



Sebastian – Corneliu Vîrlan

-- Software Engineering Manager --

Personal Details

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	Blog: https://sebastianvirlan.com/blog

About Me

I began my journey in Software Engineering back in 2008, where driven by passion for web technologies, I built a Romanian social platform, which proved successful for a few years. As I gained more experience in the field, I expanded my career by developing web software for various local businesses. Seeking a more collaborative environment to enhance my skills through shared knowledge, I transitioned from solitary work to team-based environments, where I continued to grow and contribute to the development of web software. Personal values such as passion, empathy, collaboration, quality, and innovation created positive impact, reflected by delivering robust and high-performing software, while demonstrating effective leadership. Encouraged by positive feedback and having a clear understanding of the software engineering career path, I decided to move towards a managerial direction, leveraging my experience to provide clear guidance and directions to teams.

Licences & Certifications

- Scrum Master Certification
<https://coursera.org/share/da660bf5236dafa6e75114821d0a3f79>
 - o Introduction to Scrum Master Training
 - o Scrum Methodologies
 - o Scaling Agile and the Team-of-Teams
 - o Combining Scrum with Other Agile Methodologies

Work Experience

Software Engineering Manager at PrettyLittleThing (Hybrid) [January 2023 – March 2025]

Being the first Engineering Manager at PLT, I defined and implemented foundational key management functions, for [people management, competency tracking and performance evaluation frameworks](#) which were later adopted across Boohoo Group PLC. My role consisted in people and project management responsibilities across several tribes of 40+ people ensuring that strategic business requirements are delivered on time with high-quality software.

Managed Tribes and Projects

- Digital (Frontend)
 - o <https://prettylittlething.com>
 - o PrettyLittleThing iOS and Android mobile apps (60% business revenue)
 - o PLT Marketplace iOS and Android mobile apps (built to promote sustainability)
- Product & Pricing (Backend)
 - o Product Information Management (Akeneo)
 - o Product related micro-services
 - o PrettyLittleThing Operations Hub

Technologies

- Web Frontend: TypeScript, React, NextJs
- Web and Mobile Backend: NodeJs, Typescript, Serverless Architecture on AWS
- Mobile Development using cross-platform framework React Native
- Laravel for internal operational tools

The primary focus of my role at PLT was on *People*, shared responsibilities for *Systems* in collaboration with the Tech Leads, *Systems Roadmap* in partnership with the Product Group, followed by *Teams Visibility* in conjunction with the Scrum Group.

Department / Cross-Tribes Impact

- Established Engineering Competency and Engineering Management frameworks tailored for PrettyLittleThing
- Refined and formalised people management processes such as hiring, performance tracking and evaluation, performance improvement plans and dismissals
- Fostering a culture of innovation, ownership, autonomy and continuous improvement motivating the squads to explore new technologies and tools that can improve the customer facing products
- Enhancing the onboarding experience through a mentoring programme to accelerate new hires integration
- Improved collaboration, communication, and understanding of services within and among tribes / squads
- Took on Scrum Master responsibilities in the absence of a Scrum Master when needed
- Headcount planning and teams planning
- Contributed to the IT Department merger between Boohoo and PrettyLittleThing
- Developed and implemented a strategic roadmap for engineering initiatives aligned with the business goals and the software industry best practices
- Reported weekly engineering updates, KPIs to the Group CIO and the Directors

Tribe / Squad Impact

- Increased delivery by improving cross-team dependency management, code reviewing process and fostering a cross-functional culture as well re-assessing sprint velocity.
- Increased development visibility and transparency by enhancing the agile development processes on a strategic re-platforming white-label initiative responsible for moving all the Boohoo Brands to the PLT tech stack. £20m p/a cost saving initiative
- Worked with other departments to identify and implement optimal solutions for their challenges
- Established Engineering KPIs to ensure consistent quality and delivery
- Created technical roadmaps to tackle projects with 5+ years of accumulated technical debt, while staying aligned with the company-wide goals

Individuals

- Performed people management responsibilities including one to ones, career planning, skill evaluation, performance tracking, conducting performance reviews, leading performance improvement plans and handling employee dismissal
- Identified individuals learning style and provided tailored learning paths
- Monitoring morale and working towards improvement
- Creating succession plans ensuring critical roles are not left vacant for long periods or filled by people who don't have the right skills to perform
- Developed future leaders by introducing a management mentoring program to upskill team members for managerial roles

Improvements to the Software Development Lifecycle (SDLC)

- **Documented and standardised** key repetitive processes to ensure consistency and efficiency where appropriate
- **Established performance monitoring and error tracking strategies** to identify and address issues proactively
- **Optimized alert systems** by reducing noise from redundant alerts, reassessing thresholds and refining severity levels
- **Improved production incident management process**, reducing resolution times and minimising business impact
- **Drove innovation** by advancing "Shift-Left" testing strategies, through E2E automation on the customer facing products

Reason for leaving: Company downsized due to [financial conditions](#).

Software Engineering Manager at Moteefe (Remote) [January 2022 – January 2023]

Built and managed 2 high-performing teams, as well ensuring that the right output is produced. Delivered the Moteefe's strategic re-platforming of the buyer experience E-commerce Stores, including its infrastructure. Due to circumstances out of my control, the role has been eliminated starting my notice period on 2nd of November.

Teams

- Built and managed 2 engineering teams, including hiring / termination and performance management
- Developed career paths with clear directions for progression

- Drove innovation, established new approaches in improving productivity
- Partner with senior engineers to drive technical initiatives that raise the bar for our engineering practices
- Lead on communication with stakeholders from other teams, creating focus space for engineers to do their best work
- Fostering technical excellence part of the team's agile development culture

Technologies used:

- Website Frontend: TypeScript, React, NextJs
- Backend: NodeJs, Typescript, Headless E-Commerce, and several commercial software integrations
- Infrastructure: AWS

Product & Business

- Provided strategic and operational oversight for software product development
- Managed business expectations and resolved conflicts
- Worked closely with business leaders to develop tactical and strategic solutions
- Developed and drove execution of 6 months road maps
- Writing requirements in the absence of a product owner
- Costs saving initiatives by removing unnecessary steps

Reason for leaving: Company downsized due to [financial conditions](#).

Senior Lead Software Engineer at TalkTalk Manchester [September 2019 – January 2022]

Had the opportunity to be part of a greenfield project. Product released to Production in January 2021. <http://talktalk.co.uk> (the new Brochureware + Checkout website)

- Contributed on choosing the right technologies and services that would fit our needs (.Net C#, Angular TypeScript, Docker, K8s, Helm, operating on cloud)
- Contributed on defining development strategies and guidelines for new teams (code branching model, testing, build and release, monitoring, logging)
- Software Design such as Architectural Design (domain driven micro-services, public facing APIs, databases, caching)
- Environments based on Development and Business Requirements
- Ensuring resilience and transient-fault-handling (retries, circuit-breakers for downstream API calls)
- [Rollover Keys for Data Encryption \(PII\) - https://sebastianvirlan.com/2021/01/21/azure-key-vault-keys-roll-over-encrypting-pii/](https://sebastianvirlan.com/2021/01/21/azure-key-vault-keys-roll-over-encrypting-pii/)
- Mentored / Coached engineers and supported their growth
- Managing teams in multiple locations (offshore)
- Conducted Engineering interviews
- Defined Alerting Model, Incidents & On-Call Strategy

For more details about what I do at TalkTalk please read my post on:
<https://sebastianvirlan.com/software-engineer/talktalk-manchester/>

Platform Software Engineer at BBC MediaCityUK [September 2018 – September 2019]

- Designed and built Data Transformation Workflows that uses Clojure components and Kafka Topics to consume messages and publishes them to S3.
- Ensured quality with unit and integration tests and applying TDD
- Research on a list of CI tools for choosing the best fit for the team
- Work with project, product and technical leads to design software and create implementable specifications and tasks at feature and component level
- Part of my day-to-day tasks is to review and give constructive feedback on others code
- Utilised: JavaScript, TypeScript, Clojure, Docker, K8s, Kafka, Jira, Jenkins

For more details about what I did at the BBC please read my post on:

<https://sebastianvirlan.com/software-engineer/bbc-manchester/>

Reason for leaving: Sought a workplace with a more collaborative and supportive team environment to continue my professional growth.

Senior Software Engineer TheFlow LTD. Sheffield, UK [July 2017 – August 2018]

- Improved existing code using SOLID design principles.
- The development of a framework to increase code re-usability.
- Developed web applications using Ruby, Ruby on Rails Framework and MySQL databases.
- Ensured quality with unit testing and minimum 80% test coverage.
- Utilised: Ruby, Ruby on Rails, JavaScript, Kafka, Docker, Jira, Bamboo

For more details about my work at TheFlow please read my post on:

<https://sebastianvirlan.com/software-engineer/the-flow-sheffield/>

Reason for leaving: Relocated to UK, Manchester, house purchase.

Senior Software Engineer at Assist Software Suceava, Romania [September 2015 – July 2017]

- Applied clean code practices and design patterns to develop readable, maintainable and scalable code for web applications.
- Optimized legacy code and improved performance across many projects.
- Lead Developer on a team of 4 people that together we developed a BOT for a Strategic Management Virtual Game for SMES web app.
- Lead Developer on a team of 3 people where we successfully implemented all the client's requirements.
- Integrated software with monitoring and support tools
- Utilised: PHP, Laravel, Ruby, Ruby on Rails, JavaScript, Vapor Swift, Docker, RedMine

For more details about my work at Assist Software please read my post on:

<https://sebastianvirlan.com/software-engineer/assist-software-suceava/>

Reason for leaving: Relocated to UK, Sheffield.

Freelancer at Freelancing, Romania – [15 March 2011 – August 2015]

After working at Enovation HD, I became a Freelancer, and I start building software solutions for Romanian companies. I was mainly focused on building online shops, using WordPress or eCommerce platforms. One of the biggest challenges came later, when I built a Real Estate platform.

For more details about my work in freelancing time please read my post on:

<https://sebastianvirlan.com/software-engineer/freelancer/>

Software Engineer at Enovation HD Suceava, Romania [15 March 2010 – 15 March 2011]

- Developed static HTML websites for clients
- Developed an eCommerce website using Joomla CMS.

For more details about what I did at Ennovation HD please read my post on:

<https://sebastianvirlan.com/software-engineer/enovation-hd-suceava/>

Other Side Projects

- Angel and Demon Social Platform (2008) – <https://www.isd.sebastianvirlan.com>
- Maps Journey Replay (2018) – <https://github.com/sebastianvirlan/maps-journey-replay>
- Radar Scanner Animation in Swift for IOS (2019)
- Real Estate Platform (2017)
- FoxStorm - TypeScript Web Framework inspired by Laravel & Rails (2019)
<https://github.com/FoxStorm>

For more details about my personal / open-source projects please read my post on:

<https://sebastianvirlan.com/software-engineer/my-projects/>

Skills, Experience, Worked With

- Leveraged Knowledge in WEB Development, Full Stack Development
- Expertise in many mainstream development language/frameworks
 - Programming Languages: C#, PHP, Ruby, JS/TS, Swift, Clojure
 - Backend Frameworks: DotNet, Ruby on Rails, Laravel, CodeIgniter, Smarty
- Competence in database design and use in software applications
 - MySQL, MongoDB, DynamoDB
- Real Time Communication with Sockets
- Good Understanding of DevOps practices
- Experience of professional software development processes (Agile)
- Very Good understandings of OOP/ functional principles and design patterns
- Git and it's features
- Containerisation software platforms like Docker, I used to do video tutorials about "How to deploy modern WEB applications with Docker".
- Expertise in automatic deployment, scaling and management of containerized applications using Kubernetes
- Tests using automated test-driven techniques for ensuring code quality and good coverage
- Mentoring junior engineers / starters
- Computer Science degree + Computer Science and Engineering Master's Degree

Publications

- **Modular JavaScript Facebook Application Tutorial** - <https://assist-software.net/snippets/how-save-data-amazon-dynamodb-using-ruby-on-rails>
- **Workshop Ruby on Rails (CRUD and API tutorial)** - <https://assist-software.net/snippets/ruby-rails-crud-and-api-tutorial>
- **How to save data to Amazon Dynamo DB using Ruby on Rails** - <https://assist-software.net/snippets/modular-javascript-facebook-application-tutorial>
- **Video Tutorials - Deploy Modern Applications with Docker**, based on a contract with the PackPub company.
- **Posts on my Programming Blog** - <http://sebastianvirlan.com/blog/>

Education

Suceava, SV, RO „Ștefan Cel Mare” University of Suceava

- M.S.E., Computer Science and Engineering, October 2014 - July 2016
- B.S.E., Computer Engineering, October 2008 - July 2012

For more details about the coursework please read my post on:

<https://sebastianvirlan.com/education/>

Speaker

- **Journey to Success** @ “Ștefan Cel Mare” University of Suceava
- **Choose the right CI Tool for your team** @ BBC Manchester
- **Mentor** @ CodeUp Manchester & CodeUp Salford