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profile

Technical writer and editor with experience in corporate, community and publishing sectors. Comfortable writing press releases, ad copy, brochure copy, end-user documentation, sysadmin procedures or feature articles. Also a system, LAN and Web admin, as ready to edit Markdown, AsciiDoc, XML, CSS, or HTML in a git repo as I am to edit a Word or InDesign file.

experience

2024 – now	**Senior Technical Writer, Origin Energy**

Setup a docs-as-code writing/editing/publishing workflow, integrate this workflow with GitHub and Amazon Web Services (AWS) hosting, and, using said workflow, write a user guide for a new application providing third-parties access to Origin's Virtual Power Plant (VPP).

Selected Hugo as the framework, wrote workflow setup manual, wrote *VPP User's Guide*, and wrote a shell script to automate project updates to AWS.

2022 – 2023	**Senior Technical Writer, tiny.cloud**

TinyMCE is a rich-text editor, written in TypeScript and designed as a drop-in WYSIWYG writing and editing environment for adding to a web-site or web-based application.

The tinyMCE documentation suite is an open-source project, built using AsciiDoc, maintained on GitHub and published using Antora.

The TinyMCE documentation suite includes

‣ setup guides;

‣ cloud & self-hosted deployment guides for multiple frameworks, including React, Node.js, & Laravel;

‣ documentation of the dozens of available plugins, including working code samples.

‣ API documentation;

‣ and more.

And, as my GitHub contributions graph hints, I was the sole technical writer working on the TinyMCE developer documentation.

2021 – now	**Freelance Writer & Editor.**

Currently contracting for several firms under NDA, including three technology start-ups (two in Germany, one in Israel). I have also worked as a freelance technical and development editor for several academic clients and an Israel-based start-up.

The NDA contracts all involve developer or system administrator software documentation. And, for each contract, the workflow is docs-as-code: Markdown or AsciiDoc-based projects in git repos building to static HTML/CSS sites using tools such as Antora and MkDocs.

A recent development editing contract entailed editing, re-writing, fact-checking, typesetting, laying-out, and preparing for publication a book-length manuscript. This book is a specialist-audience–focussed version of three inter-related PhD theses. The edits, re-writes, fact-checking, typesetting, and basic layout were all done in a series of connected Microsoft Word documents. The final layout and typesetting for print and ePub publication was done in Adobe InDesign. This is the fourth book-length work I've edited and prepared for publication using Microsoft Word and Adobe Indesign.

2021	**Senior Technical Writer, Flight Centre Travel Group**

A short-term contract to document an OpenAPI-based API suite used by the Flight Centre Travel Group to manage hotel, car, & flight bookings, including packages, itineraries, transfers, short- & long-stays, & more.

I set up the documentation- and publishing-workflow. This workflow was built on JSON and GitHub-flavoured Markdown files stored in an internal git repo and processed for publication through SwaggerUI and MKDocs.

2019 – 2020	Technical Writer, Data61, CSIRO

Research, write, edit, and publish the first *Wildcat user manual*. *Wildcat* is Data 61's proprietary Simultaneous Localisation and Mapping (SLAM) software.

As the sole Technical Writer I created the first Wildcat instructional material for people not involved in the software's development. The first public version of this manual focused on documenting *Wildcat's C++* classes and its plug-in architecture, enabling roboticists to customise the software by writing their own plug-ins or extending the existing classes for use with robots traversing terrains and environments beyond those already catered to by the software.

This manual was written as GitHub-flavoured Markdown plain-text files with MkDocs acting as the typesetting and publishing tool.

2015 – 2017	Principal Technical Writer, Opengear Pty Ltd

Opengear manufactures remote-access hardware for businesses, scaling from remote offices and retail branches to primary it infrastructure and data centres. Opengear customers range from small businesses to large corporations such as Telstra and Apple.

As Principal Technical Writer I was responsible for all customer-facing product documentation. On joining Opengear I moved the documentation workflow from an unstructured combination of wiki-links and Microsoft Word documents to a version-controlled git repo. Documentation is now produced using HTML 5 and CSS 3 ur-text and PrinceXML. This allows for single-sourced documents to be published as web-ready html, print-ready pdfs and e-book ready ePub files.

2014 – 2015	Principal Editor, The Editorial Company

The Editorial Company was a virtual bullpen: a small team of experienced writers and editors providing high-end editorial services to business and publishing clients.

As a member of said bullpen, I wrote and edited press releases, marketing material, technical documentation, presentations and other material. As Principal Editor, I acted as the clearing house for team members and principal contact for clients, managing team deadlines, assignment logistics and brief preparation & sign-off.

The Editorial Company's internal systems and company workflow were based around an in-house NoSQL database and linked git repo. Customer briefs & work output were created in either Microsoft Word/Adobe Indesign or structured HTML/CSS.

The Editorial Company's customer base was primarily South-East Asia. Customer briefs, while mostly presented in English, were often prepared by people working in their second or third language. Clarifying, re-stating and re-framing the brief through interviews and further correspondence was a routine part of my workflow.

2006 – 2014	Senior Technical Editor, Red Hat Incorporated.

On joining I edited (and re-wrote much of) the *Red Hat Enterprise Linux 5 Deployment Guide* and edited the *Red Hat Directory Server Administration Guide*.

In 2007 I re-wrote Red Hat's internal style guide, initiated and wrote the first half-dozen articles for Red Hat Magazine's documentation column, and wrote press releases.

In 2007 I also re-wrote Red Hat's corporate security policy and wrote the internal security implementation and security procedures manuals.

In 2008 I developed and implemented the documentation template and application used to ensure Red Hat's products are audited code as per various legal standards. The most visible consequence of this are the extensive Technical Notes and re-designed Release Notes accompanying Red Hat Enterprise Linux releases. From 2009 through 2012, I continued as the primary author of Red Hat's release documentation.

As part of the re-engineered release documentation workflow, Red Hat's internal Bugzilla instance was modified. Red Hat uses Bugzilla for its bug-tracking and feature-prioritisation workflow. The locally-hosted instance at Red Hat is now programmatically integrated with the release documentation workflow.

As well, I was half of the two-person team responsible for Publican, a command-line application that takes DocBook XML and outputs publication-ready HTML, PDF, and plain-text files. It also automates the creation and maintenance of a standardised web-based front-end to an XML-based documentation suite.

This tool, developed entirely at Red Hat, is the core of Red Hat's entire documentation tool-chain. Initially in-house only, it was released as Free Software after several years internal use.

Aside from being the primary bug-tester and QA person, I wrote the first three versions of the Publican manual, as well as the application's man page (the help file included with Unix-based shell applications).

During 2013 and 2014 I also worked with the Publican developer to add a standardised Release Notes structure to the documentation workflow. This plug-in addition to Publican's functionality is tied to Red Hat's internal systems and has not been released publicly as Free Software.

In 2014 I co-wrote the first public-facing version of the OpenShift documentation. OpenShift is Red Hat's on-premises cloud-services software. As part of the editorial process I conducted a feature comparison analysis with OpenShift's commercial competition. This included setting up and testing 100-node mixed-platform cloud-based infrastructures on competing platforms such as AWS and Microsoft Azure.

Throughout my time at Red Hat I also provided editorial oversight to a 100-strong bullpen collectively responsible for Red Hat's product documentation. Adjunct to this, I wrote and ran internal courses and training sessions including a half-day 'better first drafts' session and a multi-day 'form and structure' course.

2003 – 2006	**Network & Web Administrator, Ecopolis Architects.**

I managed a 20-node multi-platform LAN, including CAD workstations; A1-printers; plotters; and Linux-based Web and Mail servers.

Duties: software & LAN maintenance, account management, mail & web server maintenance, web-site design, copy-writing & maintenance.

I also created, maintained and updated company letterheads and drafting document designs. These presentation-level document templates were setup in Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, as HTML/CSS-based e-mail templates and in VectorWorks (drafting software for architects).

2000 – 2006	**Freelance Journalist & Technical Writer.**

In 2001 I restarted the *Morning News* technology news digest previously written for Random Access. *Morning News* was a daily ≈3,000-word technology news & views digest made available by e-mail to paid subscribers, mostly in South-East Asia. This independent digest ran until 2003.

From 1999 to 2001 I wrote a book review column for *Australian MacUser.* From 1998 through 1999 I wrote a games review column for *Inside Mac Games*. I was also Associate Editor at *MacSense Online,* a web-based start-up magazine: I wrote the 'About This Macintosh…' help column, as well as news, features & editorial.

Features, articles & reviews (music, book & performance) for *The Age*, *The Age Monthly Review*, *The Advertiser*, *The West Australian*, *The Sunday Mail* (including a weekly computer column from 1993-02 to 1994-04), *The Adelaide Review*, *Australian Book Review*, *Australian MacUser*, *Australian Jewish News* & other magazines & journals.

Play-tester and copy-editor for TSR Incorporated. Play-tested and copy-edited gaming modules including *Ruins of Adventure, Curse of the Azure Bonds* and *Fate of Istus*.

2003 – 2005	**Web Master, ComputerStew, TechTV.**

ComputerStew was a daily sketch comedy show on the US cable TV network, TechTV. I ran the show's web-site, moderated the site's message board and wrote occasional sketches for the show.

2002	**Contract Technical Writer, Telstra.**

I wrote the online help & courseware for call centre staff transitioning from a green-screen to a web-based database access system.

2001 – 2004	**Writer & Instructor, Ziff-Davis University (ZDU).**

While running multiple on-line courses for ZDU (including courses on the Macintosh, Windows, HTML, CSS & JavaScript) I wrote guides for ZDU students & staff including a copyright primer, a guide to Mac OS and Windows text editors; a primer on dealing with PKZip files; an introduction to TraceRoute; and a guide to A4 & US Letter-size paper.