

Dean McDonnell

Co-Founder | Applied AI Architect | AI Transformation Leader | Enterprise AI Strategy | Solution Engineering Leadership | Enterprise Solution Architecture | Fintech | SaaS | API | ex-Stripe | ex-Intercom | ex-PayPal | [Email](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

Professional Summary

Applied AI Architect and Enterprise Technology Leader with 15+ years of experience helping global organisations adopt frontier AI, modernise enterprise platforms and deliver large-scale digital transformation. Proven track record building and leading high-performing Solution Engineering teams across EMEA and APAC, partnering with Sales, Product and Engineering to translate complex technical challenges into measurable business outcomes.

Experienced in architecting enterprise solutions spanning AI, cloud, APIs, payments and SaaS platforms, with a strong focus on customer transformation, executive advisory and scalable technical engagement. Successfully developed AI adoption strategies, business cases and operating frameworks that improve productivity, accelerate customer adoption and establish repeatable best practices across technical organisations.

Alongside corporate leadership roles at ESW, Stripe, Intercom and PayPal, founded and built Faces2Names, an AI-powered SaaS platform leveraging large language models, AWS cloud services and secure application architecture to deliver intelligent knowledge management, digital storytelling and conversational AI capabilities.

Passionate about enabling organisations to adopt frontier AI responsibly, combining technical depth, commercial insight and people leadership to build innovative, scalable and trusted AI solutions.

Employment History

 **Co-Founder & Chief Product & AI Architect** | [Faces2Names.com](#) (December 2025 -)

Key Achievements

- Founded and built an AI-native SaaS platform that enables families to preserve, organise and discover collective knowledge through intelligent knowledge management, digital storytelling and collaborative family experiences.
- Architected an end-to-end AI platform using Large Language Models (LLMs) to deliver AI-generated autobiographies, conversational AI, speech-to-text transcription, multilingual translation, semantic search, document understanding and intelligent content generation.
- Designed secure, enterprise-grade AI and cloud architecture, implementing permission-aware AI, AWS (S3, CloudFront, Route 53), scalable REST APIs and robust security controls including RBAC, MFA, encrypted auth and signed URLs.
- Led full product development as a solo founder, delivering web and native mobile applications using PHP, JavaScript, MySQL, HTML, CSS, Kotlin and Swift, while defining the product roadmap, user experience and long-term AI strategy.
- Engineered advanced media and collaboration capabilities, including intelligent media processing, secure document storage, digital legacy planning, knowledge graphs, timelines, messaging and permission-based content sharing.
- Defined the long-term product vision, balancing AI innovation with privacy, security, responsible AI principles and commercial viability.

Technologies

Artificial Intelligence	Cloud & Architecture	Development
Large Language Models (LLMs)	AWS	PHP
AI Assistants	S3	Javascript
Prompt Engineering	Cloudfront	MySQL
Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG)	Route 53	HTML
AI Content Generation	REST APIs	CSS
AI Transcription and Translation	Secure Media delivery	Kotlin
AI Knowledge Management		Swift

Key Achievements

- Built and led the Enterprise Solution Engineering function, defining the operating model, mentoring a high-performing team and establishing scalable frameworks for technical discovery, solution architecture, proof-of-value engagements and customer delivery.
- Defined the organisation's AI strategy, evaluating emerging AI technologies and developing executive business cases, adoption roadmaps and implementation plans covering AI-powered meeting intelligence, workflow automation, sales enablement, operational analytics and productivity improvements.
- Drove organisation-wide transformation, redesigning customer onboarding, technical approvals, analytics workshops, implementation governance and cross-functional collaboration, reducing operational complexity and improving delivery consistency.
- Developed Solution Engineering playbooks, career frameworks and technical standards, standardising customer engagement, accelerating onboarding and creating repeatable best practices across the organisation.
- Partnered with executive leadership and enterprise customers to identify AI opportunities, influence product strategy and deliver business-focused AI transformation initiatives.
- Led executive customer engagements, including discovery workshops, architecture reviews and proof-of-value sessions, translating complex technical challenges into commercially viable enterprise solutions.
- Introduced data-driven operating metrics and continuous improvement practices, improving executive reporting, resource planning, organisational visibility and fostering a culture of mentoring, knowledge sharing and AI-assisted ways of working.

Transformation & AI Initiatives

Enterprise AI Adoption Strategy	Enterprise Technical Playbook	Analytics Workshop Transformation
AI Meeting Intelligence & Knowledge Management	Customer Discovery Framework	Time Tracking & Operational Analytics Strategy
AI-Assisted Sales Enablement Programme	Technical Approval Workflow Optimisation	Customer Onboarding Optimisation
Solution Engineering Operating Model	Cross-functional Collaboration Programme	Executive Business Cases & Organisational Change Management
Solution Engineering Career Framework	Retailer Profile Standardisation	

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Senior Enterprise Technical Advisor (TAM) | Stripe, Dublin (January 2021 - November 2024)

Key Achievements

- Served as the trusted technical advisor for a portfolio of strategic enterprise customers representing \$160B+ in annual payment processing volume, partnering with executive stakeholders to define long-term technology and platform strategies.
- Led enterprise architecture engagements covering global payments, API integrations, distributed systems and platform scalability, designing resilient solutions across Stripe Payments, Billing, Connect, Identity, Financial Connections and Webhooks.
- Guided enterprise digital transformation initiatives, advising CTOs, VP Engineering and Solution Architects on global expansion, automation, AI opportunities, multi-currency processing, recurring billing and marketplace architectures.
- Partnered with Product and Engineering leadership to resolve complex architectural challenges, influence product roadmap priorities and advocate for enterprise customer requirements.
- Led executive technical engagements, including discovery workshops, architecture reviews, implementation planning and business reviews, driving increased platform adoption and identifying opportunities for customers to expand into new products, markets and use cases.
- Improved operational excellence by leading critical technical escalations, developing internal tooling and dashboards, mentoring Technical Account Managers and establishing trusted executive relationships that enabled customers to make strategic technology decisions.

Technologies

Enterprise Architecture	Stripe Products	Leadership
API Strategy	Payments	Executive Advisory
Distributed Systems	Billing	Technical Discovery
Payment Architecture	Connect	Customer Transformation
Cloud Integrations	Identity	Cross-functional Leadership
Security & Authentication	Financial Connections	Product Strategy
Enterprise Scalability	Webhooks	Stakeholder Management

 Senior Presales Engineer - EMEA | Intercom, Dublin (November 2019 - January 2021)

- Led technical discovery and architecture design for enterprise SaaS deployments across EMEA.
- Delivered tailored demos, proof-of-concepts, security reviews and managed RFP responses for technical buying committees including C-suite stakeholders.
- Architected API integrations within complex enterprise stacks including CRM and data platforms.
- Worked closely with Product to influence roadmap priorities based on customer feedback and emerging market trends.
- Partnered with Product to represent enterprise scalability and integration requirements
- Contributed to hiring and team growth including interviewing candidates.

 Lead Sales Engineer - Midmarket, APAC | PayPal, Sydney (October 2016 - April 2019)

- Owned technical strategy for 6,000+ mid-market and enterprise clients across APAC.
- Worked with an offshore technical team based in Chennai, India from Sydney, ensuring consistent delivery across a distributed APAC customer base
- Led API integration and checkout optimisation initiatives spanning fraud, authorisation and payment flows - driving AU\$13.6M annual revenue uplift through reduced drop-off.
- Delivered executive-level technical reviews and strategic updates to align performance initiatives with commercial.

Previous roles available upon request

Education

 Bachelor of Electronic Eng (Hons.) | University of Galway, Ireland (September 2005 - May 2009)

Skills

Leadership

Solution Engineering Leadership | Executive Advisory | Technical Pre-sales | Customer AI Transformation | Cross-functional Leadership | Team Development | Executive Stakeholder Management

Artificial Intelligence

Large Language Models (LLMs) | AI Strategy | AI Adoption | Prompt Engineering | Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) | AI Governance | AI Workflow Design

Enterprise Architecture

Enterprise Architecture | API Strategy | Distributed Systems | Cloud Architecture | Integration Design | Security & Compliance | AWS

Industry Expertise

SaaS | AI | Fintech | Enterprise Software | Payments | E-commerce | Professional Services

Technologies

AWS | Claude | OpenAI APIs | Amazon Bedrock | REST APIs | PHP | JavaScript | SQL | MySQL | HTML | CSS | Git | Zendesk | Salesforce | Slack | Microsoft Suite | Google Suite