

Braxton J. Schafer

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📄 PROFILE

Senior systems engineer and software developer specializing in large-scale Kubernetes platforms, infrastructure automation, and developer tooling. Currently driving a multi-initiative redefinition of company-wide CI/CD — build infrastructure, standardized pipeline components, observability, and artifact management. Track record of leading the design and delivery of reliable, observable systems at scale, from production operators to open-source contributions. Effective technical mentor and communicator with a commitment to doing things right, *especially* when it is not easy.

📁 WORK EXPERIENCE

Cloudflare

2022 - Present

Senior Systems Engineer, DevTools; previously Systems Engineer, Kubernetes Platform

- Architect and lead net-new GitLab deployment to replace Bitbucket as company-wide source control, built entirely on Kubernetes from the ground up.
- Design ground-up reimplementing of GitLab runner manager as a Kubernetes controller in Go, replacing legacy upstream manager with a cloud-native approach.
- Build the observability layer for the new CI platform: per-project and per-component pipeline metrics, queue-depth and error dashboards, health-gated rollouts of CI component changes, and alerting that distinguishes platform failures from user-caused job failures.
- Design and implement a standardized component model for CI pipelines.
- Authoring a proposal to consolidate artifact and package registry management across engineering under the platform team.
- Drive CDK8S adoption across engineering as the standard for codifying Kubernetes infrastructure, eliminating manifest duplication across clusters.
- Design and build tooling that makes AI effective across the team, including a custom tool to manage and sync skills, agents, and commands from multiple sources into any AI harness.
- Publish internal blog posts distilling AI techniques that work in practice, turning individual experimentation into team-wide standard practice.
- Mentor interns and new staff members, helping them ramp up on complex systems and Cloudflare's engineering culture.
- Built and operated 3 production bare-metal Kubernetes clusters (~500 nodes each) as the de facto internal platform.
- Published on the Cloudflare Blog: identified a Kubernetes misconfiguration causing 30-minute restarts; the one-line fix recovered 600 engineer-hours per year.

Octospin, LLC

2020 - 2023

Software Architect (concurrent, contract)

- Created backend application from the ground up using C# 11 WebAPI.
- Designed and built development, testing, and production infrastructure on DigitalOcean.
- Managed highly-available infrastructure using Terraform.
- Worked directly with the executive team to ensure their vision was met.

Desktop & Unix Engineer

- Managed and architected migration of company source repository from a million-revision scale Subversion monorepo to a Git repository on hybrid-cloud GitLab.
- Created and maintained DevOps tooling built on GitLab, Artifactory, and Terraform.
- Ran monitoring and configuration management infrastructure, including Zabbix, Prometheus, Puppet, and Ansible for thousands of Linux servers.
- Architected Splunk deployment and wrote custom tooling to enable DevOps workflows on it.
- Designed and implemented Kubernetes infrastructure using VMware Tanzu and Weaveworks Flux v2 to provide highly-available GitOps services.
- Led the Apple administration team, supporting hundreds of Mac and iOS devices via Jamf Pro and custom scripts.
- Served on the Security Operations Council, providing information security and policy recommendations.
- Performed code review for other software developers and maintained continuous integration infrastructure and tooling.

** SKILLS**

** Kubernetes & DevOps:**

- GitOps with ArgoCD and CDK8S
- Open-source contributions to Kubernetes and Cloudflare projects
- Postmortem culture

** R&D:**

- Primary languages: C#, Bash, Go, Python
- Other languages: C, C++, Java, PowerShell, Rust, SQL (T-SQL and PostgreSQL), TypeScript
- Test-driven development (TDD)

** Systems Management:**

- Ansible, Puppet, Salt, Terraform at enterprise scale
- Splunk, Prometheus, Loki, Grafana
- Large-scale Ubuntu and EL Linux sysadmin
- Defensive security, reverse engineering, and holistic security

** EDUCATION**

Ripon College

2012 - 2015

A.B. *cum laude* Computer Science (hons.), Spanish Minor