

NARESH KUMAR

Software Engineer & Technical Leader | Platforms, Delivery & Quality | AI-Assisted Engineering

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Authorized to work in the United States, India and New Zealand

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Software engineer and technical leader with 20+ years across support, testing, and project and release leadership at Dell, Cerner, Cognizant and VMware. I translate customer needs into requirements and system designs, and explain technical decisions to nontechnical stakeholders. Today I build and run platforms for endurance events and small businesses with AI coding agents.

CORE SKILLS

Engineering: Requirements discovery, system design and architecture; TypeScript, Astro, React, WordPress; data processing and integrations

Delivery & leadership: Customer communication, technical translation, scoping, release management, risk management and distributed teams; adapting explanations to the audience

Platforms & security: VPS administration, Cloudflare DNS and WAF, SSL/TLS, backups and recovery; MFA, role-based access, email authentication, PCI-DSS hardening

Quality & AI: Regression, performance and security testing; AI coding agents; local open models; AI-use policy

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Bedrock Sandals | Montana · remote
Fractional CTO

2012 – now

- Fractional CTO since August 2026: lead technology across systems, infrastructure, security, operations, data and delivery; turn business needs into automation and AI-enabled workflows; coordinate vendors and QA, hands-on where needed.
- Infrastructure and security lead (2012 – 2026): zero-trust access, role-based permissions and hardware MFA across Google Workspace and Shopify Plus; DMARC, DKIM and SPF; app audits, customer data protection and PCI-DSS hardening. Zero incidents in six years.
- Built a regression suite for content, data, security and performance; wrote the AI-use policy; building a repair tracker.

Founder and principal consultant | St. Louis since 2021; New Zealand and India before
Independent practice

2014 – now

Big's Backyard Ultra, technology partner and advisory board member | 2020 – now

- Built the affiliation system supporting 720+ races, with backyard ultras held in 82 countries.
- Build and operate the website, members platform, race catalogue, results and certificates.
- Administer WordPress sites and VPS infrastructure, managing updates, databases, user access, DNS, SSL/TLS and performance optimization.
- Secure and maintain site operations through Cloudflare, WAF rules, server hardening, offsite backups, recovery testing, monitoring, incident response, QA and documentation.

GVRAT, partner and sole platform builder | 2020 – now

- Built GVRAT solo in under a week during lockdown in India. Planned for 2,000 runners; 19,600+ joined from 70+ countries. Built activity processing, maps, certificates and email communications; RunSignup handled registration and payments.
- Provided written participant support for logging miles, corrections and navigation. Added new challenges as runners finished early; 12M+ miles logged in the first four months. Now run the annual Great Virtual Race Across the USA (Transcon).

Circumpolar Race Around the World (CRAW), lead engineer and sole developer | 2020 – 2024

- Owned a global virtual team race end to end for four years as its sole engineer: product design, architecture, delivery and operations, from Gary “Lazarus Lake” Cantrell’s concept to launch in September 2020. Served 54,949 registrations from 7,329 participants in 48 countries.
- Built the results engine: ingested registrations and activity through the RunSignup API and computed standings in Google Apps Script for 635+ teams, each running independent per-region clocks that started on a team’s first logged mile and stopped at that region’s finish.
- Ran production as systems engineer (WordPress on a self-managed VPS) and extended the 30,167-mile, 12-region course to 18 regions. Designed the runner passports, the region medals that assemble into a world map, and the finisher’s buckle.

Client work

- Build client websites with AI coding agents under a spec-driven, reviewed and tested process, including Tunnel Hill 100 and a law practice’s client-intake site.
- Built a portfolio for a six-day world record holder, including an interactive chart of all 1,140 laps of her record run.
- Run local open models for confidential document summaries and financial analysis on client-controlled systems.
- New Zealand (2014 – 2020): digital project manager at One Fat Sheep, an augmented-reality agency, and digital marketing consultant to Small Planet Sports.

VMware | Palo Alto, California

2013 – 2014

Project manager

- Directed end-to-end testing and release for four global IT automation and product releases spanning at least 14 business units, coordinating about 30 people. All four shipped on time.
- Standardised defect triage across business units and owned risk mitigation with the lead project managers.

Cognizant | Nashville, Tennessee and Fairfield, California

2008 – 2013

Test lead to project lead

- Healthcare (2008 – 2012): test lead for an onshore and offshore team of 8; for Emdeon, now Change Healthcare, led functional, regression and acceptance testing, and significantly fewer defects reached its customers.
- Copart: led testing of its projects with onshore and offshore teams.

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Cerner, now Oracle Health | Software test engineer, electronic health records (registration, scheduling, order entry, revenue cycle)

2006 – 2008

Dell | Technical support expert, enterprise (Bangalore): server troubleshooting on Windows, Linux and Unix; driver and wireless testing

2004 – 2006

LEADERSHIP AND IMPACT

Freedom Seat Foundation | Founder

2016 – now

- Founded a tandem-cycling initiative against human trafficking: 17,000+ km across 15 countries, 500+ riders and \$250,000 raised, with 100% going to partner organizations, including Tearfund New Zealand.
- Led the 2019 Chennai to Hamburg expedition: 8,646 km across 13 countries with 180+ riders.
- The documentary Freedom Seat (2021) won the Audience Award at the Ciclismo Classico Bike Travel Film Festival and was an Official Selection at Kendal Mountain Festival.

Speaker | Represented by Celebrity Speakers NZ

2014 – now

- About 50 talks on resilience and execution for schools, Rotary clubs and companies in NZ, India and the US.

Open source | Pragmatic Programmer skill (2026): Guardrails for AI coding agents, with an A/B evaluation suite.

EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

- BE, Electrical and Electronics Engineering (First Class), Dr. M.G.R. Educational and Research Institute, University of Madras, 2004
- Chartered Engineer (C.Eng); Member, The Institution of Engineers (India)
- Google Project Management Certificate, 2026 · Google Cybersecurity Certificate, 2026
- Languages: English, Tamil, Telugu and Hindi