

# Justin Smestad

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## BACKGROUND

After a successful exit with my own company in 2008, I've spent my career seeking out companies that embody the hustle of startups. Most of the recent roles I have taken on can best be described as "Player Coach" where I am hands-on building the product while also providing guidance for others. While I find manager and development roles equally fulfilling, I am just as content in an individual contributor role where I'll be able to directly shape the product for end-users.

## DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

My go-to technical stack for more than 10 years has been Ruby-based (Rails, Sinatra, Hanami). However, recently I've been enjoying working on projects that utilize Ember.JS/Angular front-end and a mix of backend languages notably Node.JS, Ruby, and Elixir.

In my time outside the office, I try and spend as much time as I can learning other languages such as Rust, Embedded C/C++, and Go.

## OPEN SOURCE

Warden - built a Rack-based authentication library now used by Rails most popular authentication gem, Devise.

JSONAPI Consumer - An ActiveRecord-compliant consumer framework for communicating with JSONAPI-based APIs.

## EDUCATION

University of Iowa  
Computer Science, B.S. - 2008

## EXPERIENCE

### Sr Software Engineer / Data Lead - Homebot

| Feb 2017 - Current

Coming in as the fifth employee and first engineering hire. I took on the challenge of redesigning the existing architecture with one that would provide more reliable performance and stability. The new architecture replaced an existing Angular 1.x and Loopback/Node.JS API with React/Ember.JS front-ends powered by a JSONAPI Rails application and a custom SSO/OAuth authentication system.

### Engineering Director - Spikes Security / AurionPro

| May 2016 - Oct 2016

Eric Sullivan, my boss @ NCC Group, recruited me into Spikes as a strategic hire to re-assess their existing architecture and recommend a path forward towards something more stable. It was my responsibility to re-deploy an on-premise web app deployment from a custom PHP+jQuery stack onto a modern tech stack (evaluated Ruby, Elixir, and Go as possible fits) using existing resources. During this time the company went through an acquisition by AurionPro and before we were able to begin executing the new architecture, the company was forced to cut staffing due to setbacks in funding necessary to support the new effort.

### VP Engineering - AgilData

| 2015 - 2016

I joined AgilData to take on the challenge of releasing another database product/platform. They had built a simplified streaming database using SQL. I managed the entire engineering and support staff. During my time there, I moved the team to an agile engineering process suited to the distributed environment we operated in. I was also in charge of delivering a stable 6-week release pipeline similar to Chrome or Ember.JS. - As competitors like Apache Spark gained traction the company moved into a consulting-based business model and liquidated shortly after.

## REFERENCES

**Alex Stamos**  
Chief Security Officer @ Facebook  
(my former boss @ Artemis/NCC Group)

*Justin lead a distributed development team, including some extremely junior engineers, to quickly design, prototype and deploy our web-scale vulnerability detection platform. He was a joy to work with, and while we were physically separate I never had any problem with communication or motivation with Justin. I would strongly recommend Justin for any mission-critical development projects.*

**Eric Sullivan**  
Former boss @ NCC Group & Spikes Security

*Justin brings a remarkable range of technological breadth as an engineering leader. I hired Justin at Artemis Internet as the first Lead Engineer to develop a complex, automated vulnerability assessment system. He quickly engaged with our contract house, Pivotal Labs, coming up to full speed in a matter of days, much of it while working remotely. His responsibilities grew rapidly, commensurate with our company's growth.*

## EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED)

**Lead Software Engineer / Technical Director - NCC Group Domain Services**

| 2013 - 2015

As the first engineer hired by NCC Group, formerly Artemis, for the launch of a security-focused gTLD named .secure (resulted in .trust) I recruited a distributed engineering team and developed an architecture to address ICANN compliance. Upon successful launch of the initial prototype and the growth of the engineering team, I was promoted to Technical Director where I managed a team of engineers and acted as architect on major projects.

**Founder - Mongo Machine**

| 2010 - 2011

Mongo Machine was a company I bootstrapped that provided a database-as-a-service for MongoDB. The company was acquired by Compose in 2011.