

KEVIN KOO YI ZEN

Co-Founder & CTO | Full-Stack Engineer | Tech Entrepreneur
linkedin.com/in/kevinkooyizen

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Results-driven technology leader and serial entrepreneur with over 10 years of experience in full-stack software development, team leadership, and product strategy. Proven track record of co-founding and scaling technology startups, building products that serve hundreds of thousands of users, and leading cross-functional engineering teams. Adept at architecting scalable systems, driving strategic alignment, and translating business objectives into robust technical solutions. Holds a BEng in Mechanical Engineering with Management (Honours) from The University of Manchester.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Co-Founder / Chief Technology Officer | GoodWhale – Investing Simplified *Oct 2023 – Present*

- Designed and developed GoodWhale Buddy, an AI-powered personal finance chatbot deployed across Telegram, WhatsApp, and LINE that uses Generative AI to track spending, provide budgeting insights, and deliver emotionally aware financial guidance in natural language.
- Integrated advanced LLM APIs (Gemini Pro, Claude, OpenAI) to power conversational AI features including receipt scanning, spending categorisation, goal tracking, and culturally aware financial nudges.
- Achieved recognition by Google Cloud for pioneering use of Generative AI in human-centred finance and conversational design.
- Hired, developed, and led a cross-functional engineering team, setting clear performance expectations aligned with organisational goals.
- Established and communicated team priorities in line with overall business objectives, fostering strategic alignment across multiple teams.
- Formulated a comprehensive long-term technical roadmap encompassing current and future product and infrastructure requirements.
- Supervised system designs, critically evaluating architecture to resolve complex and ambiguous technical challenges.
- Conducted thorough code reviews, ensuring adherence to best practices in code integrity, testability, and efficiency.

Senior Software Engineer / Chapter Lead | 8I Holdings Limited *Nov 2020 – Sep 2023*

- Built and launched an equity analysis tool with educational modules, growing the platform to over 130,000 users.
- Served as Chapter Lead, providing technical leadership and mentorship to engineering team members.
- Leveraged expertise in Figma, software development, and management to drive product delivery.
- Collaborated cross-functionally to align engineering efforts with business strategy and product vision.

Full-Stack Web Developer | Tripfez Travel *May 2019 – Oct 2020*

- Revamped the company website, contributing to the acquisition of 300,000 users.
- Developed and implemented a content management system using Laravel for the new website.
- Re-architected the platform using a microservice-based structure with Symfony to enhance performance and scalability.
- Optimised API calls and minimised database queries for improved efficiency.
- Integrated the BillPlz payment system, enabling online bookings and payments.
- Configured and maintained an AWS-based infrastructure with security and cache layers (SSL, Fail2ban, FastCGI, Gzip).

- Established a CI/CD flow with Circle CI, automating code testing and eliminating manual deployment.

Co-Founder / Chief Technology Officer | Beacon Systems Sdn Bhd Oct 2017 – Jan 2019

- Built an accounting, inventory, and payroll product, onboarding over 200 SMEs and major corporations including Sunway Group and Palace of the Golden Horses.
- Hired, grew, and led the development team through the full product lifecycle.
- Implemented accounting, inventory management, and HR/payroll features with compliance to Malaysia's Tax system (SST).
- Enabled auto-generation of financial reports (P&L, Balance Sheet, Trial Balance, General Ledger).
- Integrated payment gateways (AsiaPay/FPX/ipay88) and customised invoice PDF generation.
- Established a secure multi-tenancy database infrastructure with a microservice-based backend architecture.
- Implemented automated testing with Laravel Dusk and conducted on-site demonstrations and client training.

Co-Founder | Renarium Jun 2016 – Apr 2017

- Developed a C2C intermediary renting platform for household items in Manchester, United Kingdom.
- Conducted comprehensive market research to identify target demographics and growth opportunities.
- Validated user needs through user testing and iterated on the platform based on feedback and insights.
- Utilised effective pitching strategies to secure project funding.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Engineering (BEng), Mechanical Engineering with Management (Honours) | The University of Manchester 2013 – 2016

Activities: Statistical Strategy Society, Dodgeball, Table Tennis, Futsal

Project: Design of a prosthetic hand producible via injection moulding

A-Levels (Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Accounting) | Taylor's College 2012 – 2013

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Languages & Frameworks: GoLang, Laravel, Symfony, Vue.js, React, JavaScript, PHP, Python

Cloud & Infrastructure: Amazon Web Services (AWS), Google Cloud Platform (GCP), Webpack, CI/CD (Circle CI)

Design & Tools: Figma, Git, Microservice Architecture, Multi-Tenancy Database Design

AI Tools & Platforms: Claude Code, Anthropic Claude API (Opus, Sonnet, Haiku), OpenAI API (GPT-4o, o1, o3), Google Gemini API, Cursor AI, Antigravity, Local LLM Deployment (Ollama, LM Studio), Prompt Engineering, AI-Assisted Development Workflows

Leadership: Team Building, Strategic Planning, Code Review, Agile Development, Mentoring

CERTIFICATIONS & COURSES

- Scrum Master Certified (SMC) – Scrum Alliance (Sep 2021)
- Digital Marketing Professional Certification – Digital Marketing Consultancy Sdn Bhd (May 2018)
- Full Stack Web Development – NEXT Academy (Oct 2017)
- Associate Mechanical Design – Dassault Systèmes (Sep 2016)