James Meickle

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About

Platform engineer with 15+ years of experience, including site reliability engineering, build systems, and security. Currently building the AI agent platform at a robotics research lab, and open-source agent identity tools on the AT Protocol, the open network behind Bluesky.

Experience

Roboticist, DevOps *(AI platform, build systems, and security)* 02/2024 – Present
Robotics and AI Institute (formerly Boston Dynamics AI Institute) – Cambridge, MA

- Authored the design for a C++/Python/ROS2 Bazel monorepo, conducted interviews to staff up the new Build team, and embedded for 6 months to help build the MVP. The monorepo now has 100+ contributors, 10x faster builds, and a 90% reduction in build failures.
- Established an agentic development platform used to author over 50% of company code. Integrated GitHub Copilot with a Rust lifecycle manager for headless agent swarms on remote GPU development VMs, open-weights models on vLLM, MCP guardrails, and cost dashboards.
- Operated Kubernetes AI training clusters (35,000 vCPUs and 500 GPUs) on cloud, neocloud, and on-prem. Provided on-call support for distributed training workloads. Introduced SRE practices including incident response, postmortems, and observability tooling.
- Founded a cross-team security committee, migrated 500+ GitHub repos to hardened IaC, built secure access methods for a cross-company research partnership, added org-wide security linting and license scanning, and responded to security incidents.

Founding Engineer 03/2022 – 11/2023
Tome – Remote

- Acting head of IT and Security for a legaltech startup, including obtaining SOC 2 via a from-scratch program of technical controls, penetration testing, and evidence collection.
- Built backend infrastructure for automated analysis of venture capital investment contracts, including job scheduling, sandboxing, database administration, and failure handling.
- Moved all production deploys to continuous delivery across TensorFlow/Keras inference serving, Python API services, and data pipelines, with shared observability standards.

Principal Infrastructure Engineer 06/2020 – 01/2022
Catchlight (Fidelity Labs at Fidelity Investments) – Remote

- Founding infrastructure engineer for an ML marketing platform: built its web infrastructure, SageMaker training on deidentified data, and model-driven Elasticsearch ranking.
- Replaced two-week deploy windows with containerized CI/CD on Jenkins and Kubernetes, increasing production deploy frequency 10x.
- Secured enterprise-wide approval for Terraform at Fidelity and coached teams in separate business units on IaC adoption.

Site Reliability Engineer / Senior Site Reliability Engineer 03/2017 – 04/2020
Quantopian – Boston, MA

- On call for public and trading infrastructure at a crowdsourced hedge fund that sandboxed untrusted Python code from 300k+ users, backed by PostgreSQL, MongoDB, and Cassandra.
- Eliminated 90% of overnight PagerDuty incidents by migrating trading infrastructure from a single cron server to an Apache Airflow cluster with tasks executed in Kubernetes pods.
- Refactored the community trading simulator from a Python monolith to per-algorithm stateless containers on Kubernetes, isolating blast radius and reducing cost 50%.

Site Reliability Engineer 05/2015 – 02/2017
Center for Brain Science at Harvard University – Cambridge, MA

- Wrote a Python framework for high-reliability statistical processing of petabyte-scale MRI brain scan data using SLURM to schedule tasks on HPC cluster hardware.
- Designed a research data pipeline to cope with 5x data volume due to increased voxel density and app-based research subject data including phone logs and GPS coordinates.
- Built a task orchestration system on Buildbot with retries, backfills, and on-demand jobs.

Sales Engineer and Developer Evangelist, AppNeta 01/2013 – 05/2015
Web Developer and Release Engineer, OHO Interactive 06/2012 – 11/2012
Freelance Web Developer, Infinity Interactive and Digitamite 07/2010 – 05/2012

Open Source

- **did.bot**: AI agent identity and governance. Per-agent atproto accounts tied to a responsible human operator, with audit logs, a kill switch, and policy guardrails on scopes and writes.
- **atgc**: Git client for AI agents on Tangled. Rust CLI that gives each agent worktree a stable committer identity and scoped access, with stacked PRs and machine-readable output.
- **vibescrobble**: Live status feed for coding agents. Agents post what they are working on to their own atproto repos and notify each other, with token use tracked by operator and model.

Projects and Community

- Discovered and responsibly disclosed an access control vulnerability in GitHub Actions that allowed bypassing required checks, earning a HackerOne bounty.
- Author of *Beyond Burnout* (Ch. 29 of *Seeking SRE: Conversations About Running Production Systems at Scale*, ed. Blank-Edelman, pub. O'Reilly, 2018).
- Conference organizer, speaker, and infrastructure-as-code workshop trainer at events including PyData, ODSC, Velocity, and DevOpsDays.

Technologies

Python, Rust, Go, Bash, Linux, Kubernetes (GKE, EKS, Lambda Labs, bare metal), GCP, AWS, Tailscale, Terraform, Nix, Bazel, Docker, Helm, ArgoCD, GitHub Actions, Datadog

Education

Central Connecticut State University – Bachelor of Arts, Psychology & Political Science