Jack E. Olson

A seasoned leader in software development.

I have had a long and successful career in system software development I am a competent technician, a solid development leader, a competent business executive, and a software industry analyst. I am particularly well known as a database expert and for product architecture.

My career has spanned 40+ years and has seen involvement in many of the significant trends, companies and products of the industry. My contributions-inventions have always been significant in the Global commercial software marketplace. In summary, my inventions have sold and generated between $12 and $20 billion in gross revenue. During the past fifteen years these product design-inventions have developed an entire marketplace (Data Profiling/Data Quality) and annually my product sales during the past 10 years have generated nearly $10 billion in revenue from BMC Software, Peregrine Systems, Evoke Software and earlier architectural designs from IBM.

Early beginnings in the military

My computer career started in 1964 in the US Navy, after graduating from the Illinois Institute of Technology as a US Navy scholarship student. I majored in mathematics. I was on active duty for five years. Early in my military life I was put in charge of a data processing center for a Naval Air Station in Hawaii, managing four programmers, eight operators and 25 key entry clerks. After three years, this installation was rated the best in the Navy for small-size data processing installations. I personally wrote 60% of the programs in use and designed all the others. Many of the programs were packaged and sent to other data processing installations for use, despite the fact that this was not part of our mission.

I was then assigned to a Navy Study Group in San Diego. I managed a department of computer programmers who performed various consultations assigned by the office of the Chief of Naval Operations. I personally designed a significant portion of the Navy Maintenance Management System and all of a Pert-based program for Managing Aircraft Carrier Overhauls. My department implemented the latter project under my supervision. Both of these were hugely successful projects in the Navy during the late 1960s.

A long 17 year career at IBM

After leaving the Navy I began a long career at IBM that spanned 17 years and three sites. My entire time at IBM was in various software development laboratories

I began in Des Plaines, Illinois, developing System 3 applications, entirely solo. I designed, developed, documented, tested and released a program for managing small apparel company cutting schedules. The product consistently resulted in more efficient cutting, better order filling

and less end of season throw-aways. I then worked on projects for TV station scheduling, department store inventory management, and construction project management. I was becoming a highly skilled product designer and code writer, working on many different systems in multiple languages.

On the next project, I became leader for the initial release of a product pair that essentially automated the credit card billing process for oil companies. It put all the data on DASD and allowed for real-time access from video terminals (2260s initially and 3270s later). This was a highly successful product, used by all major oil companies in the US for many years. The application generator side evolved into CSP, a well-known IBM 3GL application development product.

While doing all this at IBM I also attended night school and completed the MBA program with distinction.

I then moved to San Jose to work at the IBM Database/Data Communications Development Center. My first job was staff programmer on CICS/VS version 1.0. I designed and wrote the memory management, logging and trace routines. This was IBM 360 assembler language code. I became a prolific writer of mainframe systems code and gained invaluable knowledge about operating systems and transaction management during those days.

I then moved to IMS Database Development. I worked on IMS utilities, logging, recovery, and database definition. I was initially a lead developer and then was appointed manager of the department. This all occurred in 1976 and 1977 when IMS was in the midst of an explosion of customers and function. The releases in that period established IMS as the leading database solution in the world.

I was then asked to move to Austin, Texas to help start a new office automation project. I managed a department that built the operating system for the 5520 Administration System. This was the first complex office automation project in IBM. The 5520 was a workstation cluster (up to 32 stations around a twin s/36 based server). It had extensive communications allowing document transmittal to other 5520 clusters in the same facility or to anywhere else. The operating system was designed and built from the iron up. I managed that group through four releases.

I then was promoted to Senior System Architect and put on a design team for a new advanced workstation. The team consisted of one hardware and two software experts. Our work resulted in the PCRT workstation, which eventually mutated into the RS6000. My involvement was to modify AT&T UNIX for our specific needs, resulting inthe AIX operating system. I also contracted with ORACLE to produce a database component called RTSQL.

I was then tapped to design a relational database for the PC environment. I designed a clone of the mainframe DB2 product, modified to work in a small system environment. I produced extensive architecture and functional specifications. I hired and trained development team leaders for the implementation phase. This product was released initially as data manager for OS/2 and has mutated until it is the foundation of the UDB family of data base products today. There are currently several hundred people employed by this project.

Making BMC Software a Success Story

After finishing at IBM, I was hounded by a Houston startup called BMC Software. I couldn't resist the opportunity to work in a less structured and bureaucratic environment. BMC hired me in 1986 as a product author to create a new product line around DB2/MVS tool needs. I created a new development site for BMC in Austin, identifying and designing fourteen products. I acquired a staff and supervised the construction of these products and often time/occasionally wrote extensive amounts of code. BMC grew from $8M revenue to $300M during the eight years I worked for them. When I left, the DB2 product line accounted for 40% of all revenue. They still account for more than 30% of all revenue. The development team I started in Austin now has more than 600 people working in it.

During my stay at BMC Software I worked in many capacities. I mostly identified and designed products. I also participated extensively in recruiting, job assignments, marketing support, market research, due diligence for acquisition efforts and other activities that would increase sales. I was promoted to Corporate Architect before I left.

Peregrine Systems

I left BMC Software in 1994 and spent several months studying the state of the database tools industry. I spent my time looking at the field of database replication, and worked closely with a colleague named John Moores. John was the founder of BMC Software. He hired me into Peregrine Systems as a development VP. I hired a development team in Austin, whose objective was to develop highly optimized and reliable database replication services. We developed some fast load utilities for UNIX-based databases and a Change Data Capture product for mainframe DB2. This group was spun off into a small group called Peregrine/Bridge Transfer Group and sold to Prism Solutions in July 1997.

Evoke Software

I left shortly after the Prism acquisition and joined up with Lacy Edwards at Evoke Software in October 1997. I became Vice President of Engineering and the Chief Technology Officer, later being promoted to Executive Vice President. I still hold these three titles today. In essence I controlled the product side of the house.

I took an interest in Evoke for the fact that I saw the potential for attacking two problems that were major issues in the IT industry. One was the inability of IT shops to complete projects which involved taking data from operational systems and putting them into replicate stores successfully. This included data warehousing, CRM systems, database consolidations, implementation of ERP packages, and more. The second problem was the apparent inability of IT shops to migrate applications off legacy database systems such as IMS, IDMS, S200, M204, Datacom/DB, and others.

I built the engineering team at Evoke software, provided product strategy, architectural, and design guidance, and managed the implementation, release, and support of the AXIO product suite. This product suite grew from next to nothing to a very large code base under my control.

I have also provided considerable support for sales effort, marketing efforts, and overall company management.

During this time I authored a book, "Data Quality: The Accuracy Dimension," published by Morgan Kaufmann.

Other Activities

I have authored a new leading book in the Database Archiving space (see Amazon to purchase) that analyzes the importance of long term structured data storage for various industries and regulatory compliance issues. It is my belief this will be another multi-billion dollar market in the coming 5 to 10 years.

Other notable achievements include being a frequent speaker at technical seminars: IBM GUIDE, IBM SHARE, IDUG, many regional DB2 User Groups, Database Exposition, DAMA, and others. My talks generally are about technology, not about products. I also have written articles for several technical rags: Database Programming and Design, Data Management Review, Data Management (cover picture), Software Magazine, and Technical Services Magazine. I have also organized and conducted several customer focus groups and have traveled extensively to customer sites for requirements or product reviews.

I am listed as the inventor on four software industry patents.

I have managed projects using offshore development teams in Estonia and in Russia.

I have reviewed business and product plans of many companies for JMI (John Moore's venture capital firm) and others. I have served as an outside director and both business and technical advisor to other start-up software companies. I continue to pursue these types of activities outside working for Evoke.

Current Activitites

Over the past five years I have architected the smallest, fastest and securest full Relational Database Management System on a PC. This product in the past year has been tested by outside third parties including multi-billion dollar consulting companies who have signed contracts to resell this into their customer base and the Global 2000 marketplace.