

Guido Maria Serra

Principal Infrastructure Engineer

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Profile

Principal Infrastructure Engineer with ~30 years of experience operating and stabilizing large-scale distributed systems—from late-90s Linux infrastructure to modern cloud and AI platforms. I typically work with scaling technology companies during periods of rapid growth or production instability, helping stabilize infrastructure, redesign platform architecture, and restore operational control. Past environments include global platforms such as PlayStation, OLX, HelloFresh, Nokia and Vodafone.

Highlights: Operated global-scale multi-datacenter infrastructure; led platform teams through production crises.

Selected Engagements

PlayStation Now — Global Infrastructure Operations

Situation: Video game streaming platform scaling globally across multiple datacenters.

Action: Operated and evolved a multi-datacenter platform (55k hosts across 12 DCs). Built metrics tooling (custom DSL/Graphite), Ceph storage architecture, NTP and PKI-based SSH infrastructure. Gentoo package maintainer for Ganeti/KVM orchestration. Mentored 5+ engineers.

Result: Infrastructure stabilized; supported global launch of PlayStation Now.

HelloFresh — Security & Infrastructure Scaling

Situation: COVID-19 demand surge; departing security engineer; minimal team coverage.

Action: Took over workload in 2 weeks. Built security team 1→5 FTEs. Rolled out vuln scanning, Elasticsearch SIEM. Established incident response and on-call.

Result: SIEM solution operational; AWS/Cloudflare security monitoring established.

OLX Group — Infrastructure Cost & Reliability

Situation: Global platform with \$30M+ infra spend (AWS, Akamai, NewRelic) needing cost optimization.

Action: Led APM strategy across 4 hubs (Argentina, Portugal, Germany, India). CDN/SSL/DNS vendor selection and coaching. NewRelic vendor manager (\$2M budget). Load testing and capacity planning.

Result: \$300K/year savings through FinOps; improved platform reliability.

Professional Experience

Security & DevOps Consultant | DFND Security / Forward Earth / 3T Labs 2025
Remote — Multiple clients

- Fastly (Signal Sciences) WAF and edge security deployments for EMEA clients.
- ISO 27001 certification project; Vanta auditor training and compliance automation.

Head of SRE | Octostar 2024–2025
GPU Kubernetes platform for ML workloads; ClickHouse/MinIO data platform.

DevOps Lead (Advisory) | Contensi 2024–present
CDKTF infrastructure automation; mentoring junior engineers.

Staff SRE (Fractional) | Prima Assicurazioni 2022–2023
Coached 12-engineer SRE team out of operational deadlock; AWS multi-region rearchitecture (London, Barcelona, Milan).

Cloud Architect | ClovrLabs 2021–2023
Built 5-person security ops team; Kubernetes/GitOps platform (ArgoCD, Traefik, Datadog).

Site Reliability & Security Engineer | Max Planck Institute 2022–2024
Hybrid OpenStack/Kubernetes; 1.5PB storage; federated IAM (LDAP/SAML/OAuth2).

Security / DevOps Engineer | HelloFresh 2020–2021
See Selected Engagements above.

DevOps Engineer | Mobivia / ATU 2018–2022
4-year modernization: Cloudflare/Traefik migrations, Keycloak SSO, ArgoCD GitOps.

DevOps Team Lead | Urban Mobility Int. (WeShare/VW) 2019
1-week pre-launch engagement; GCP Functions and Kubernetes.

Senior Performance Engineer | OLX Group 2016–2018
See Selected Engagements above.

Site Reliability Engineer | Sony PlayStation (Gaikai → PlayStation Now) 2013–2016
See Selected Engagements above.

Earlier Career (2008–2013)

Rocket Internet — Chief Troubleshooter & Senior Data Architect (2013) | Berlin
txtr (3M) — Backend QA Manager (2011–2012) | Berlin
ProfitBricks (→ IONOS) — Senior System Engineer (2011) | Berlin
Nokia Maps (Gate5 → HERE) — Senior System Engineer (2010–2011) | Berlin
Vodafone Group — QA Architect (2008–2010) | Düsseldorf

Foundational Era (1996–2008)

Solution Architect for SMEs in Italy (1996–2008). Designed LDAP/VoIP/firewall solutions; released patches for GOsa², PHP Seagull, GNU TLA. Clients included ISPs, banks (BPU Banca), and libraries—including the Stendhal digital library for Biblioteca Sormani (still online: digitami.it/stendhal). Stager under Alessandro Rubini for embedded Linux R&D. Lecturer at Politecnico di Milano (C/Linux). Active in FOSDEM since 2007.

Core Technical Domains

Distributed Systems & Infrastructure

Large-scale Linux platforms, multi-datacenter operations, Ceph, distributed storage, massive fleet management.

Cloud & Platform Engineering

AWS, GCP, Kubernetes, Terraform, Pulumi, CDKTF, infrastructure automation, GitOps.

Observability & Reliability

Prometheus, Grafana, Datadog, ELK, OpenTelemetry, incident response, SLO/SLI design.

Security & Compliance

WAF (Fastly/Akamai/Cloudflare), IAM/SSO, ISO 27001, SIEM, production hardening.

Education & Credentials

Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Science — Politecnico di Milano | 2000–2008, ongoing
Training: Red Hat Ceph Storage (CEPH125), NYC 2016; ISO 27001 / Vanta Auditor, 2025

Additional

Languages: Italian (Native), English (Fluent), German (Working)

Security: DEFCON CTF finalist; iCTF World Champion; SOC GOON (2025)

Open Source: FSFE Fellow; co-founder of Politecnico Open *nix Labs (POuL); contributor to GOsa²

Licenses & Interests: Driving (A, B); Offshore Sailing (racing cert., maritime radio); Skiing; Trekking