

Personal:**Darren Lauser**

Citizenship: Born US citizen, naturalized citizen of Ireland

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Summary:

- Principal IT Engineer and Consulting Architect for VMware and infrastructure technologies, with a focus on teamwork.
- Passions: Leadership, growth, human rapport
- Superpower: Peace in the midst of highly stressful situations
- Weakness: Looking at the Six Types of Working Genius, my greatest frustration is Galvanizing.
- Advanced certifications: <https://www.credly.com/users/darren-lauser>
- VMware Consulting Architect – 13 years VMware experience – global tech lead for DRaaS with VSR (details below) – VMC on AWS
- Previous to VMware, 10 years of IT DevOps experience – P5 – lead solution engineer for HP IT operations – Linux and mission-critical servers
- Because of this depth of experience, and due to my years of leadership studies and practice, I am ready to take on challenging projects.
- <https://www.linkedin.com/in/darrenlauser/>

Professional Skills:

• Leadership	20+ years
• Linux	20+ years
• High Availability	20+ years
• Kepner Tregoe Analytic Troubleshooting	18 years
• Presentation and Training Development and Delivery	17 years
• DNS	17 years
• Process Engineering and System Analysis	15 years
• Storage Arrays	14 years
• VMware vSphere (ESXi and vCenter)	13 years
• Solution Engineering	11 years
• Bash	11 years



• NFS	11 years
• SRM	11 years
• Fiber Channel	10 years
• Networking	10 years
• iSCSI	8 years
• Performance Tuning	8 years
• vSAN	8 years
• NSX	7 years
• DHCP	6 years
• Healthy Organizations	6 years
• Server Hardening and Security	5 years
• HTML	4 years
• PERL	4 years
• Data Center Design	4 years
• Microsoft	3 years
• VMC on AWS	3 years
• DRaaS	3 years
• AWS	2 years
• SQL	2 years
• Python	2 years
• SaltStack	2 years
• Kubernetes and Docker/containerd	1 year
• VMware Aria (vRealize) Operations (vROps)	1 year
• Apache	1 year
• Javascript	1 year
• C	1 year



Professional Experience Examples:

Python and SaltStack Development

Using Python to access five API platforms, created automation for a SaaS 3D rendering business. Wrote salt states to manage the rendering fleet.

AWS Development

Using Python boto3, autoscaling group, and EC2 Image Builder, developed automated deployment for KeyShot Network Rendering clusters within AWS. This allows a render farm to be deployed, as needed, so it does not incur CPU/GPU costs when not in use. The builds include CPU Worker, GPU Worker, Manager for each cluster, and a license server.

Python and SaltStack Development

For a cloud provider, developed, documented, and deployed a Python app, and some other tools, that are now automating their cluster node assignments. This saves them on hardware costs, electricity costs, and improves the service uptime. Deployed salt to integrate with the app and to facilitate large-scale administration. This project was done in complete collaboration with the existing administration to ensure the app was suitable for the purpose and environment, and so they are fully understanding how it operates.

Salt Deployment and Development

For a large customer, with several thousand VMs, provided leadership and development to prepare and deploy SaltStack, including SecOps, as a replacement for Chef Automation. This project included, for example, investigate customer needs, analysis of legacy code base, open salt deployment, and development of salt code that was not covered by the SecOps product.

Deployed salt in Ubuntu 22 environment and configured beacons. Developed script to restart salt minions in a more clean and reliable way by improving systemd integration.

VMC on AWS Architect Consulting

For a large customer, with several thousand VMs, provided leadership and guidance to prepare multiple on-premises sites for migration to VMC on AWS. This project included, for example, investigate customer needs, disaster recovery design considerations, network topology advice, compatibility assessment, and cost comparison. We addressed both concepts and details that will help avoid common pitfalls and optimize the fit of the solution to the needs. Full discussion and documentation was provided to the IT Operations Team for every recommendation and point of awareness.



Engineering Team Development

Provided mentoring to ramp system engineering team on vSphere, NSX-T, and VMC on AWS.

DRaaS Project Engineering

Global Tech Lead for DRaaS with VSR. The Tech Support project took a year, among many other duties. We gathered and shared the best practices for DRaaS troubleshooting. This was one of the biggest opportunities for improvement in our global team and has resulted in a 90% reduction in the rate of premature escalations to the DRaaS SRE team. This positive outcome has been maintained for over five months to the present. The main document for this effort is a KB that was newly created at the beginning of the project: <https://kb.vmware.com/s/article/78941> There have also been other KBs created, Confluence pages, product documentation enhancements, training packages, tool and lab resource improvements, and even product enhancements. This was a collaboration that I initiated and lead including the global VMC on AWS team, the DRaaS product engineering team, and members of the core SRM Tech Support team.

VMware Technical Support Lead for Core Team

Before coming to the VMC on AWS team, 22 months previous, I was P4 Staff Engineer for core Tech Support, with experience in storage (including global tech lead for VSA), networking, SRM, vSAN, NSX, and vSphere. The toughest cases came to me. Unless absolutely needed, I did not take over, but took this powerful opportunity to mentor my colleagues in moving the case forward. VMware appliances are based on Linux. So, regardless of what services were being provided by the appliance, my Linux expertise was often engaged.

Engineering Engagement Improvements

Our escalations director was noticing an opportunity for improvement in how our TSEs engage with the product engineering teams, so she asked me to deliver a Problem Report (PR) Handling TOI to the Cork site. I gathered best practices from quite a wide team of experts, and also got feedback from them on the resulting TOI content. I delivered this 90-minute TOI to the team over a 12-month period and it was also recorded and shared with the global team. Maybe there is no correlation, but the director said the product engineering teams were becoming much more pleased with the quality of engagement from Tech Support.



Lead for Zoom Adoption

VMware was an early adopter of Zoom, and I was the principal conduit between the users and the Zoom product management team for improving the user experience.

Escalation Engineer Mentoring Program

Previous to this, I initiated, developed, and deployed an Escalation Engineer Mentoring Program, as this was widely agreed to be sorely needed. Again, with a great deal of collaboration to develop and approve the content. It carries on to this day.

The Previous Decade of IT

Previous to VMware, 10 years of IT DevOps experience – P5 – lead solution engineer for HP IT operations – Linux and mission-critical servers.

Bash Expertise

UNIX scripting power user since 1996, long since translated to Linux scripting. Bash scripting is both an aptitude and an enjoyment for me, though I have not had the opportunity to exercise this expertise every single year while at VMware. At HP, I built scripts for server builds, for IP pool monitoring, boot disk mirroring, and several others. At VMware, I built scripts for troubleshooting analysis of log bundles. Even at home, I used bash scripts for some projects.



Awards and Accomplishments:

- Advanced certifications: <https://www.credly.com/users/darren-lauser>
- Received 2017 VMware Engineer of Excellence Award (this is the highest possible award for my role).
- Voted Toastmaster of the Year for Cork VMware program in 2021.
- Quite a few awards for my contributions to the VMware Knowledge Brief system.

Education:

- Toastmasters: Completed level 3 Pathways. Compared to the legacy award program, this is roughly equivalent to the Competent Communicator award. Served as President of the program, and other officer terms.
- First Aid certified. Member of First Aid Team both at HP and VMware. Volunteered for first aid team at St. John Ambulance in Cork, Ireland.
- Mental Health First Aid certified. Charter member of 2019 team in VMware Cork.
- Self-education in many leadership and business books, e.g., Patrick Lencioni, John Maxwell, John Wooden, Jim Collins, Mickey Connelly, etc.
- Attended two years of full-time college courses in engineering, computer science, and general science, with a 3.33 GPA, but did not apply for an associates degree.
- I have learned enough about project management, and people management, that I could be a very good manager. However, management does not align with the strengths of my personality type, so, instead of being a manager, I use such expertise to gain full synergy in collaborating with managers. I also ensure to manage myself well, so others can rely on me. I focus on leadership.
- Dale Carnegie Immersion – <https://www.dalecarnegie.com/en/courses/479>
- Original Genius training – <https://missiongroup.org/>
- Dynamic Leadership training – <https://www.conversant.com/>





Tools Expertise:

- GIMP
- Linux tools:
 - bash
 - vi
 - ssh
 - rsync
 - curl, wget
 - fdisk, parted
 - gzip, tar
 - awk, sed, cut, etc.
- grep
- sort
- etc.
- BitWarden
- SonicWall NetExtender VPN client
- Zoom, Webex, both for meetings and remote support
- S3Express
- Putty
- 7-zip
- partedUtil
- Jira
- Confluence
- Salesforce
- Slack



Darren Lauser	Work Experience (continued)
2009-2021 @ VMware Ireland	Staff Engineer VMware Certified Implementation Expert
2008-9 @ ACS Ireland	Staff HP-UX Engineer a.k.a. Senior Infrastructure Systems Analyst
2000-8 @ HP	Staff Engineer, Analyst, and DevOps Team Lead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture planning, coordinating, and incident support for complex or mission-critical operations and thousands of HP-UX and Linux servers located in several geographies by applying knowledge of IT disciplines. • Provide leadership and mentoring to those on the team with less expertise. • Work with the R&D Labs to provide cost-effective solutions that meet their infrastructure requirements.
1998-2000 @ HP	UNIX (HP-UX) System Administrator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrated dozens of HP-UX workstations from version 9 to 10.20 in preparation for Y2K compliance • Workstation and server support for both hardware and operating system • Scripting (ksh, PERL) • LVM, VxFS, NFS server and client
1996-1998 @ HP	UNIX (HP-UX) Software Administrator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance and troubleshooting of automation software • Scripting (ksh, PERL) • Attended college courses in C programming data structures, UNIX system administration based on HP-UX and Linux • Relational database design and SQL training
1995-1996 @ HP	Process Coordinator (material handling operations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversaw system operators • Attended college courses in C, data structures, C++ and object oriented programming
1994 @ HP	Hardware Technician (material handling automation)
1993 @ HP	Joined HP as a Material Handler

