

About Me - Mugunth Kumar

Who I Am

I'm a CTO and engineering leader with nearly 20 years of experience building technology that creates real impact. My journey has taken me from India to Singapore to Melbourne, giving me a global perspective on technology leadership. I've built and scaled teams from 1 to 24 engineers, authored advanced programming books, and led technical transformations at companies ranging from startups to enterprises.

What sets me apart: I combine deep technical expertise with strategic business thinking. I don't just build technology—I build teams, culture, and sustainable systems that deliver measurable outcomes. Whether it's reducing attrition by 85%, improving gender diversity from 5% to 30%, or cutting infrastructure costs by 90%, I focus on results that matter to the business.

How My Values Drive Results

Purpose-Driven Technology with Business Impact

I build technology that serves a greater purpose while delivering business value.

As **CTO of Pink Cloud** (addiction recovery platform), I'm spearheading Australian expansion by establishing strategic partnerships with **University of Melbourne**, **Monash University**, and **Turning Point** (Australia's leading addiction research centre). I've architected and delivered: - **Subscriptions platform** (Django/AWS Fargate) supporting 5M+ unique research codes with academic analytics - **Meeting data platform** (FastAPI/DuckDB) serving sub-100ms queries at ~\$30/month operational cost - **RAG-powered AI features** expanding access to evidence-based care

On the side, I'm building **Nool** — an AI-powered reading companion that transforms scrolling into learning. Full-stack product (Django, Swift, Kotlin) demonstrating end-to-end ownership from concept to deployment.

Data-Driven Leadership That Moves Metrics

I make decisions based on measurable outcomes, not opinions.

- **Education Horizons:** Introduced DORA metrics and Story Mapping, reducing cycle time by 40% and improving delivery velocity across 5 teams (24 engineers)
- **PaperCut:** Built CI/CD pipeline (Bitrise) improving build reliability by 60%
- **Xero:** Implemented A/B testing and phased rollouts, decoupling engineering from product schedules and reducing deployment risk

Empathy That Reduces Attrition

Technical excellence and human connection aren't opposed—they're complementary.

- **Reduced attrition from 30% to under 5%** at Steinlogic through structured 1-on-1s, capability frameworks, and bias-free hiring
- **Education Horizons:** Coached 3 tech leads into people managers within 90 days, increasing team autonomy
- **PaperCut:** Built mobile guild from scratch by mentoring Go engineers into mobile specialists, eliminating external hiring needs

Diversity That Drives Innovation

I build inclusive teams where different perspectives create better solutions.

- **Improved gender diversity from 5% to 30%** through objective, rubric-based hiring at Steinlogic
- **Openpay:** Expanded international hiring (NZ, Colombia) during COVID, improving global delivery capabilities
- Created capability frameworks and technical guilds to democratize knowledge and growth opportunities

Transparency That Accelerates Problem-Solving

I prefer harsh truths over comfortable lies—it's how we find real solutions.

- **Education Horizons:** Implemented formal incident management process and trained associate engineers to run production releases within 3 months
- **Steinlogic:** Established architectural decision records (ADRs) ensuring technical choices were documented and challengeable
- Built cultures where engineers felt safe raising concerns, leading to earlier issue detection and faster resolution

Strategic Technology Adoption

I identify transformative technologies early and apply them pragmatically.

- **2008:** Pioneered iOS development, authoring advanced programming books (translated to Spanish, French, Chinese)
- **2017-2024:** Led backend/cloud transformations (AWS CDK, event-driven architectures, microservices)
- **2024-Present:** Building production AI/ML systems (RAG pipelines, scikit-learn, AWS Bedrock) focused on business value over hype

What I Bring as CTO

Technical Leadership: - Architect scalable systems: event-driven architectures, BFF layers, microservices - Build AI/ML-integrated products: FastAPI, scikit-learn, RAG pipelines - Deep expertise: Python, AWS (CDK/Fargate/RDS), Swift, Golang, Docker, Redis

Strategic Execution: - Turn business goals into technical roadmaps with measurable KPIs - Balance build vs. buy decisions based on ROI and strategic value - Drive technical due diligence for M&A and partnership opportunities

Team Building & Culture: - Scale teams sustainably while maintaining quality and culture - Create psychological safety that accelerates innovation - Develop engineering leaders through structured coaching and capability frameworks

Operational Excellence: - Implement DORA metrics, incident management, and continuous improvement practices - Design CI/CD pipelines that enable junior engineers to deploy safely - Optimize infrastructure costs without sacrificing reliability (e.g., 90% cost reduction)

What I'm Looking For

I thrive in **purpose-driven organizations** where technology creates measurable social or business impact. I'm most effective in: - **Growth-stage companies** needing to scale teams and systems

sustainably - **Organizations embracing AI/ML** where I can apply strategic + hands-on expertise - **Mission-driven environments** where technology serves a greater purpose - **Cross-functional leadership** requiring alignment between product, engineering, and business

I'm based in **Melbourne, Australia** and open to opportunities that combine strategic technology leadership with meaningful impact.

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