

Maxim (Max) Kitaygora

Software Engineering, Account Management, Professional Services, Site Reliability Engineering, Solution Architecture

email: max@mtwhales.com | phone: (669) 318-9402 | Location: Newark, CA 94560

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/max-kitaygora/> | website: <https://mtwhales.app> | chatbot: <https://mtwhales.app/chat.html>

As a seasoned software engineering leader with 25 years of experience, I aim to empower innovative organizations by architecting scalable solutions and mentoring teams to deliver and support transformative, customer-focused technologies.

SUMMARY

Accomplished engineering leader with a 20+ year record of scaling software engineering teams, founding an IoT startup to drive product innovation from concept to commercialization, and delivering scalable SaaS, AI, and IoT solutions for startups and global enterprises. Built and led high-performing SRE teams. Experienced in managing Cloud transformation projects. Successfully stabilized critical projects and accounts, enabling significant improvements in system performance and customer satisfaction. Passionate about mentoring engineering talent and fostering customer-focused cultures to deliver high-impact solutions for innovative organizations.

WORK EXPERIENCE

InTone | 01/2025 – Present | Palo Alto, CA

Adviser, Engineering and Go-to-Market Strategy

- Advised a startup on leveraging generative AI-powered voice agents and serverless AWS infrastructure to enhance sales operations, driving profitability and \$1.2M+ ARR within six months through scalable, customer-focused solutions.

Valence AI | 02/2024 – Present | Palo Alto, CA

Adviser, Engineering and Go-to-Market Strategy

- Provided strategic guidance on developing an AWS-based solution for real-time emotion analysis and corresponding text outputs for contact center agents, driving \$1M+ ARR and profitability within 18 months.

Vibranium VC | 07/2023 – Present | Palo Alto, CA

Technical Adviser

- Conducted in-depth due diligence for cloud-native SaaS platforms, evaluating technical architectures to ensure scalability and viability for portfolio investments.
- Advised portfolio startups on customer onboarding strategies and scalable cloud architectures, driving user adoption and operational efficiency for GenAI and SaaS solutions.

Orion Innovation | 10/2017 – 04/2025 | Palo Alto, CA

Director of Software Engineering, Account Director

- Strategically managed key accounts and cross-functional teams (Legal, Finance, Service, Product), partnering with VP- and C-level executives to secure 7- and 8-figure contracts, negotiate tailored solutions, and drive revenue growth through high-value partnerships.
- Cultivated strategic partnerships across technology and business verticals while leading a corporate VC program, unlocking new logos, expanding market opportunities, and fostering innovation aligned with key account growth.
- Built and mentored high-performing, customer-focused teams across five countries, fostering a collaborative, no-silos culture to scale engineering operations and ensure efficient deal execution for global client satisfaction.
 - + Led a team of 124 software engineering and SRE associates for a late-stage startup to scale a high-traffic POS platform, migrating it to an AWS microservices architecture with Datadog monitoring. The scaling enabled service delivery to over 20,000 restaurant locations, drove revenue growth from \$13.7M in 2019 to \$129M in 2023, and supported acquisition in 2024.
 - + Led a team of 59 software engineers to support development of an AI-powered SaaS contact center platform, with some engineers integrating real-time AI across over 20 digital channels and 120 third-party

integrations, while others enhanced core functionality, improving customer sentiment by 29% and contributing to 9% YoY revenue growth to \$2.4B in 2024.

- + Led a team of 19 engineers to develop and deliver a VMware Adapter, enabling integration of SAP LaMa with VMware SDDC to automate cloning, refresh, and migration, reducing provisioning time by 40% and supporting global scalability.
- + Oversaw a 15-engineer software engineering team to deliver web and mobile apps for a sports technology provider, powering 10M+ annual registrations and 15M+ app users across 50M users in 35 countries by 2024, accelerating rollouts by 15% and contributing to revenue growth from \$11.8M (2021) to \$75M (2024).
- + Stabilized a Smart City CMS project by leading a 12-engineer technical team to develop a scalable IoT SaaS platform for a late-stage startup, supporting 50,000+ sensors and 140M+ global devices, enhancing customer satisfaction and facilitating acquisitions in 2018 and 2020.
- + Led a 3-engineer software engineering team for a fintech startup (acquired 2021) to upgrade a payment platform's Android OS (7 to 10), optimizing for 150,000+ terminals serving 30M customers, enabling 100,000+ merchant adoptions with \$16B+ Gross Merchandise Volume and facilitating acquisition.

MERA | 06/2015 – 10/2017 | Nizhny Novgorod, Russia

Director of Software Engineering, Account Director

Orchestrated strategic business development initiatives and software development services by aligning customer's vision with technical execution, driving the successful delivery of innovative fintech solutions.

- Directed an 87-engineer software engineering team for a leading fintech startup to develop an iPad-based POS platform, scaling a cloud-based solution post-\$13.5M Series C (2015) and \$35M private equity funding (2017), enabling 76% YoY growth in monthly hosting revenue by late 2017 and aligning with customer success KPIs.
- Led an 80+-agent Tier 2 Customer Support team for a POS startup, achieving a 99% customer satisfaction rating through optimized client engagement and support processes.
- Conducted technical due diligence for five M&A deals in the payment processing sector, ensuring products met client requirements and demonstrating expertise in fintech solutions.

KiQ Desk Gadget | 06/2015 – 11/2016 | Nizhny Novgorod, Russia

Co-Founder, CTO (Concurrent with MERA role)

Drove the creation and commercialization of an innovative IoT personal assistant desk gadget from concept to market readiness, aligning entrepreneurial vision with technical execution to deliver a transformative AI-driven product.

- Secured \$250,000 from angel investors as a founder, spearheading fundraising efforts and negotiating partnerships with hardware vendors to fund and prepare a \$50,000 Kickstarter campaign for producing 1,000 units of an IoT desk gadget.
- Led end-to-end product development, directing a cross-functional team to build a Wi-Fi and BLE-enabled IoT gadget (plush kitty form factor) with cloud-integrated software, firmware, and mobile application, delivering notification tracking and personalized AI-driven humor to enhance user engagement.

Lintelus | 03/2013 – 06/2015 | Nizhny Novgorod, Russia

Director of Software Engineering

Nurtured a high-performing engineering team thriving in a fast-paced startup environment, aligning team capabilities with dynamic market demands and go-to-market strategies and driving startup growth as a key leader in product commercialization.

- Led operations, directing a 12-engineer software engineering team, investor relations, and founder partnerships to enable startup growth and secure a \$3M second seed round following a \$1M initial investment.
- Guided product strategy and engineering for a cloud-based SaaS engagement platform, transforming an early-stage MVP into a commercial product while fostering client and stakeholder relationships.

- Led deployment of the SaaS platform at high-profile events like Oracle Open World and Cisco Live Milan, supporting 7,000 attendees with 4,000 simultaneous connections for slides, polls, and chats, enhancing client engagement and strategic partnerships.

MERA | 06/2009 – 03/2013 | Nizhny Novgorod, Russia

Director of Software Engineering, Account Director

Scaled engineering organizations and led complex technology transformations, aligning technical execution with business goals to accelerate growth.

- Scaled an engineering organization for a Series C startup from 15 to 80 engineers pre-acquisition, contributing to a client's \$107M ARR and a 10x valuation exit via acquisition in 2009. Post-acquisition, expanded the team to over 300 professionals, delivering large-scale backend and mobile applications for real-time automotive navigation, which enabled a 32.7% annual revenue increase in the Wireless & Mobility unit.
- Led the transition of enterprise UM and UC solutions (IP/SIP-based platforms with messaging, collaboration, attendant, and contact center capabilities) from an enterprise telecom client to an in-house team; built and managed a 50-engineer software development team, contributing to the client's gross margin increase from 52.2% in 2011 to 55.6% in 2013, despite revenue declining from \$611.8M in 2012 to \$576.9M in 2013.
- Directed cross-functional technical teams for Healthcare and Telecom clients, delivering solutions through Agile methodologies that improved client satisfaction, accelerated delivery cycles, and increased project efficiency.

MERA | 04/2005 – 06/2009 | Nizhny Novgorod, Russia

Senior Manager, Software Engineering and Professional Services

Managed diverse engineering teams while cultivating a culture of innovation and continuous learning, enabling agile adaptation to evolving customer needs.

- Directed a team of over 150 software engineers and a Professional Services team of 7 engineers to develop and support IP/SIP-based Unified Messaging and Contact Center solutions for an enterprise telephony provider customer with 35 to 50% market share, enabling seamless project transitions during a \$915M acquisition in 2009.
- Built and led an 11-engineer software engineering team for an early-stage IIoT startup, delivering scalable IoT solutions for data center monitoring, enabling real-time environmental analytics across enterprise data centers and achieving up to 15% energy cost savings, supporting growth post-\$15M funding rounds by 2008.

Previous Roles

- Served as Engineering Manager and Team Leader at MERA (2002–2005, Nortel account), as Software Engineer at Teleca (2000–2002, Motorola account) and Alcor (1996–2000), developing software for enterprise clients.

EDUCATION

Nizhny Novgorod State Technical University

Nizhny Novgorod, Russia

08/1992 – 07/1998 | Master's degree | Computer Systems and Networks

CERTIFICATIONS

- *Berkeley Venture Capital Executive Program (2023)*

PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT

- *Active member of the AWS Connected Community, engaging with technical and startup ecosystems.*
- *Advisor to AI startups, guiding technical strategy and scalability.*
- *Mentor to early-stage founders and tech sales professionals, fostering innovation and growth.*