



Thirty years of building and leading high performing engineering and science teams including Alexa, Prime and DVD rentals at Alexa. Hyperscaling Alexa and Prime.



Experience

Executive Roles

Amazon

Vice President, Alexa Software

Director, Amazon Prime Technology Team

Managing Director, European DVD Rental

Senior Manager, Retail Software Development

Nakina Systems, Director, Software Development

Akara Networks, Director, Network Management Software

Board and Advisory Roles

WISEcode, Executive Vice Chairman

Elarian AI, Technical and Strategic Advisor

ClearRisk Inc., Strategic Advisor

VUI, Inc., Strategic Board Advisor

Al Lindsay

Partner

About Me

I am a software executive with over 30 years of experience leading engineering, product and machine learning teams, spanning very large teams (over 1000 people), and small teams. Having successfully led product and customer-focused teams through incubator ideas, hyper scaling, large platform migrations, and operating software at scale for low latency and high availability, I have learned a lot about which mechanisms and strategies are most effective in each phase of growth. Throughout my career, I have played a vital role in hiring and developing the right phase-appropriate top-tier people at all levels, including building an organization of the best engineers, machine learning scientists, and speech scientists in the world who came together to build Alexa. Drawing on these firsthand experiences, I now advise executives building and leading engineering, AI and product teams.

Career Highlights

I began my career as a Software Engineer working on large-scale, highly available platforms like Nortel's 411 automated directory assistance platform, and Norstar switches. I left Nortel early in my career to pursue a passion to work in smaller startups where I could have a bigger impact. I led engineering teams that built network management solutions in the private cloud. The collapse of the telecom market claimed 2 of those companies, and a 3rd (Akara) had a successful exit through acquisition.

I joined Amazon in 2004 when it was still in startup mode, with a tech org of around 500 people largely still in one building (PacMed). I spent 15 years building and leading teams that operated independently within Amazon (i.e. 2-Pizza Teams). I started in the retail organization, building features to aid new categories like Sporting Goods, Apparel, Jewelry, and Groceries. I then led the DVD Rentals team in Europe. I spent 3 years leading the Prime tech org that saw the re-acceleration of growth and ultimately reached 10 million subscribers in 2011. I then started the Alexa engineering team from scratch, turning an idea for a voice-controlled audio device into a hit product and then guiding the tech organization through hyper-growth.

Techquity Solutions

Unlike traditional roles, you won't find specific courses or university programs teaching you how to become a good leader of technology teams. Spending time with leaders who have been successful is the best way to develop as a leader. I am passionate about solving technology leadership challenges at both hi-tech companies and non-technology companies that are leveraging technology for differentiation and advantage, helping them build high-performing teams and develop strategies for hiring and mentoring outstanding tech talent. I am passionate about leveraging my experiences to help companies succeed and avoid the many pitfalls that I myself have experienced.

Innovation & Impact

- **Led the creation of Alexa, which included solving the novel far field speech recognition challenge, wake word technology, and creating the highest quality synthetic voices in the world.**
- **Awarded Numerous patents including the foundational Alexa voice controlled computer patents**
- **Scaled organizations and systems for hyper growth with high reliability and performance (Prime, Alexa)**
- **Built developer programs at scale (Alexa Voice Service-AVS, and Alexa Skills Kit - ASK)**
- **Co-led a large scale technology migration from the monolith legacy platform that all Amazon website were built on to a new architecture, effectively rebuilding the platform while still operating the business**
- **Led a team that used advanced mathematical solutions (constraint propagation and linear programming) to do least cost routing through telecom networks.**
- **Successfully integrated the teams and technology of many acquisitions into existing high performing teams**
- **Built our global teams (7 countries, 10 cities), many which were entirely new sites, and led them to deliver on the most complex of products as a single team**
- **Navigated the challenges of machine learning infrastructure and tooling before there were industry tools**

Why Techquity?

Techquity gives me the opportunity to leverage my unique experiences and leadership abilities to have an outsized impact on the success of the businesses I work with. It allows me to work closely with founders and leaders in a wide variety of industries that are interesting and impactful.

Thought Leadership

- [*When Will Alexa Know Everything?*](#)
- [*All About AI: Building Alexa and Beyond, An Insider's View on the AI Revolution*](#)
- [*"Hey Alexa, What's Next for Voice Tech?"*](#)

**Technology problems are the hardest problems.
We help you fix them.**

We Can Help