

AIZU IKMAL AHMAD

Technology specialist and system architect in media & online shopping industry.

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Executive Summary

Technology expert and system architect with a decade of building high performance & HA web platforms, capable of handling more than a million real-time concurrent hits.

Professional Highlights & Experience

Astro GoShop (Astro GS Shop) - Kuala Lumpur - Online & TV shopping platform

Astro GoShop (www.goshop.com.my) is an online and offline shopping platform, with a vast consumer base originating from Live TV Shopping channel on a notable cable TV provider in Malaysia - Astro.

Being a worldwide cable TV provider, Astro has posed significant challenges to my career progression. Managing remote developers from across the globe and dealing with communication barriers, such as multiple time zones, language fluency, and skills, has proven to be challenging. However, I am committed to ensuring a smooth development process with harmony & efficiency between developer & designer scope.

Tech Lead (March 2023 - October 2023)

- Responsible for defining the technical direction and strategy for Astro GoShop website & mobile app. This involves making decisions on technology stack, architecture, scalability, security & performance. Thanks to adoption on AWS with the mix of on-premise architecture, the challenge has been an interesting case study for my career reference.
- Lead a team of software engineers, setting goals, delegating tasks and providing guidance and mentorship to ensure successful project delivery, with help on tools like Jira & Slack.
- Collaborate with business units by bridging the gap between engineers, designer & product stakeholders, to ensure the project objectives are met with success.
- Actively participate in the development process by reviewing code written by team members, ensuring adherence to coding standards & best practice.
- Work closely with company-wide (Astro Group) DevOps, CyberSec and Infrastructure, ensuring product implementation adhere to compliance requirements and secure against potential threats.

Notable points;

- Increase SEO visibility & optimization for more than 110% performance improvement within 3 months by refactoring the pre-render mechanism of web presentation.
- Optimize AWS resource cost & usage across multiple products; mainly on EC2, Search Console and DynamoDB.
- Optimizing sprint cycle of product and feature development, from 7-weeks cycle to 4-weeks cycle; increase efficiency of developers by 50% faster release, indirectly gain up business units satisfaction rate.
- Increase visibility & communication effectiveness across the board from developers, QA, product stakeholders, business analyst, business units, marketing & merchandising department.

Malaysiakini (Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.) - Kuala Lumpur - Online news provider

Malaysiakini (www.malaysiakini.com) has been a pioneer of online independent news in the country since 1999. As a fully self-funded media outlet, Malaysiakini's mission centers on providing fast and accurate independent news which serves more than 10 million monthly readers.

- I worked with Malaysiakini for more than 13 years, knowing inside and out media organization requirements, trends and demands.
- Bridging the engineering team across editorial, subscription, sales and other internal departments.
- The team and I have been featured on the AWS case study for our achievement in reducing costs by 50% and being able to receive high traffic for more than a million concurrent readers:
<https://aws.amazon.com/solutions/case-studies/malaysiakini-case-study/>

Chief Technology Officer (2019 - March 2023, 3-years)

- Set the overall technology direction and strategy for the Malaysiakini.
- Lead the development and implementation of technology solutions to support the organization's goals and objectives.
- Oversee the technology department team, including hiring, training, and performance management.
- Collaborate with other departments and stakeholders to identify and prioritize technology initiatives.
- Manage budgets and resources for technology projects and teams, notable achievement with saving of 50% on AWS platform.
- Keep up-to-date with the latest technology trends and developments, and evaluate their potential impact on the organization.
- Ensure the security and reliability of the Malaysiakini.com web platform stacks as well as feed service to other newswire feed services.
- Act as a thought leader and spokesperson for the organization's technology initiatives & opportunities.
- Work closely with the CEO, COO & Editor-In-Chief (EIC) and other senior leaders to align technology strategy with overall business goals and objectives.
- Define and implement processes and standards for the web platform development and deployment.
- Monitor and report on the progress of technology initiatives to shareholders & senior management.
- Manage risks associated with technology projects and initiatives, and develop backup & contingency plans as needed.

Notable points;

- Team leader for the 2022 Malaysia 15th General Election high-performance live page on AWS platform (live.malaysiakini.com).
- Planned & guide team for high-performance web platform infra, serving 20k concurrent readers daily, via GraphQL API to various platforms; web, mobile app & newswire feed service.
- Head of engineering & project manager for news suite software for media publishing house;
 - Newscraft CMS - Headless Content Management System (CMS).
 - Newsmetrics - Real-Time Analytics Dashboard.
- Set standard tech stack for the team of engineers - NextJS, React, NodeJS & AWS products;
 - Standardized all Malaysiakini web products, projects, and internal tools to JavaScript stack.
 - Migrated all various online server vendors to AWS
 - Standardized critical MK source code repositories to AWS CodeCommit and build pipeline dev-ops systems with AWS CodeBuild & AWS CodePipeline.

Engineering Manager (2017 - 2019, 2 years)

- Be a mentor and coach to the team, providing guidance and support to help them grow and develop.
- Develop and implement strategies and processes to support the team's growth and success.
- Collaborate with other departments and stakeholders to understand business objectives and priorities.
- Participate in the hiring process to identify and recruit top engineering talent.
- Create and maintain a positive, collaborative, and inclusive work environment for the team.
- Conduct performance evaluations and regular feedback to the team to support their development and growth.
- Identify and resolve technical, subscription & operational challenges that the team may face.
- Oversee the implementation of processes and tools to support the team's work, a specific methodologies, code review, and continuous integration/delivery
- Contribute to the development of the organization's overall technology strategy and vision.
- Planning for product commercialization Newscraft CMS & Newsmetrics Analytics Dashboard.

Notable points;

- Team leader for the 2018 Malaysia 14th General Election Live page which generated more than a million concurrent visitors (live.malaysiakini.com) on AWS platform.
- Lead team & infrastructure to build hybrid mobile app Android & iOS mobile app.
- Lead for tech support, managing a fiber-optic network with multiple VLANs serving workstations, CCTV, and VOIP phone systems.

Senior Full Stack Engineer (2012 - 2017, 5 years)

- Design and develop scalable and maintainable software solutions using a variety of technologies and programming languages
- Collaborate with other members of the engineering team to define and implement new features and capabilities
- Mentor and provide technical guidance to junior engineers on the team
- Troubleshoot and debug complex technical issues
- Contribute to the evolution of the team's development processes and practices
- Keep up-to-date with the latest technologies and trends in software engineering.
- Review code and provide feedback to other team members to ensure the highest quality standards
- Assist with the development of technical documentation and specifications
- Work closely with product managers, designers, and other stakeholders to understand business requirements and translate them into technical solutions

- Identify and implement opportunities for performance optimization and improvements to the codebase
- Participate in agile planning and estimation processes, and take ownership of the delivery of assigned tasks.
- Lead technical design and architecture discussions and decisions within the engineering team
- Act as a technical liaison between the engineering team and other departments or stakeholders
- Provide technical support and guidance to other teams within the organization as needed.

Notable points;

- Solo-developed sister sites of Malaysiakini and the ultimate challenge with the Malaysiakini mobile web.
- Experiment and R&D with technology stack, with early adoption of NodeJS.
- Develop & manage Malaysiakini mobile web.
- Advocate SaaS cloud to team & shareholders; production implementation on AWS cloud platform & Cloudflare.
- Notable web application developed: Undi.info - election database (www.undi.info), URL shortener (www.mk.my).

Open Source Technologist (2009 - 2012, 3 years)

- Advocate and promote the organization's involvement in the open source ecosystem - specialist in PHP & MySQL, WordPress plugins & theme development.
- Keep up-to-date with the latest open source web platform trends and developments.
- Design & developed WordPress for news websites, with a custom front end to deliver high availability and performance.

Multimedia & DigitalWorks Sdn. Bhd. - Kuala Lumpur - Web development firm

Web Programmer (2007 - 2009, 2 years)

- Design and develop web platforms using LAMP stack.
- Work with senior team members to understand and implement requirements.
- Troubleshoot and debug technical issues on various web projects.
- Write clean and well-documented code.
- Contribute to the team's development processes and practices.
- Be part of the Malaysia Parliament online presence & website team, to develop a database and profile page for the government's MPs.

Skills Points

- **Web Platform Application:** System architect, High performance, High availability web
- **Programming Languages:** HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP, MQL4 (Metatrader)
- **Framework / Libraries:** NodeJS, NextJS-React, Svelte, Google SDK, AWS SDK, Tailwind CSS
- **Database:** MongoDB, Redis, MySQL, SQLite
- **Operating System:** Linux (Debian-based distros), MacOS

Referral

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