

DENNIS SLADE JR.

Strategic Technology Consultant | Interim CTO / Director of Technology | Platform Modernization
Brooklyn, NY | (917) 553-2812 | DennisSladeJr@gmail.com | work.DennisSlade.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Seeking strategic technology consulting engagements and interim executive roles. Technology leader with 25+ years turning complex technical challenges into elegant, scalable solutions that drive measurable business results. Expert at taking inherited chaos and transforming it into reliable systems without disrupting ongoing operations. Proven track record managing \$2.1M+ technology budgets while delivering platforms serving 1M+ users globally at 99.9%+ uptime. Successfully scaled distributed teams across 12 time zones, executed complete platform modernizations, and aligned technology strategy with revenue goals - all while maintaining zero security breaches and 90%+ team retention through organizational change. Currently advising Executive Directors and C-level executives on AI tools adoption, ethical AI usage, and practical AI implementation.

Core Competencies: Strategic Technology Leadership | Interim CTO / Director of Technology | Platform Modernization & Architecture | Engineering Team Building | P&L & Budget Management | Security & Compliance | AI Adoption & Policy | Stakeholder & Executive Communication | Vendor & MSP Management | International Team Management

CONSULTING EXPERIENCE

Think Deep Consulting • New York, NY

Independent Technology Consultant | Jan 2025 – Mar 2026

- Served as Director of Technology for Rainbow Rackets LLC; planned and built RainbowRackets.org
- Team program manager for ChronoQuest, winning entry in the 2025 NYEdTech Meetup Hackathon; represented the project at SXSW EDU 2025 and EDTECH Week NYC 2025.
- Planned and implemented HilaryClarkWriter.com.
- Advised clients on AI tools (Claude, ChatGPT) adoption, policy frameworks, and practical implementation.

Think Deep Consulting • San Diego, CA

Independent Technology Consultant | Sep 2012 – Nov 2016

- Founded and led technical operations for Social Career Page; supervised distributed team across 5 time zones and 3 continents.
- Migrated platform from shared hosting to multi-environment AWS infrastructure (EC2, S3, Route 53, load balancer).
- Built educational and business applications from the ground up; performed database migrations and system enhancements.

ENTERPRISE LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Scholastic Inc. • New York, NY

Manager, Software Engineering - Digital Education Tech Lead | Dec 2016 – Jul 2023

Led engineering teams in Scholastic's Digital Education division serving 1,000,000+ students, teachers, and parents across 30+ products, 28 Classroom Magazine sites, and 1,000+ institutional customers worldwide. Managed \$2.1M+ technology budget with 25 staff across 3 Agile teams spanning 11 countries and 12 time zones.

Platform Modernization & Architecture

- **BookFlix 2.0 Complete Redesign:** Led 12-person team through full platform rewrite in 6 months with zero downtime. Removed Flash dependency; expanded to mobile/tablet market with HTML5 responsive design. Serves 100,000+ daily users globally.

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- **Middleware Platform (SDM) Tech Lead:** Primary technical leader for authentication, security, and COPPA compliance backbone serving 30+ products, 3 eCommerce sites, and 28 magazine properties. Maintained 99.9%+ uptime over 4.5 years including 4 back-to-school peak cycles.
- **Legacy-to-Microservices Modernization:** Architected transition from monolithic API to microservices architecture supporting 430+ endpoints. Led containerization strategy and major infrastructure upgrades (Spring Boot, Java 8→17, MySQL→Aurora RDS) with 100% service availability maintained throughout.
- **Teachables eCommerce Integration:** Architected real-time order authentication system connecting Oracle order processing with product delivery, enabling new B2C revenue stream.

Strategic Technology Leadership

- Partnered with Executive Directors on multi-year technology roadmap aligned with revenue goals; drove technology decisions supporting \$10M+ annual revenue.
- Served as technical liaison between engineering, product, sales, and C-level stakeholders; translated complex technical concepts for non-technical executives.
- Evaluated and championed emerging technologies for future product applications; led platform lifecycle planning.

Engineering Organization & Operational Excellence

- Achieved 90%+ team retention rate through COVID-19 transition and organizational change - significantly exceeding industry average.
- Increased automated API test coverage from 0% to 40% in one year; implemented performance testing protocols and CI/CD pipeline enhancements.
- Took complete ownership of release management: 20+ production releases annually with zero unplanned downtime; led 24/7 incident response and post-mortem analysis.
- Recruited, mentored, and developed engineering talent at all levels; established Agile/scrum practices across distributed international teams.

Security, Compliance & Risk Management

- Maintained zero security breaches across all platforms throughout 6+ year tenure despite managing highly sensitive data for 1M+ students and families.
- Ensured enterprise-grade COPPA and FERPA compliance; implemented RBAC frameworks, audit trails, and biweekly Qualys vulnerability scanning.
- Led frontend and API penetration testing programs; multiple security remediations without service disruption or data exposure.

Vendor, Partner & Stakeholder Management

- Led integrations with Google Classroom, ClassLink, Clever API 3.0, Canvas/LTI 1.3, and OneRoster that enabled deployment to hundreds of additional school districts.
- Coordinated dependencies with 15+ internal teams: IAM, Oracle, Salesforce/MDM, eCommerce, Security, Tech Ops, and QA.
- Managed offshore development partnerships across Eastern Europe, India, and Latin America; successfully transitioned consultant deliverables (Unicon, Relevance Lab) to internal teams.
- Partnered with international Scholastic divisions in the UK, Middle East, and Asia; managed codebase supporting multiple regions, languages, and legal jurisdictions.

Money-Media / Financial Times • New York, NY

Senior PHP Developer | Interim Director of Application Development | 2007 – 2009

- Assumed full management duties of Director of Application Development during vacancy, effectively serving as acting technology leader; provided CTO with periodic progress reports and collaborated on resource allocation.
- Determined release schedules for CMS, customer fulfillment systems, and live publication sites serving 50,000+ daily users; managed 16,000+ source files across 5 publications and 3 web applications.

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- Solved months-old issue affecting \$100K+ client through systematic cross-platform troubleshooting; led payment authorization system upgrade under strict deadline.

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Caregiver / Patient Advocate • Wilmington, NC | Jul 2023 – Dec 2024

Full-time in-home caregiving during parent's cancer treatment. Daily coordination with nurses, hospice providers, social workers, and hospital staff.

DeNA / ngmoco:) / Freeverse • CMS Tools & Backend Developer | New York, NY | 2010 – 2012

Sun Microsystems / Forte Software • Technical Support Engineer | Oakland, CA | 1998 – 2001

Additional roles include Freeverse Inc. (Technical Support Lead & Web Programmer, 40+ products, 80,000+ customers) and Ascentive LLC (Senior Web Developer). Worked 4 years in Switzerland in European banking as a FinTech developer.

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

- **Languages & Frameworks:** Java (Spring Boot), JavaScript/TypeScript, React, PHP, Ruby, Python, SQL, bash
- **AI Tools:** Kiro IDE, Claude, ChatGPT
- **Cloud & Infrastructure:** AWS (EC2, RDS, S3, CloudFront, containers), OpenShift, Docker, 13+ years cloud experience
- **Databases:** MySQL, Aurora RDS, MongoDB, Redis, PostgreSQL
- **Architecture:** Microservices, RESTful APIs, event-driven, service-oriented architecture (SOA), legacy modernization
- **Security & Compliance:** OAuth 2.0, SAML, JWT, SSO, RBAC, penetration testing, vulnerability management; COPPA, FERPA, GDPR
- **DevOps & Tools:** CI/CD pipelines, Jenkins, Git/Bitbucket, Jira, Confluence, Agile/Scrum

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science | Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY

Liberal arts foundation in computer science from the institution that produced computing pioneer Grace Hopper

REFERENCES

References available upon request

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP & INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

Speaking & Panels

- Educational Technology Implementation and Best Practices
- Building and Managing Distributed International Teams
- Digital Divide in Education and Technology Access
- LGBTQIA+ Inclusion and Organizing in Tech Industry
- Diversity and Inclusion in Technology at All Levels

Industry Engagement

- Represented ChronoQuest at SXSW EDU 2025 and StartED EDTECH Week NYC 2025
- Represented Scholastic at EdTech conventions; participated in 1EdTech (IMS Global) standards initiatives
- Active podcast guest on technology leadership, diversity, and digital equity topics

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LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY

- **Technology Strategy:** Technology decisions must be grounded in business objectives and measurable outcomes. I balance tactical delivery with strategic vision: modernizing platforms, managing technical debt, and investing in team capabilities while maintaining service continuity and meeting commitments.
- **Team Building:** High-performing engineering organizations require psychological safety, clear communication, and continuous growth opportunities. My 90%+ retention rate through significant organizational change reflects that treating people as full human beings - not just resources - drives both employee satisfaction and business results.
- **Stakeholder Partnership:** Effective technology leadership means translating between technical and business languages. I build trust with engineers, executives, and board members through consistent delivery and transparent communication about risks and tradeoffs.
- **Diversity & Innovation:** Homogeneous teams produce homogeneous solutions. I actively build diverse, inclusive organizations because varied perspectives lead to better products, stronger problem-solving, and better business outcomes.