

Marcus Orochena

AI Strategy Lead | Engineering leader | Fullstack builder with 15+ years shipping systems and teams

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PROFILE Engineering leader and fullstack builder with 15+ years taking ambiguous problems to production. Currently AI Strategy Lead at The Phoenix: company-wide AI adoption plus the agent and product-intelligence systems teams use day to day. Earlier: scaled SaaS to multi-million users, led teams through acquisition, and founded products end-to-end.

EXPERIENCE

The Phoenix Mar 2023 - Present
AI Strategy Lead May 2026 - Present

- Own company-wide AI strategy across engineering, product, and ops - so teams get real leverage from agents while people stay accountable and human review stays the merge gate
- Ship an internal agent orchestrator (Elixir/Phoenix) that turns tickets and GitHub events into constrained runs - implementation PRs, reviews, CI fixes - with tool allowlists and engineers as the merge gate
- Ship a product-intelligence workspace that grounds answers in live specs, indexed code, and design evidence - so decisions use citation-backed expected-vs-actual analysis instead of unconstrained generation
- Drove build-over-buy AI platform: multi-provider gateway routes each workload to the best-fit model at API-token cost, keeps data in-house, and keeps engines swappable as the frontier moves
- Set adoption bands for AI-assisted work that baseline teams on leverage with ownership - not vanity usage - and drive enablement against those targets

Software Engineer Mar 2023 - May 2026

- Built event management and scheduling platform serving 1M+ users across 100+ non-profits, plus an embeddable calendar widget (Next.js, Drizzle ORM, PostgreSQL)
- Shipped user-facing AI chatbot for personalized event recommendations using vector search, a custom MCP server, and multi-agent workflows
- Led monorepo migration and owned DevOps across AWS and Cloudflare - CI/CD, networking, and deployment pipelines

Sync or Swim 2024 - Present
Founder & Engineer

- Built a real-time bidirectional sync platform that keeps databases, CRMs, and vector stores aligned through low-latency change detection and propagation
- Designed extensible adapters for PostgreSQL, MySQL, Salesforce, Redis, and Vectorize - with one- and two-way sync, conflict resolution, retries, and a no-code schema mapper

Enovational 2020 - 2023
Acquired by Ernst & Young Oct 2022; continued as Manager, Software Architect through Mar 2023
Engineering Lead | Software Architect

- Led a development team on a SaaS platform serving ~3.3M users; doubled team velocity within 3 months through coaching, clearer goals, and better delivery practices
- Directly managed and mentored engineers through regular feedback, career development, code review, and hands-on technical guidance
- Owned AWS infrastructure (ECS, scaling, monitoring) and a stress-testing strategy that supported state-wide launches with zero downtime
- Built a public REST API and migration tooling; cut story points on portal integrations by ~50% via a clearer integration strategy
- Led post-acquisition infrastructure and tooling migration into EY with minimal user disruption

Truck Driver Power 2018 - 2020
Senior Software Developer

- Improved API response times 10x (~2000ms -> ~200ms) and cut backend memory use 60% through query optimization, caching, async jobs, and GC tuning
- Stood up CI/CD for web and mobile, moving release cycles from ~2 weeks to nightly, and containerized services for reproducible deploys
- Grew test coverage from 0% to ~90% and mentored 6 developers on TDD, git workflows, and code review

Prudential Associates 2011 - 2018
Technology Officer | Founder, Threxys Technologies

- Led document classification software for digital forensics and internal tools that automated time-tracking and billing
- Founded Threxys Technologies: sentiment and threat analysis for executive protection (clients included Discovery Channel) and cybersecurity consulting for small businesses

SKILLS

Primary depth in Elixir/TypeScript/Rails and AI systems. Comfortable ramping into unfamiliar stacks (.NET, Rust, Java, and similar) when the problem demands it - polyglot by practice, not by checklist.

AI SYSTEMS

LLM agents, multi-agent workflows, MCP, RAG / vector search, AI gateways, prompt design, citation-grounded retrieval

LANGUAGES & FRAMEWORKS

Elixir/Phoenix, TypeScript, Next.js, React, Ruby on Rails, Node.js, PostgreSQL, Redis, GraphQL, Drizzle ORM

INFRASTRUCTURE

AWS, Cloudflare, Docker, CI/CD, ECS, Linux

SELECT CONSULTING

Ongoing side consulting alongside full-time roles - architecture, product, and 0-to-1 builds.

Ernst & Young

2026

- Led an evidence-driven assessment of a mission-critical no-code platform serving 20+ state agencies - combining 15+ stakeholder interviews with codebase, production telemetry, and delivery analysis
- Produced an execution-ready investment roadmap spanning platform health, team operating model, 10 prioritized technical workstreams, and an incremental AI-native product capability

Leyefe

2015

- Took two founders from concept to an iOS TestFlight beta within a few months, owning the mobile implementation and release
- Built a daily prompt-based photo network with rotating categories, media processing, location, notifications, social graphs, and a community feed

Cosmop

2013 - 2014

- Technical lead on a small founder-and-designer team; turned a vague concept into a production Rails application for internal beta, owning implementation and deployment
- Built travel discovery and curation around recommendations, maps, messaging, user-generated feeds, and community experts for specific destinations