Proven ability to lead organizational transformation on a global scale, including turning around underperforming teams, investing in talented individuals, building new technology programs and infrastructure, and driving operational improvements. Known for strong emotional intelligence and empathy in times of transition, stress, or change.

Executive Highlights

DELIVERED REAL-WORLD AI VALUE

Built IBM's hybrid cloud platform, serving 2,000+ applications and achieving up to 90% cost savings over legacy hosting. Led rapid, iterative development of our AI platform, enabling AI use cases including AskIT (deployed in 90 days; 50% reduction in IT support tickets), AskIBM (launched in 60 days; 1.1M queries in the first 3 months), watsonx Code Assistant for Ansible, and IT incident summarization and analysis productivity improvements.

TRANSFORMED IBM CLOUD TEAM

Performed top-to-bottom overhaul of IBM's hybrid cloud organizational strategy, including technology, people, leadership, and process changes. Eliminated dependence on managed service providers by reallocating responsibilities to IBMers at 2:1 ratio. Replaced the entire leadership team and cut total head count by 44 people, saving millions per year. Read the full story in Medium blog post.

REDUCED CLOUD SPEND BY $6M

As a Director at IBM, led development and global launch of the enterprise account management and governance function, which provides visibility into more than 95% of the CIO division's cloud costs. With these insights, decreased cloud spending by 10% on $80M total budget. This freed enough funding to green light 6% increase in new cloud spend on infrastructure.

Professional Experience

IBM | RED HAT
Seattle, WA

Director, Hybrid Cloud and AI Platforms
12/2020 - Present

Advanced through Red Hat's cloud organization as the leader of two high-performing IT engineering teams that worked with OpenShift and OpenStack. Transitioned to IBM in 2020 after the acquisition. Hand-selected by the VP of Hybrid Cloud Platforms to lead the "crown jewel" hybrid cloud and AI platforms, which serve over 2,000 internal applications, enables wide adoption of hybrid cloud, containerization, and AI, and provides thought leadership and direction for IT professionals worldwide at various stages in their hybrid cloud and AI journey.

- Designed and implemented a fresh organizational vision to enable the successful innovation, operation, and growth of IBM CIO division's global hybrid cloud platform, which is built on Red Hat OpenShift
- Delivered a secure, managed AI platform, based on watsonx technologies, that resulted in hundreds of proof-of-concept AI projects and dozens of generative AI use cases, including a foundation for the AskIT and AskIBM assistants that serve 280k employees
- Developed a high-performing, global organization with 130+ engineers, developers, architects, delivery leads, and managers
- Demonstrated the business and financial value of migration to hybrid cloud platforms by creating an integrated data platform that measures insights from the application portfolio and cloud maturity metrics
- Improved modern hybrid cloud adoption practices by 12.4% within a year by creating a gamification strategy that motivated application owners to upgrade, using a scoring system that rewarded modern application architecture and operational improvements
- Own large operating budget of $125M for FY23

Senior Manager, Hybrid Cloud Infrastructure
02/2017 - 12/2020

- Built a $5M internal public cloud brokerage that consulted with Red Hat teams to modernize consumption of public cloud resources and encourage responsible innovation by providing account management and cost optimization best practices, consultative services, and automated governance
- Implemented OpenShift when building the IT organization's premier container platform
- Incorporated templated CI/CD pipeline and custom container image scanning and validation
- Enabled development teams to deploy 120+ containerized applications to this platform in the first 12 months
- Mentored three emerging leaders across multiple departments and functions; guided three mentees to achieve role clarity and career advancement, including a multistep promotion from principal to chief platform architect
- Implemented OpenStack, enabling hybrid deployment in multiple private and public clouds, which resulted in seamless transition of applications across multiple sites in compliance with scalability, resiliency, security, and budget requirements

Professional Experience

WEBASSIGN | CENGAGE LEARNING

Raleigh, NC

Director of Technical Operations

05/2016 - 02/2017

Earned successive promotions by contributing pragmatic, innovative solutions that improved employee and group performance and daily IT operations. During tenure, spearheaded top-to-bottom transformation of two critical departments (technical operations and corporate IT) by driving positive change across people, process, and technology areas. Cengage Learning acquired WebAssign in September 2016.

- Managed $2.5M budget and a team of 14 DevOps, infrastructure, and business intelligence engineers and project managers
- Oversaw development and 24x7x365 operation of WebAssign's SaaS product portfolio, which was used by 2M students and thousands of educators across 4,500 educational institutions (400K daily average user peak)
- Improved SaaS product availability to 99.9% or higher through strategic implementation of technologies and processes to eliminate or quickly resolve service interruptions, as well as tools to track performance and availability
- Led major upgrade to a nearly 20-year-old question scoring engine, metrics-driven monitoring system, and annual stress tests
- Drove significant technology investments to increase fault tolerance, scalability, and performance; reduce technical debt; and enable flexible disaster recovery and hybrid cloud solutions

Senior Manager of Technical Operations

04/2015 - 05/2016

- Tapped by the CTO to lead the technical operations team after executing a special project to accurately measure application performance using synthetic user monitoring
- Led a cross-functional internal campaign ("Flawless Fall") that promoted the goal of error-free service delivery and tightly coordinated the response of application development, marketing, customer service, and technical operations departments
- Transitioned low-performing or otherwise problematic employees and replaced with more suitable engineering talent

Corporate IT Manager

03/2012 - 04/2015

- Supervised a team of five technicians, system administrators, and BI engineers responsible for engineering and provisioning of IT services for internal users; delivered support and management of hardware, software, and networking systems
- Overhauled the service deck ticketing system to embrace data and metrics, which included building a physical dashboard that allowed employees to track their request in the department's queue
- Defined metrics for response time, first call resolution, incident management, and other KPIs aligned with internal SLAs; decreased first response time by 43 minutes and overall turnaround time to less than four hours

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES (NIEHS)

Research Triangle Park, NC

Desktop Engineering Team Lead

04/2011 - 03/2012

After beginning career in web development at IBM, joined NIEHS to lead various teams responsible for the support and management of over 1,600 Windows and 600 Mac desktops, and a growing inventory of mobile devices, in a complex scientific computing environment. Provided technical leadership and directly managed various technical projects.

- Enabled centralized management of 600+ Mac computers by implementing Casper Suite (now Jamf Pro), a COTS product
- Provided technical direction for Windows endpoint management, which included response to frequent break/fix service call
- Reduced average number of security vulnerabilities per computer from 20+ to <10s

Additional Positions at NIEHS

12/2003 - 04/2011

- Desktop Support Team Lead
- Desktop Support Technician

Education

Western Governors University

Durham, NC

B.S. in Business and Information Technology Management