Shady Sharaf

<title>Principal Software Engineer</title>

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<excerpt>

I'm a Software Engineer; I have a thing for writing code!

I have a passion for clean, standard-compliant code. I like to create, innovate, and exceed expectations. I don't settle for GOOD as long as there is BETTER.

I love what I do, and I do it because I love it. My projects are my babies, and whatever my position is, I always feel responsible for getting my project to the end line in the best shape possible.

I'm a good team player, who is able to develop and motivate other players in a team, with a good experience as a Team/Tech Lead, Technical Project Manager, and a Technical Director.

I am a pragmatic open source advocate, a local tech meetup organizer and presenter, and I occasionally contribute to open source projects.

<why hire=me>

I lead and thrive within HPT teams

During my last few years as a Senior and then Principal engineer, I had the pleasure of leading multiple teams throughout successful projects. During which, I learned the basics of building a high performing team, starting from alignment on direction and goals, ensuring team members are supported in their professional development in relation to project/company needs, to having enough processes and documentation in place for me to be easily succeeded.

Ask me about HPTs and Capability maturity efforts for more on that.

I learn in the open, and encourage others to do the same

In a fast-paced ecosystem like the one I've been at for +10 years, continuous learning is a hard requirement. They who don't cope with change die like tech dinosaurs Nokia, Yahoo, and Blockbuster.
So I have an ongoing PD plan that's tailored to my role/position and expectations of my current engagement.
I also work on encouraging team members to form their own PDP and work on it. By learning in the open, sharing learnings in workshops or even in daily standups, I was consistently able to get positive responses and results across the team. Which reflected on team morale, and subsequently on our quality of work.

Ask me about skill mapping and assessment efforts, and my PDP.

<links>

[github/shadyvb](#) (+ how i work)

[linkedin/shadyvb](#)

[wp/shadyvb](#)

[heropress/shady](#)

[test/personality](#), [test/logic](#)

<tags>

#infj-t #chaotic-good #people-first #team-dev #architect #leader #disruptor #always-learning #ambitious #agile #change #metrics #communication #trust #transparency #motivation #development #stability #standards #testing #perf #enterprise #scaling #security #ai #api #bi #cdp #dxp #pwa #js #php #wordpress #react #devops #automation #ci-cd #remote #digital-nomad #speaker #organizer #entrepreneur #consultant #traveler #foodie #cooking #pineapples-on-pizza #coffee-geek #father #fifa

<education>

Computer Science
42, US '2017

Business Administration
Cairo University, Egypt '2016

Network Engineering
Microsoft, Egypt '2006

<events/pro-dev>

- Software Architecture NY, 2017
- ReactEurope, 2018, 2020
- ETHDubai / Web3, 2021

I'm a loyal Agile practitioner, and metric driven

Rapid technological advances force businesses to learn to adapt and respond to different change catalysts across the board. So agility and flexibility is crucial for their digital presence. Embracing Agile principles and methods, and double loop learning informed by clear metrics and data, has been my passion as a team lead, to secure wins across not only company/client/project fronts, but at the team/individual levels as well.

Ask me about the 4 Ts experimentation cycle: Trust, try, track and train.

I lead projects from pitch to fetch

Understanding client needs and struggles, going the extra mile to dive deeper beyond the client's requests, acting as a technical partner and not just a coding machine, often maximized chances of delivering true value to our clients, and created the trust that nurtures team growth.

Ask me about Sales enablement, performance reviews, team and project health metrics.

<history>

The Times, UK — *Principal Software Engineer*

April 2023 - PRESENT

Building The Times website, the renowned pioneering British newspaper.

Altis DXP, UK — *Principal Product Engineer*

July 2021 - April 2023

Building Altis-DXP, a flagship enterprise digital experience platform, seeded by WordPress, served by AWS, enhanced via AI, and built by an array of WordPress core contributors and team leads, and +15 years worth of expertise making global enterprise customers happy.

Altis-DXP is a subsidiary of Human Made.

Some of my work there:

- **Capability maturity**
  I led the first iterations of Capability Maturity process, which measures and tracks different aspects of team behavior and processes to improve collaboration, engagement, and efficiency. During which, I employed my learnings on HPTs, led initiatives to improve our metrics based on feedback and my suggestions:
  - **Team health checks initiative**
    Created a process to use a pulse survey with custom questions and metrics corresponding to HPT metrics, to serve as the input data for our retrospective meetings. Called for an implemented a meta discussion space in each retro call to talk team health and progress, and improvement efforts.

- LeadDev / StaffPlus NY, 2022
- WCUS / WCEU / WCLDN / ..

<events/talks-i-did>

- WordPress 101
- Security in WordPress
- WordPress hooks
- Zero to hero WP Dev
- Editorial workflows
- 4Ts of Agile

<quotes:linkedin>

"I've loved working with Shady over the past few years. The breadth of his experience is impressive [..] I've also appreciated his positive attitude and team spirit, and I look forward to working with him again."

Weston Ruter
Google, (ex: XWP)

"Shady is an outstanding developer and software architect [..] Next to his technical skills he is a true and inspiring leader for his dev-team, always willing to go the extra mile in order to solve complex issues / master new challenges. Even in tight situations he stays calm and supports his team while pushing them forward."

Hans-Juergen Bode
Siemens

"Shady is one of those rare developers who has a very strong set of skills across all aspects of working with clients and developing products. His technical skills are outstanding, but what sets him apart is his ability to consider the wider problem and the implications of work that he and his team does; to discuss and understand underlying business requirements with clients in order to architect the best technical solutions; to mentor, lead, and learn from colleagues; and to proactively put in place initiatives and work in an agile manner.

Shady is a strong and thoughtful communicator, whether it's in person, in writing, or on video calls. He leads when he needs to and he listens carefully. His team members

- Roles and responsibilities
  Called for and helped clarify and document roles and responsibilities on the team, to have clear understanding of expectations and processes for each one, given the relatively-new team structure.
- Continuous improvement, training / skill tracker
  Called for and implemented a skill matrix where engineers self-evaluate themselves on different skills needed within the team, and use that to guide their Professional development plans. Served as a way to understand the team strengths and weaknesses to guide future allocations as well.
- **Sales enablement: audits, matrix**
  - Automated CWV bulk tracker
    Created a tool/process for bulk checking Core web vital metrics and Lighthouse scores for a list of URLs, to serve as a sales tool, understanding and comparing a prospect to competition, and as a delivery tool, to automatically track performance metrics over time/changes/releases.
- **Open source components / Altis modules**
  Worked on improvements and implementation of different features in Altis-DXP across the time of my engagement.
  - Altis testing framework, automated tests
    Championed the introduction of automated tests in Altis framework, and extended the framework to allow for a zero-config acceptance testing setup. Using Codeception. Also led implementation of the framework to write tests for Altis modules themselves.
  - Codespaces support in Altis
    Helped implement Altis support for GitHub Codespaces.
  - Altis Accelerate, plugin and architecture
    Helped the separation of Altis DXP into Cloud/Marketing solutions, resulting in the public Altis Accelerate plugin. Led the development of individual features, and worked with the product lead to improve existing ones.

Human Made, UK — *Principal Engineer*

May 2016 - April 2023

Working with a few of the big names in tech and publishing in USA / EMEA / and APAC regions to carry out migration projects / new builds and improvements on several digital properties of each, some hosted on WordPress VIP Platform, and some on HM's Altis.

Some of the clients are:

- Google, US
- Facebook, US
- Siemens, DE
- Sony Playstation, US
- News Corp, UK

learn a lot from him and he allows himself to learn from and understand others. He is humble and he delivers."

John Blackbourn
Human Made

"[..] Shady holds a deep technical expertise that lends tremendous value to the work he engages in. I've counted on Shady to solve difficult technical problems and he's come through [..] Shady cares deeply about his work and the people he works with. If you need someone who knows their material and will give you their best, Shady is your man."

Jonathan Wold
Automattic, (ex: XWP)

"Shady is a very experienced & detail oriented developer. He really shines when it comes to architecting complex back-end systems and solutions [..] He always has a positive attitude towards things and a "let's make it happen" mentality. [..]"

Ahmed El Gabri
Miro, (ex: Wyoos)

</quotes:linkedin>

<quotes:reviews>

Anonymous reviews '2020: (full review PDF is available)

"As a non-dev I always can follow your thoughts and understand why a technical approach is chosen."

"Shadi is a very smart person who likes to share his knowledge with others. In any situation when there are ambiguities, he is always happy to help!"

"Shadi is a reliable person. Every bug I reported he carefully analyzed and resolved. Also, he has helped me several times for QA problems and

- Redbull Media, AT
- TechCrunch, US

Some of my work there (just some highlights):

- **Siemens Ingenuity**
    - Led the development of the Ingenuity portal for Siemens, which is an outbound blogging portal for professional content interested in Siemens technologies and companies. We built an AI-assisted front-end authoring environment that helped industry professionals create SEO-friendly and accessible content using a third-party AI suggestions service, built on top of WordPress Block editor in its early days.
    The project got a shout out in WordCamp US as the most innovative product using AI in WordPress that year.
    - Led the development of an online-event platform to host all Siemens employees and influencers during the pandemic, in a virtual environment. Was a huge success.
- **News UK**
    - Led a hybrid-team setup to develop different features for multiple news outlets and properties. And the transformation of the platform to a headless installation, meshed with a content hub, with WordPress serving only as the authoring environment and content proxy.
- **WPSimpleSSO**
    A flexible, lightweight, easy-config, to-the-bone plugin to integrate with SSO Idps like OKTA and Google, primarily using the SAML protocol. Used in Altis.
- **WP Flags**
    A flexible feature flag management system, on a per-user and/or per-site. Used to activate features or change behavior based on user-selected and/or enforced feature flags.
- **Alfie**
    A extensible personal assistant for your WordPress site, inspired by mac's Alfred assistant, to facilitate and improve editorial flows.
    (private repo, in the prototype phase)
- **HM Content Import**
    A system to manage complex and deep content migrations, handles export/import of data from any data structure to WordPress. Eg: Drupal to WordPress, WordPress to WordPress, etc.
- **ADRs (Training article)**
    Vouched for and implemented using ADRs to log all architectural decisions to keep a history of the project changes and the reasons behind each, and why a specific solution was deployed.
- **Project reviews**
    Vouched for systemic reviews of performance metrics across time, and using that to explore potential improvement opportunities, and extending site audits into the presales process as a sales tool.
- **Workshops**

Did a few workshops on technical topics.
- Elastic(Press/Search)
- Debugging
- Altis testing framework
- Performance reviews

XWP, AU — *Senior Software Engineer*

October 2013 - January 2016

Worked with a few of the big names in tech and publishing in USA / EMEA / and APAC regions to carry out migration projects / new builds and improvements on several digital properties of each, mostly hosted on WordPress VIP Platform.

- USAToday, US
- Rogers Media, CA
- GlobalNews, CA
- News Corp, AU
- Automattic/WordPress, US
- Fox, AU

Some of my work there:

- Built [Stream](), the flagship audit logging plugin for WordPress, and its hosted logging platform.
- Maintained [WordPress Coding Standards]() in its infancy, and developed the official automated CS checks tooling for PHPCodeSniffer.
- Helped build a central content hub platform using WordPress, delivering content to a few different distribution channels including different websites, mobile apps and social platforms.
- Helped migrate large network sites to WordPress, and deployed automated regression testing to bulk check for UI changes across releases.

X-Team, AU — *Senior Software Engineer*

August 2014 - January 2016

Develop solutions in MEAN stack, including internal communication systems and real-time analytics platforms.

Contracted for:

- Riot Games, US (makers of League of Legends)

Link Dev, EG — *Opensource Department Lead*

October 2013 - Jan 2014

Trained newly founded opensource division employees on Linux, PHP, WordPress, and enterprise development.

Assisted migration and build of several properties and high-traffic platforms:

- ItalinaOnline / Libero / Virgilio blog networks, IT

Wyoos, US — *Technical director, Partner*

April 2012 - May 2013

Built a technical team for a newly founded startup based in the US, architected and developed SaaS eCommerce solutions.

Profile.FM, UK — *Senior Software Engineer*

October 2011 - April 2012

Developed and maintained 10+ commercial WordPress plugins, an SEO research and discovery platform, and a WordPress bulk management platform.

Egypreneur NGO, EG — *Technical consultant, partner*

May 2011 - Present

Planned and executed Egypreneur networking platform, and subsidiaries.

Participated in Entrepreneurial events, like Startup Weekend, as a Technical Consultant, provided technical mentorship for startups.

EPIC Systems, EG — *Technical lead, Senior Engineer*

March 2010 - October 2011

Developed RFID middleware software in applications like Supply chain management, Access Control, Cattle health monitoring.

Developed a distributed online location-aware pharmacy hyper-market.

Was responsible for pre-sale, and deal closing meetings. Also worked with sales/marketing to build up a marketing strategy, to enhance visibility and get more/better clients.

AYB NGO, EG — *Technical lead*

2009 - 2010

Developed internal communication systems and micro-blogging platform, and an online volunteer management platform. And the NGO's network sites.

IT Owners, QA — *Technical lead, partner*

2008 - 2013

Developed commercial LMS and SMS PaaS system based on WordPress multi-site. Worked with the government to enhance online education standards. Received a letter of appreciation from the Qatari government on efforts to uplift standards.

</history>