Gary Faircloth

Content DevOps and Software Development, Technical Writing, and Information Architecture
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Summary

Coordinating with users, subject matter experts, designers, writers, and translators, I have carried many UIs and publications from design to release. Throughout the development process, many look to me for coaching, leadership, and training on new technologies. I inspire a fun and energetic atmosphere in which to create.

Specialties

- Software development for documentation production and quality assurance
- Support and DevOps for documentation authoring and production tools
- Technical writing of user and development documentation
- UI design methodologies
- Internal professional vitality training
- Translation coordination

Technologies

Content DevOps (Docs-as-Code CI/CD):
   DITA-OT, Metalsmith, Jekyll, Hugo, Sphinx, Gatsby, Pandoc, Paged.js, Jenkins, TravisCI, GitHub workflows, Docker

Software development:
   React, JavaScript, Python, Ruby, SQL, PHP, CakePHP MVC, HTML, CSS, XSLT, XSL-FO, Perl, Git, bash shell

Technical writing and training:
   DITA, Markdown, AsciiDoc, reStructuredText, OpenAPIv3 (Swagger), Oxygen XML Author, Draw.io, Kdenlive, OBS Studio, Camtasia, GiMP, Inkscape

Experience

IBM: Content DevOps and Support Lead | Jan 2020 - May 2023 | Seattle, WA

- Influenced Data and AI Content Tools strategy toward corporate and industry standards, while leading a small development team to support content designers in the organization.
- Developed, documented, and held training on the Metalsmith and LiquidJS markdown authoring environment for Cloud Pak for Data content, to migrate from Jekyll for a new translation workflow.
- Achieved top search ranking for Cloud Pak for Data as a Service documentation by writing and deploying the NodeJS backend sitemap.xml generation utility.
- Developed the design layout, automated build process, and localization workflow for the service documentation landing pages for IBM Cloud Pak for Data, by using IBM Carbon CSS, DITA XSLT overrides, Hugo, Ruby, and IBM Globalization Pipeline CLI tools. Documented and held training on the process.
- Wrote a Python application to crawl, download, and divide a 5000 page documentation web site, including referenced graphics, to build into manageable PDF sizes.

IBM: Application Development Lead and Content DevOps Developer | Nov 2014 - Dec 2019 | Seattle, WA

- Developed, documented, and held training on a Jekyll markdown authoring environment to provide authors with conditional-coding for topic reuse, using three output styles across six products, some in continuous delivery.
- Devised a multi-sourced approach for authors of Jekyll markdown and DITA to publish concurrently.
- Led a small team who continued to design, develop, document, and maintain the CakePHP build, test, translation, and delivery system that automated the publication production workflow across sites.
- Integrated SOAP communication with the corporate translation planning application and REST communication between our application's server nodes.
- Mentored a frontend development intern as she added translation planning forms to our application.
- Created a common code base, scripts, workflow, and documentation to automate the installation of the application and backend servers on our separate application server nodes.
- For a library of content to be maintained by Ruby developers, migrated the content to DITA-OT markdown and wrote a Ruby script to compile the source and trigger the automated building and publishing.

IBM: Technical Writer and Application Developer | Aug 2006 - Oct 2014 | Seattle, WA

- Collaborated with support and engineering to improve the installation and administration documentation, while also designing and developing the product documentation's first automated build application.
- Recognized for creating the source control release strategy and web application for both the English and translated content build, review, test, and publish workflow.
- Developed the translation workflow components of an inspired team member's vision for a more user customizable web application for the documentation production workflow. He architected it with CakePHP, MySQL, and Jenkins, and he drove adoption across at least three sites.
- Applied a DITA metadata architecture to installation and administration topics to produce custom PDF guides based on user selections of role, desired OS, and configuration options.
- Architected the DITA reuse strategy for topics to be shared among the IBM Classic group of products.
- Partnered with other information architects to design and implement a DITA architecture componentized by feature capability and organized hierarchically by user task.
- Co-authored our lab's monthly newsletter about our product and documentation competitors.

IBM: Technical Writer | Aug 1994 - Jul 2006 | San Jose, CA

- An active member of the IBM Software Group installation workgroup, I aided the design of the product installation wizard and drove the out-of-the-box download and readme experience, to include conducting many hours of low-fi user testing.
- As a site expert in Eclipse Help and user-assistance configuration and implementation, I was lead architect of the Eclipse UA DITA specialization and created two wizards to aid writers with conversions to Eclipse Help.
- As site DITA advocate, I migrated the product documentation to DITA and assisted two other product doc teams in their migration from both IBMIDDOC SGML and IBM BookMaster.
- Used Perl to create the DITA User Guide and Message Reference from the product Java message catalog.
- Increased skills in DB2 SQL, XML, and PHP-style web application authoring.
- Proposed and created a data source configuration wizard, written in C and TaskGuide SGML, using APIs for Windows, DB2, Oracle, Sybase, and SQL Server, over SNA APPC or TCP/IP connections, with some additional WinHelp reference content.
- Held training sessions on TCP/IP and introductory Linux usage.
- Improved the OS/2 online help design independent of writing the content by using Perl to separate the two.
- Administered an AIX shared-development server on which I also developed and hosted a perl CGI web app used for CMVC defect tracking for the team.
- Learned object-oriented modeling, AIX, and Perl, while maintaining the installation guide in BookMaster.
- Drew upon user and competitor feedback to improve contextual help, implement tooltips, and using ViewletBuilder create a product Flash tutorial on migrating from Oracle to DB2.
- Authored a two-page full-color brochure for a product marketing campaign at a third of the cost by using an in-house SGML Doctype.
- Through two releases, maintained the Net.Data User Guide and Reference, authored in IBMIDDOC SGML.

Education

University of Washington

Bachelor of Science (BS), Technical Communication, Department of Human-Centered Design and Engineering, Computer Science specialization, 1989 - 1994.

Awards

Outstanding Technical Achievement

Issued by IBM - Oct 2021, Team award for implementing the AI-driven video transcription service provided in the Cloud Pak for Data as a Service documentation application, as described in the paper published in the CASCON Proceedings of the ACM, Nov, 2021.

Outstanding Technical Achievement

Issued by IBM - Sep 1994, For replacing many complex topics with a data source configuration wizard, which was very well received by customers, because it gracefully overcame points of potential failure in various types of network communications and federated database connectivity.