

1 Philippe M. Chiasson

1.1 Summary

From the wire, up

I like to build highly scalable, available, maintainable and high performance systems and products, by building on open source infrastructure components.

In addition, I have over 25 years of open source development experience as a contributor and project lead, in particular within the Apache, Perl and mod_perl projects.

I am always looking for interesting challenges that would allow me to use my expertise to it's full while at the same time teaching me something I didn't know yet.

I have a strong team spirit, and I enjoy working in a friendly, family-like environment.

1.2 Expertise

As a designer of large systems, it's important to recognize the right tool for the right job. As a side-effect, I have grown a large tool set that I can reach into when it's time to solve problems.

At a high level, here are some of the **major** elements of my expertise:

- **Apache**

I have been using Apache for a long time, and I have built, configured and deployed it for sites driving millions of visitors.

From a different angle, I have implemented Apache modules, both in C and in Perl, and have twisted Apache in all sort of interesting ways. One good example is teaching apache to understand a home-grown, reverse-engineered UDP+XML network protocol. Another one is a filtering module that applies customizations to HTML documents being served straight off the wire.

- **Perl**

When it comes time to sit down and put something together, I almost invariably turn to perl, as my most powerful, all-purpose tool. I have been using Perl for over 15 years, and I am intimately familiar with both it's use and it's internal implementation. I have published modules on CPAN, exposed C interfaces to Perl, maintained large code bases in Perl, and also trained other members of my teams on Perl's best (and worst) features.

- **Unix**

I have in depth experience and knowledge in Unix operating systems. I am very comfortable administering Linux and Solaris systems, as well as experienced in *BSDs, HP-UX & AIX.

I am most at ease with RPM based distributions, and know the ins and outs of managing large collections of such systems, homogeneous or not.

- **mod_perl**

As a core developer and maintainer of mod_perl, I bring a difficult to match expertise when it comes to mod_perl. I have used my knowledge successfully to transition legacy CGI web systems for performance improvements of many orders of magnitude.

Using mod_perl, I have integrated Apache with proprietary 3rd party libraries, created high-performance API endpoints, implemented off the wire web content filtering and templating, created dynamic webserver configuration management systems and much more.

I have also frequently spoken on the subject at conferences and internal events.

- **Cloud Computing**

In the last 4 years, I have been investing most of my time and effort gaining a deep understanding of operating large-scale systems in a Cloud environment.

I have been a key member of a multi-year effort to migrate large and disparate workloads from traditional datacenters into the Cloud. This included the development of a complete open-source platform to enable migration efforts to be reliably repeated and solve architecture challenges once and for all.

1.3 Professional experience

1.3.1 *Mozilla, Remote*

1.3.1.1 **Cloud Specialist (2014-present)**

When the Mozilla Lab was cloded down, I moved into a new role within the traditional and aging IT group. I was part of a small SWAT team with the mission of taking all of Mozilla's operations to the Cloud.

In this role, I've helped understand the existing challenges of a data-center centric operation organization, with a lot of baggage. I was instrumental in designing what eventually became a full-featured cloud platform called *Nubis* to embody in code all the best patterns and practices of Cloud Operations.

With the work on that platform, I was able to be instrumental in the successful migration to the cloud of a large portion of Mozilla's IT workload, all using a single methodology, bringing order and repeatability to what was once cahos.

It's in this role that I was able to develop a very deep understanding of the challenges of moving to the Cloud. From financial aspects all the way to deep technical limitations of the different Cloud platforms.

1.3.1.2 Director of Mozilla Lab (2011-2014)

When Mozilla Messaging was folded back into Mozilla, it moved into Mozilla's R&D Lab. I became the sole operator of the entirety of the Lab.

This included moving back Thunderbird services into the Mozilla Lab infrastructure, but also meant providing support, operational services and architecture services to the large number of projects incubating in the Lab.

In my role, I served as an advisory to most projects, helping them reach their goals and ultimately, leave the incubator.

I operated a large heterogeneous operational workload, mentored many young projects with little real-life operational experience, reviewed architectural design and provided day to day support for all the ongoing projects.

1.3.2 Mozilla Messaging, Remote

1.3.2.1 System Architect (2008-2011)

I oversaw the entire buildout from scratch of the entire IT operating stack for Mozilla Messaging, a spinoff of Mozilla, taking on all responsibility for the development, support and release of *Thunderbird*, Mozilla's e-mail client.

I reported directly to the CEO and was responsible for:

- **Build Engineering =item * Release and Update pipeline =item * Front-end web services =item * Back-end in-product APIs =item * Internal Dev Tooling**

1.3.3 ActiveSate, Vancouver, Canada

1.3.3.1 Director of Webops/IT (2006-2008)

I have overall responsibility for the team responsible for all production websites, internal IT systems, engineering and staff IT support, telecom, and operations support. Reporting to the CEO, I have:

- Led the build-out and transition of the ActiveState IT systems from within previous parent company (Sophos) to a standalone infrastructure, including:
 - specification, selection, costing, installation & configuration of all shared computing resources, including networking, firewalls, VOIP system, backup systems, collocation facility, email servers processing over 40 million emails a month, one of the largest known public mailman setup, and a web infrastructure serving more than 80 million requests a month.
 - Designed and implemented a configuration management system, based on subversion, allowing for full automation and historical tracking of every production systems, from the initial automated install to day to day maintenance.

- Gained responsibility for managing and directing web operations group responsible for production web services on both Apache/Linux and Zope/IIS/Windows. Significant accomplishments include:
 - Mentored junior staff and coordinated project planning
 - Reported to senior management team on all IT/webops, managing CapEx budget
 - Supported both Sales Marketing and Engineering teams, including rollout of systems such as
 - **SugarCRM**
 - **Tapeless online backup**
 - **Subversion**
 - **Network Attached Storage**
 - **Postfix**
 - Conversion of large, failure prone Windows/IIS web property to a high available, fault tolerant system running on top of a LAMP stack
- Built network and systems monitoring facilities tracking most IT resources, using open source components.

1.3.3.2 Senior Perl Developer (2005-2006)

As Senior Perl Developer, I was responsible for the design, development and support of ActivePerl, The Perl DevKit (PDK) and other perl related products.

I was responsible for successfully porting ActivePerl and The Perl DevKit (PDK) to OS X and it's newer universal binary format.

I ran and maintained the infrastructure behind ppm.activestate.com, a distribution mechanism for Perl modules. This system, in use by tens of thousands of developers worldwide, builds, tests, packages and distributes binary versions of 10,000 CPAN packages on a large number of operating systems. Challenges included porting open source projects to non-mainstream operating systems, coordination with enterprise customers, and upgrading a mission-critical infrastructure with no downtime.

1.3.4 TicketMaster.com, Los Angeles, USA (2003-2005)

Senior Software Engineer

I was responsible for multiple projects involving the massive infrastructure behind www.ticketmaster.com

At ticketmaster, I have been involved in most aspects of the existing system: designing and writing custom Apache modules; profiling and performance analysis of the existing infrastructure; application design and implementation.

1.3.5 eXtropia.com, Singapore, Singapore (2001-2003)

Senior System Engineer

I was responsible for system administration, design, deployment and troubleshooting.

My main task while at eXtropia was to provide customers and developers with the tools and support they needed to complete our projects. My work varied from network infrastructure design to specific software design and implementation. Performance, scalability, maintainability and robustness were of utmost importance.

I was instrumental in helping our customers in the Banking industry successfully design, implement and launch their first ever dynamic online presences.

1.3.6 Opendesk Corporation, Montreal, Quebec, Canada (2000-2001)

Senior mod_perl Developer, Architect and Evangelist

Once OpenDesk became a full-featured product, HBE founded the OpenDesk Corporation to host all development related to that product.

In my existing role as SmartWorker Architect, I joined OpenDesk to continue the development of SmartWorker along with the growing core team. Being the core component used to build a large online service, it was critically important to successfully meet the various challenges encountered by the OpenDesk team.

In that role, I lead the development of many new features, improved the performance the system as well as increased the overall quality of the framework.

At the same time, I was responsible for guiding an effort to turn SmartWorker into a successfully Open Source project, with a community of contributors.

1.3.7 HBE Software, Montreal, Quebec, Canada (1999-2000)

Senior mod_perl Developer and Architect

I joined HBE with my mod_perl expertise to help them complete the SmartWorker project. Initially as a core developer of the platform, I made significant contribution towards the first, production-ready, release of SmartWorker.

Later, I took on the leadership of the core team, responsible for all SmartWorker development. I was responsible for new feature development, quality and code review, as well as architectural decisions. The successfully development of SmartWorker was the key technology that enabled HBE to produce OpenDesk.com

1.4 Professional Achievements

- **Member of the Apache Software Foundation**
- **Member of the mod_perl Project Management Committee**
- **mod_perl Maintainer**
- **CPAN Author**

1.5 Speaking

I have given public presentations both to internal groups, as well as at conferences. I enjoy helping others reach new levels of understanding.

Recent presentations include ApacheCon 2007 US, ApacheCon 2006 EU and WebGUI 2005 NL.

The full list of my archived talks is available online

<http://gozer.ectoplasm.org/talks>

1.6 Education

- **1995-1998 University**
"Universite de Sherbrooke", Sherbrooke, QC, Canada
- **1993-1995 College**
"Seminaire de Sherbrooke", Sherbrooke, QC, Canada
- **1988-1993 High School**
"Le Triolet", Sherbrooke, QC, Canada

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1.9 Author

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