Derrick Orare

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Professional Summary

Senior Software Engineer with 10+ years of experience building backend systems and cloud infrastructure across fintech, energy, and enterprise SaaS. Founding engineer who has taken platforms from zero to production, processed $10M+ in annual transactions, and supported 100,000+ users at scale. Strong background in Ruby on Rails, PostgreSQL, AWS, and Kubernetes. Known for setting engineering standards, mentoring teams, and translating product goals into reliable, maintainable systems.

Technical Skills

Languages	Ruby, Python, Java, JavaScript, TypeScript, Go
Frameworks	Ruby on Rails, Node.js, Express, React, Next.js
Databases	PostgreSQL, MongoDB, Redis
Infrastructure	AWS, Docker, Kubernetes, CI/CD (GitLab CI, GitHub Actions), Juju, MAAS
Architecture	RESTful APIs, Microservices, Distributed Systems, Event-Driven Design
Practices	Agile/Scrum, TDD, BDD, Code Review, System Design, On-Call Operations

Work Experience

Founder & Lead Engineer | TexStylus — Jan 2026 – Present
Remote — Nairobi, Kenya

- Designed and developed the platform from the ground up, covering the application, backend services, data layer, storage, deployment, and supporting infrastructure.
- Built real-time collaborative document editing and LaTeX compilation workflows for working with technical documents in the browser.
- Developed a document and PDF-to-LaTeX processing pipeline designed to preserve document structure, layout, typography, and source geometry during reconstruction.
- Integrated AI capabilities through a dedicated gateway supporting document and LaTeX-focused workflows.
- Designed production infrastructure using PostgreSQL, Redis, object storage, containerized services, and isolated compilation environments.
- Implemented authentication, authorization, rate limiting, resource controls, sandboxing, and other protections required for a publicly accessible application.
- Established deployment, CI/CD, operational documentation, and production support infrastructure for an independently operated software product.
- Took the product from initial concept through architecture, implementation, testing, production deployment, and release preparation.

Senior Software Engineer (Founding Developer) | Ndovu Cloud Technologies — Aug 2018 – Present
Full-time — Nairobi, Kenya

- Architected and built a multi-tenant SaaS platform from scratch using Ruby on Rails and MongoDB, establishing the technical foundation that took the product from zero to paying enterprise customers.
- Designed and implemented a unified payment processing layer integrating M-Pesa, Visa, and Stripe, handling $10M+ in annual transaction volume reliably.
- Owned core platform services including user management, tenant isolation, billing, and reporting, all built to enterprise security and compliance standards.
- Established engineering standards–code review processes, Git branching workflows, and deployment pipelines—enabling the team to scale from one to six engineers without slowing delivery.

- Acted as the bridge between business stakeholders and the engineering team, converting requirements into technical roadmaps and concrete delivery milestones.

Senior Software Engineer | Engie Energy Access — Nov 2022 – Jul 2023
Full-time — Kampala, Uganda

- Owned backend payment reconciliation and asset-tracking systems serving ~50,000 customers across energy distribution operations.
- Built internal tooling and customer-facing APIs for meter management and billing, reducing payment processing errors and improving overall system throughput.
- Collaborated with product and data teams to define service contracts and data models for real-time reporting on energy sales and customer repayments.
- Mentored three junior engineers through structured code reviews and architecture discussions, improving code quality and reducing post-release defects.

Backend Engineer | Kwara — Oct 2021 – Aug 2022
Full-time — Nairobi, Kenya

- Built and maintained backend services for a digital banking platform (Ruby on Rails, PostgreSQL) supporting ~100,000 users with high availability requirements.
- Implemented Docker-based CI/CD pipelines on GitLab CI, cutting average deployment time from two hours to roughly 30 minutes.
- Refactored authentication flows and introduced audit logging for critical financial data paths, materially improving application security posture.
- Designed RESTful APIs while supporting an incremental migration from a monolith to a microservices architecture.
- Provided technical guidance to two engineers on backend design patterns and deployment best practices.

Full-Stack Developer | LipaLateral Limited — Nov 2019 – Oct 2021
Full-time — Nairobi, Kenya

- Developed and maintained fintech systems for payments, authentication, and credit underwriting, processing ~500,000 transactions per month.
- Led decomposition of a monolithic Rails application into four domain-focused services, reducing cross-team dependencies and accelerating feature delivery across squads.
- Grew test coverage from ~65% to over 90% by championing TDD practices and extending the RSpec suite, directly reducing production incidents.
- Rotated on-call for critical payment and loan systems, maintaining service availability during peak usage periods.

Software Development Engineer | Duara Systems (Africa's Talking Lab) — Mar 2018 – Jul 2018
Full-time — Nairobi, Kenya

- Containerised Rails-based SMS microservices using Docker and Kubernetes, achieving consistent and repeatable deployment behaviour across all environments.
- Optimised PostgreSQL databases for SMS delivery logging through targeted indexing strategies, materially improving query performance.
- Automated private cloud infrastructure provisioning using Juju and MAAS, reducing service setup time for internal teams.

Consultant – Test Automation | Central Logic — Jun 2016 – Jun 2017
Remote

- Built an automated regression framework using Selenium and Java for a healthcare SaaS platform, significantly reducing manual QA effort.
- Developed reusable page object models and test scripts, and integrated them into CI pipelines for continuous regression coverage.

Software Quality Engineer | EMC Corporation (now Dell EMC) Jun 2014 – May 2016
Full-time Pleasant Grove, UT, USA

- Designed and executed test strategies for enterprise storage software covering functional validation, system integration, and performance testing.
- Contributed to performance and stress testing programmes that supported measurable improvements across two major product releases.
- Partnered with development teams throughout the release lifecycle to identify, track, and verify resolution of defects.

Education

Brandeis University Waltham, MA, USA
Bachelor of Arts – Computer Science & African and Afro-American Studies