

Daniel May

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Engineering Leader & Builder | Applied AI, Agents & Governance | Systems · Games · Privacy

Summary

Self-taught engineering leader with 16+ years building and leading software teams across gaming, retail, and finance, now focused on **applied AI**: agent infrastructure, on-device inference, and **AI governance**. I led developer platforms for a 500+ engineer organization at Riot, co-founded a software consultancy, and today build and write about agents, provenance, and user-owned AI, including a widely-reported observation on LLM behavior. More at danielmay.co.uk.

Technical Skills

Applied AI & Agents

- **Agent orchestration** & tooling (Claude Code, MCP, OpenCode, Goose), multi-agent systems, LLM applications, evals
- On-device inference (LiteRT, llama.cpp, Gemma), inference serving & optimization (vLLM, SGLang, quantization)

Governance, Privacy & Security

- **AI governance**, cryptographic provenance / signed audit logs, privacy-by-design, reverse engineering & security research

Platforms & Developer Productivity

- Large-scale **build/release/developer platforms**, CI/CD, developer tooling, live-service & game build systems

Cloud & Infrastructure

- AWS, Azure, Kubernetes, containerization, microservices, event-driven & distributed systems

Languages

- Rust, Python, TypeScript/JavaScript, Swift, C#/.NET, SQL

Experience

Applied AI: Agents, On-Device Inference & Governance

Mar 2026 – Present

Independent Applied-AI, Agents & Governance Engineering

- Built **meta-harness**, a runtime layer above terminal coding agents (**Claude Code**, Codex, OpenCode) with multi-agent orchestration and MCP, giving developers visibility, memory, and command over their agents; composable primitives that make agent runs observable and governable.
- Built **inference-lab**, a measurement-driven serving-optimization environment (vLLM, SGLang, quantization) for a GPU rig with DCGM/Nsight telemetry, tuning throughput, latency, and cost for agent workloads and orchestrated by a team of specialized Claude Code agents.
- Built and operate **Foreign Trivia**, a live app powered by an LLM multi-agent content pipeline with privacy-safe analytics, shipped and maintained end-to-end.
- Built a private, on-device personal AI (**Rust** + Swift/iOS) that reasons over a user's own data with a local LLM (Gemma), with **Likewise** recording what it infers as ed25519-signed logs the user can inspect, control, and revoke.

Developer Platforms for a 500+ Engineer Games Org

Jul 2022 – Mar 2026

Engineering Manager, Riot Games (VALORANT)

- Led VALORANT's Build Platforms team (grown from 6 to 10 engineers), owning the build, release, and developer-tooling platform that a **500+ engineer** organization relied on to ship, setting technical direction and partnering with peer engineering leaders to keep a fast-moving live-service org shipping.
- Sustained a reliable 2-week release cadence through the game's massive expansion, supporting live events and major content releases while re-architecting build systems for new markets and platforms.
- Stayed hands-on across the platform (code review, incident response, cross-team support), setting technical direction alongside people leadership.
- Helped drive platform readiness for VALORANT's accelerated 2023 China launch, its 2024 Xbox and PlayStation release, and the 2025 **Unreal Engine** 4.27-to-5.3 migration, keeping developer workflows stable through each transition.

Platform Leadership & Fleet Modernization

Apr 2019 – Apr 2022

Software Development Manager, Amazon (Whole Foods Market)

- Led the team that modernized a 20,000-device in-store mobile fleet (1M+ deployments), building the shared platform and mobile build pipeline behind the rollout.
- Hired, managed, and mentored a 12-engineer team across multiple stacks, staying hands-on in code review and incident response.
- Drove adoption of modern continuous-delivery practices across engineering organizations, leading an initiative to modernize internal version-control tooling and raise delivery standards well beyond his own team.

Co-founder & Head of Engineering

May 2016 – Apr 2019

Ring Leader Solutions

- Co-founded a software consultancy with two senior industry veterans, growing it from zero to ~11 engineers and running technical pre-sales, solution design, and delivery.
- Delivered a renewable-energy trade-quoting platform for an energy supplier (a cloud-native, event-driven microservice system), plus a multi-asset trading platform MVP on Kubernetes.

Earlier Engineering – Financial & Enterprise Systems

2009 – 2016

Contract & Permanent Roles

- Delivered large-scale trading and enterprise platforms for tier-one financial institutions and a VC-backed AdTech startup, including scaling a real-time matching engine from ~1K to 10M+ phrases.
- Built the flagship blotter module of an award-winning single-dealer trading platform for a tier-one investment bank, then led a small agile team delivering a sales-and-trading swaption platform to global sponsors.
- Grew from senior engineer into a delivery-management role owning architecture, project discovery, and hiring, and founded a firm-wide weekly tech-talk forum for engineering knowledge transfer across the consultancy.
- Core developer on a tier-one bank's low-latency, high-performance single-dealer FX platform, owning client- and server-side features and shaping architecture in a small, high-performance engineering team.

Selected Writing & Speaking

- Originated the “Elias Thorne” observation on **LLM mode collapse**, reported by 404 Media and picked up by The Guardian, Gizmodo, and VICE (2026).
- Publish essays on applied AI, agents, **governance**, and privacy at danielmay.co.uk.
- **Reverse-engineering / security research**: a case study on a large online economy and its engineering-ethics lessons on capability vs. permission.
- Speaker: OpenClaw LA on agentic AI and local inference (2026); DDD Scotland / Dublin (2010–11).

Education

Self-taught engineer. 16 years of hands-on delivery across gaming, retail, and finance, with current work in agents, on-device AI, and governance.

Dual US/UK Citizen