Ruben Vereecken

Chief Technology Officer

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About

Entrepreneur & technology leader with a unique mix of Product & Engineering experience who still enjoys getting hands-on. Lean Product adherent, delivering value quickly and incrementally. Passionate about growing and leading teams that bring complex projects to millions of users. PhD in AI/AGI and runner of beer marathons.

Expertise

Leadership — Expert

Servant leadership, Vulnerability, Shared Vision & Principles, Org Design

Team Management — Expert

Agile & Scrum, Hiring, Structured Interviews, Coaching

Web & Mobile — Expert

Web, Android, iOS, Cross-platform

Startup Strategy — Advanced

GTM Strategy, Growth, Fundraising

Product — Expert

Lean Product, MVP, Business Model Canvas, Northstar Metric, User-centric

Artificial Intelligence (PhD) — Advanced

Supervised & Unsupervised Machine Learning, NLP, Recommender Systems

Data — Expert

Data Architecture, ETL, Analytics

Cloud & DevOps — Advanced

AWS, GCP, CI/CD, Automation

Achievements

- **Tech Advisor** for multiple startups, including for **UK's biggest network of VC's** .

- **Founded Lessgo**, developed entire first version, **raising $450k**. Grew tech org to **10 people.** Iterated through user research to the point of **8k users and 1k events** in London. Optimized infrastructure to handle **1000s of concurrent requests**.

- Helped **MassChallenge**, an accelerator with **1000s of startups**, by exploring the **build vs buy** question, restructuring the organization, and setting up **change management**.

- Grew team and built **MVP** for OpenAssembly, a **$20M** Seed-stage startup.

- Pursued **PhD in AI/AGI** while **teaching courses** in SE, DBs, and AI to **Master's & MBA**.

Experience

Sep 2022 — Mar 2023
Boston

Interim CTO at MassChallenge (contract)

Assessed tech org and roadmap, shifted focus to build only the essential, set up change management, restructured teams, and hired next CTO.

Sep 2022 — Mar 2023
Boulder (CO), London

CTO at OpenAssembly (contract)

Hired after Seed round to convert OA into a tech startup, grow the tech team from scratch, come up with production vision, and build an MVP.

Jun 2020 — Jul 2022
London

Co-Founder & CTO at Lessgo

Founded Lessgo, wrote first version from scratch, **raising $450k**. Grew Lessgo's tech organisation to 10 people by headhunting, interviewing, and **training in solid software engineering principles**. Managed in-house teams in Pakistan, resulting in **costs 8x lower than UK average**. Trained Team Leads and architected both front-end and back-end.

2021 — ongoing
London

Tech Advisor for various startups

Helped various startups figure out product roadmap, how to build tech teams, decide what to build vs buy, who to hire vs contract, etc.

Feb 2017 — Jul 2021
London

PhD in AI/AGI at Imperial College London (dropped out)

Explored new ways to let machines learn reusable concepts, inspired by human adaptability. Published on deep learning and philosophy turned into mathematics. Dropped out with half a thesis written to pursue Lessgo.

2017

Data Scientist at Columbia University (contract)

2016
Antwerp

Lead Developer at Taglayer

Led team of data scientists to build flagship recommender system.

2016

Lead Developer at FLAVR

2015
Zurich

Software Engineering Intern at Gmail, Google

Let, designed, and prototyped the new deployment system **used internally by Gmail** and other Google products to deploy to **1 billion+ users**.

2014
San Francisco

Full-stack Developer at CodeCombat (YCombinator)

Designed by hand in Figma by yours truly ♡

Selected Open Source & Other Projects

2014 — ongoing	PyVGDL 2.0 – 2D game engine
	Hacker Wall – winner of Entrepreneurs First prize for Most Disruptive
	FireFriend – winner of Diageo competition
	Tldr Pages – maintainer
	Scrapy – web crawler, now zyte.com

Education & Training

2022 — 2023	CTO Craft
2014 — 2016	MSc Computer Science (AI) at Vrije Universiteit Brussel
2011 — 2014	BSc Computer Science at University of Antwerp

| **Languages** | English (bilingual), Dutch (native), German (native), French (proficient) |
| **Soft Skills** | Natural communicator, stakeholder manager, team lead, storyteller |