

JAMES KING

Technical Lead | Compliance & Engineering Governance

Redditch, UK | +44 7517 456523 | james@jamesking.dev | linkedin.com/in/jamesking56/

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Technical Lead with 10+ years delivering high-compliance systems in regulated environments, including government services and payment infrastructure processing millions annually. Experienced in engineering governance, code review, and test-driven development across Symfony and Laravel codebases. Specialises in safely integrating AI into production workflows: writing governance frameworks, reviewing AI-generated code, and establishing team standards that balance velocity with compliance rigour.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Chief Technical Officer (Hands-on Technical Lead) | Varsuite Media Group Ltd | November 2024 - Present

Website development agency producing WordPress and Laravel websites. www.varsuite.co.uk

- Took over development from a previous setup; secured and stabilized client websites, implementing security best practices
- Migrated 100+ websites from multiple hosting platforms (primarily AWS) to in-house hosting, reducing hosting costs by ~70% and improving reliability
- Introduced development standards: coding conventions, code review process, and client issue reporting workflows
- Established new site onboarding process for clients joining the agency
- Led technical delivery across all production websites, ensuring 99.99% uptime
- Technical strategy: architected migration plan, managed vendor relationships, and implemented quality assurance processes
- AI Code Governance: Introduced AI tools to speed up development safely, writing team guidelines for AI-assisted coding

PHP Developer | Wider Plan Ltd | March 2018 - November 2024

Symfony application development for salary sacrifice and Gov.UK projects. www.widerplan.com

- Delivered features across a compliance-critical salary sacrifice platform and Gov.UK services, operating under strict HMRC regulatory and WCAG AA accessibility requirements
- Contributed to an 8-developer team building government-facing services, maintaining consistent delivery within tightly governed compliance and accessibility frameworks across a six-year tenure
- Converted CI/CD pipeline from legacy Jenkins to GitHub Actions with custom runner VMs, improving deployment reliability and team efficiency
- Regular code reviewer via GitHub PRs, upholding quality and compliance standards in a regulated production environment
- Maintained and extended compliance-critical payment infrastructure processing millions in transactions

annually, within a large-scale Symfony codebase

- Designed and implemented a full automated test suite in PHPUnit covering acceptance, feature, and unit layers, establishing testing standards adopted across the team
- Established tooling for deployment and PR staging environments, reducing manual overhead and improving team workflow

Senior Developer | Just Checking Ltd | May 2015 - March 2018

Laravel SaaS for care home monitoring. www.justchecking.co.uk

- Promoted from Web Application Developer to Senior Developer (November 2016)
- Mentored Junior Developers who went on to become Senior Developers
- Delivered full-stack features end-to-end for prototype projects and main application
- Created development tooling for a legacy platform
- Migrated from Microsoft SQL Server to PostgreSQL and Windows Server to Ubuntu
- Answered technical support line as second line support for customer service

Temporary Web Developer | Real Point Design Ltd | May 2014 - October 2014

Laravel systems for clients including major BBC project.

- Delivered full-stack features end-to-end
- Established coding standards and way of working with Laravel
- CentOS system administration for cloud servers
- cPanel administration for client sites

Junior Web Developer | Trakware Solutions Ltd | May 2013 - May 2014

Industrial placement during University. Cloud services via AWS.

- Set up open source on GitHub for in-house JavaScript framework
- Managed AWS cloud services
- Delivered full-stack features and bug fixes
- Managed release process for open-source framework

SIDE PROJECTS

Chief Technical Officer (Hands-on Technical Lead) | Varsuite Core Ltd | December 2024 - Present

Multi-tenant SaaS platform for agency site management. www.vs-core.com

- Architected and built multi-tenant SaaS platform in Laravel 11, supporting 80+ websites
- Pioneered scalable Kubernetes cluster using infrastructure-as-code, achieving zero-downtime deployments
- Implemented CI/CD pipelines in GitHub Actions with automated testing using Pest
- Authored coding standards and code review practices (PSR12, Rector)
- Delivered full billing integration with Paddle, training other team members
- AI Code Governance: Use OpenCode with Claude & Ollama daily for code generation, safety-reviewed before production

Owner / Founder | Momentum Studio Ltd | April 2018 - December 2024

Digital agency founded while working freelance in evenings and weekends. Taken over by Varsuite Media Group Ltd.

- Founded and ran own digital agency, handling all aspects from sales and marketing to technical delivery
- Delivered end-to-end projects using Laravel, WordPress, WooCommerce, cPanel, Linux and Shopify
- Developed own coding standards and CI/CD pipelines
- Created custom tooling to aid Linux system administration
- Registered Shopify Partner
- Managed all client communication, project delivery, and billing

SKILLS

AI Code Governance:

OpenCode (with Claude & Ollama models) | AI Pair Programming | Safety Review Process | Writing AI Skills and Guidelines | Prompt Engineering

Technical:

Full Stack Web Development | Laravel | PHP | Symfony | JavaScript | Node.js | React | AlpineJS | AJAX | CSS | TailwindCSS | Docker | Kubernetes | JSON REST APIs | GraphQL | MySQL | MariaDB | PostgreSQL | AWS | DigitalOcean | Hetzner | Cloudflare R2 | Redis | KeyDB | Valkey | Terraform | Ansible | IaaS | Linux | Server Administration | Git | GitHub | GitHub Actions | Test-driven Development | Pest | PHPUnit | GDPR | OWASP | WCAG AA | Security Auditing | ISO 27001

Leadership & Strategy:

Technical Leadership | Architecture Decisions | Code Review | Stakeholder Management | Vendor Management | Team Collaboration | Mentorship | Budget Optimization | WCAG AA Accessibility | Agile | Scrum

EDUCATION

Staffordshire University, Stafford | 2011 - 2015

BSc (Hons) Web Programming - 4-year course including 1-year industrial placement. Final year project won GradEx for the web category.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Winner of GradEx 2015 (Web Category) - Final year project won web category

Posters in Parliament 2016 - Presented final year project in London to industry leaders and MPs