

Gaurav Rustogi

CTO & Engineering Leader | 20+ Years | Distributed & Cloud-Native Platforms at Scale

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SUMMARY

- CTO and Engineering Leader with 20+ years of experience building, scaling and operating high-traffic, regulated platforms across real-money gaming, ad-tech and consumer products.
- Specialise in transforming early-stage or unstable systems into production-grade platforms with high reliability, low latency and optimised cost structures.
- Deep expertise in end-to-end engineering org design - hiring, structuring and leading large cross-functional engineering teams across backend, frontend, QA, Data and DevOps.
- Experienced in regulated platform operations - RBI compliance, KYC, payment gateway integration, fraud prevention and annual compliance audits.
- Strong architectural background across distributed systems, event-driven architecture, microservices and cloud-native AWS platforms.

KEY IMPACT

- Scaled and operated regulated real-money gaming platform to **10M+ registered users, ~10,000 API requests/minute** at sub-40ms latency
- Reduced infrastructure cost by **65%** through architectural redesign and AWS managed services adoption
- Achieved **99.99% uptime**, reduced crash frequency by **95%** and eliminated all planned maintenance windows
- Migrated live monolith to **event-driven distributed** architecture - latency **140ms** → **sub-40ms**, zero downtime, delivered in parallel with live product roadmap without dedicated sprints
- Led and cleared annual BDO tech and financial systems compliance audits - RBI regulations, KYC mandates, payment systems integrity, fraud prevention and state-level gaming laws
- Built and scaled engineering team from **10 to 40+ engineers** across backend, frontend, QA and DevOps over 5+ years
- Increased Forbes Media (BrandVoice) ad-tech revenue by **60% over 2 years** through campaign data accuracy systems and misconfiguration detection
- Cross-timezone US stakeholder experience across two roles - embedded delivery for Forbes Media US product managers (LeadCode) and direct reporting to VP Engineering, San Francisco with in-person HQ visit (GSN Games)

CORE SKILLS

Leadership: Engineering Org Design · Team Building & Scaling · Technology Strategy · Roadmap Ownership · Budget Management · Stakeholder Management · Cross-functional Leadership

Architecture: Distributed Systems · Event-driven Architecture · Microservices · REST API Design · SOA · API-first Design

Systems: High-availability Systems · Reliability Engineering · Observability · Performance Optimisation · Cost Optimisation

Compliance & Security: Regulated Platforms · RBI Compliance · KYC · Payment Gateway Integration · Fraud Prevention · BDO Audit Readiness

Infrastructure: AWS · Docker · CI/CD · Kafka · Redis · MySQL · DocumentDB · BigQuery

Engineering Practices: Zero-downtime Deployments · Engineering Excellence · Release Management · AI-assisted Development · Agentic AI Development · RAG Architecture

WORK EXPERIENCE

CTO, Co-founder - OzaroFit Oct 2025 - Present | Gurugram

Product: Ozaro.fit - Fitness platform (mobile + web)

- Architected and built cloud-native **microservices** backend on **AWS** from scratch using an **API-first** design
- Designed polyglot persistence architecture (SQL + NoSQL) optimised for domain-specific access patterns and platform scalability
- Established a structured **AI-assisted development workflow** - engineering detailed technical prompts covering implementation specs, class structure, API signatures and edge cases - while retaining full architectural ownership of microservices design, database schema and coding standards
- Collaborated with business co-founder on product roadmap, feature feasibility assessment and go-to-market decisions as joint decision-maker
- Delivered product from zero to launch within 2 months; achieved early commercial traction within first quarter

CTO - Passion Gaming Apr 2020 - Sep 2025 | Gurugram

Product: Rummy Passion - Regulated real-money gaming platform | 10M+ registered users | ~10,000 API requests/minute

- Owned full technology strategy, roadmap and budgeting for a regulated real-money gaming platform under RBI, KYC and state-level compliance frameworks
- Led end-to-end engineering across backend, frontend (Angular + Cordova, later migrated to Unity/C#), DevOps, QA and data teams
- Reduced infrastructure cost by **65%** through architectural redesign and AWS managed services adoption; achieved **99.99% uptime** and reduced crash frequency by **95%**
- Migrated live monolith to distributed, event-driven architecture - latency **140ms** → **sub-40ms**, zero downtime, no dedicated sprints, delivered in parallel with product roadmap
- Led and cleared annual BDO tech and financial systems' **compliance audits** - platform security, access controls, change management logs, fraud prevention, payment systems integrity and regulatory compliance
- Drove migration from 5+ individual payment gateways (Paytm, PayU, Cashfree, PhonePe, Airtel Payments) to JusPay as a unified aggregator - reducing maintenance overhead and streamlining reconciliation workflows
- Built lightweight in-house player behaviour analytics platform - demonstrating ROI of clickstream tracking without third-party tool budget, delivering insights that directly informed product decisions on onboarding flows and game format defaults
- Hired, structured and scaled a **40+ member cross-functional engineering team**; defined org structure, delivery processes and engineering culture

Engineering Manager - LeadCode Technologies Jan 2017 - Mar 2020 | Gurugram

Client: Forbes Media (US) - BrandVoice ad analytics, campaign management & automated client reporting platform

- Worked directly with Forbes Media US-based product managers, managing cross-timezone delivery as their embedded engineering team
- Led a team of **20** engineers to build a unified data aggregation platform stitching real-time data from 10+ sources including Google 360 (via BigQuery), Moat (Oracle), DFP, Outbrain and Taboola - reducing analytics turnaround from **weeks to minutes** and powering ~40 metrics and ~20 report types
- Oversaw engineering delivery of the BrandVoice automated client reporting system - enabling campaign owners to select metrics, export dynamically generated PPTs with live graph rendering, editable tabular data with real-time reflection and auto-populated narrative placeholders

- Managed delivery of a DFP campaign management module with creative management, line items, budget allocation and a rule-engine-driven daily budget optimisation
- Increased Forbes Media revenue by **60% over 2 years** by improving campaign data accuracy and surfacing misconfigurations previously invisible across fragmented analytics tools
- Managed ETL pipelines via Domo connectors, pulling from BigQuery and operational databases into processed reporting dashboards for stakeholder visibility
- Established QA processes, release workflows and data integrity validation mechanisms across engineering team

Engineering Manager - Bash Gaming / GSN Games Sep 2012 - Dec 2016 | Bengaluru

Products: SlotsBash, GSN Casino - Real-time social gaming | 500K+ DAU | 100M+ registered users

- Joined as first and sole backend developer; designed and built backend systems from scratch for SlotsBash through to launch
- Built and led a team of 6 backend developers as the platform scaled post-launch
- Promoted to Engineering Manager following GSN Games acquisition; reported directly to VP Engineering in San Francisco
- Managed 70% leadership / 30% hands-on - architecture, tech documentation, delivery and weekly cross-timezone syncs with SF engineering leads
- Visited GSN Games San Francisco HQ for technology and product knowledge transfer
- Designed dynamic game ROI mechanisms in collaboration with US-based game designers, improving game performance and revenue outcomes
- Reduced new game room onboarding to under 2 days by simplifying backend architecture and improving configurability

Senior Consultant - Eseal Inc Apr 2011 - Sep 2012 | Mumbai

Product: ESeal - B2B2C SaaS platform for product authentication and supply chain tracking

- Led backend development and system design for enterprise clients in product authentication and logistics tracking
- Designed and implemented service-oriented architecture, improving system modularity and scalability
- Hired and built initial engineering team; worked directly with enterprise clients to translate business requirements into technical solutions

Senior Software Developer - Media.net (Directi) Aug 2005 - Apr 2011 | Mumbai

Product: Skenzo - High-scale contextual ad-serving platform | 100M+ requests/day

- Contributed to backend systems powering a contextual ad-serving platform at **100M+** requests per day
- Rewrote and optimised core components of the ad-serving framework to improve scalability and throughput
- Implemented SOA and MVC-based architecture patterns; participated in large-scale system refactoring and performance optimisation
- Worked on performance-critical distributed system components in a high-traffic production environment

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Backend: PHP · Node.js · Java · Python

Frontend & Mobile: Angular · Cordova · Unity (C#)

Cloud & Infrastructure: AWS (ELB, EC2, RDS, S3, CloudWatch, MSK, WAF, GuardDuty) · Docker · CI/CD pipelines · Linux

Databases: MySQL · Redis · MongoDB · DocumentDB · BigQuery

Messaging & Streaming: Kafka · Event-driven architecture

Payments & Compliance: JusPay · Razorpay · Paytm · PayU · Cashfree · PhonePe · KYC systems · Fraud detection · RBI compliance

Observability: DataDog · Splunk · System monitoring · Alerting · Performance profiling · Uptime management

Tooling: Domo · ETL pipelines · JIRA · Swagger / REST API documentation

AI & LLM Tooling: GitHub Copilot · Ollama · LLaMA · ChromaDB · nomic-embed-text · Playwright

AI IN ENGINEERING

- Led adoption of AI-assisted development practices across engineering teams - defining workflow standards, prompt engineering guidelines, and quality guardrails for responsible AI integration
- Applied AI-assisted workflows across system design, sprint planning, test case generation, and technical documentation to improve delivery velocity without compromising architectural consistency
- Established code review and architectural oversight processes to ensure AI-generated code meets quality, security, and maintainability standards
- Coached engineering teams on effective and responsible AI tool usage within professional software development workflows

Hands-on AI Builds:

- **ai-resumatch-screener** (github.com/gauravrustogi1/ai-resumatch-screener)
An autonomous AI agent for job-matching from scratch in **Python**. Integrates **IMAP** email parsing, **Playwright** headless browser scraping and automation, **local LLM** scoring (**Ollama + Llama3.1**) into a fully working agentic pipeline. Built as a learning project without AI code generation tools to develop genuine understanding of agent architecture.
- **stockai-rag** (github.com/gauravrustogi1/stockai-rag)
An AI-powered stock research assistant using **RAG** architecture. Fetches live NSE stock data via **yfinance**, embeds financial data and analyst recommendations into **ChromaDB vector store**, and answers natural language queries using local **LLaMA 3.1 via Ollama** — built from scratch in plain **Python** without AI code generation tools.

EDUCATION

Masters of Computer Applications (MCA) - Gujarat University (2002-2005)

Bachelors of Computer Applications (BCA) - Gujarat University (1999-2002)