Vladimir Izmalkov

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Summary

Technical writer with 15+ years of experience delivering documentation for complex technical products and 5+ years of experience leading documentation teams. Expertise includes docs-as-code, developer documentation, cloud platforms, NoSQL databases, orchestration systems, and software solutions for education, retail, and emergency management. Known for translating technical complexity into clear, effective content that supports users and product adoption. My career spans academia, large enterprises, and high-tech startups, giving me a broad perspective on how to adapt documentation for different audiences and industries. I specialise in highly technical, developer-oriented documentation and thrive on challenging projects, with expertise across cloud platforms (OpenStack, AWS, GCP), NoSQL databases (Tarantool, TypeDB), SaaS products, and security certification processes. I am a strong advocate for the docs-as-code approach and work daily with Git repositories, pull requests, and close collaboration with architects, engineers, DevOps, and SRE teams. Over the years, I have led cross-functional documentation teams of up to 15 people, building efficient workflows, mentoring writers, and ensuring alignment between documentation and product strategy. My portfolio includes product documentation (quickstart guides, user/admin guides, tutorials, references), project documents (ToR, technical specifications, feasibility studies), acceptance and test documentation, tender and bid documentation (technical and financial), and knowledge-base articles and scientific publications. I value stability and long-term collaboration, preferring roles where I can contribute to company growth over quick wins. Currently based in the UK on a Skilled Worker visa; I require visa sponsorship.

Core Skills

- **Documentation & Technical Writing:** Technical writing, Documentation engineering, Docs-as-code, Text editing, Information architecture, Instructions design, Diátaxis, Developer documentation, Style guide authoring, API reference documentation, Tutorials, User and admin guides, Release documentation
- **Technologies & Tools:** AsciiDoc, Antora, Pandoc, Markdown, MkDocs, Hugo, ReStructuredText, Sphinx, Vale, Netlify, MS Office, Git, Jira, YouTrack, Asana, Confluence, Notion, Cursor, Copilot
- **Infrastructure & Systems:** XaaS, OpenStack, GCP, AWS, Linux, Windows, macOS, Docker, Kubernetes, Terraform, Vagrant, Juju, Multipass, LXD, Keycloak, Zabbix, ELK / OpenSearch, HTTP(s), FTP, DNS, TCP/IP, SSH, Wireshark, Postman
- **Software Engineering & Data:** Software development, Python, Delphi, PHP, VBA, LAMP, CMS, API, Databases, NoSQL, DBaaS, Tarantool, TypeDB, Apache Kafka, Apache Spark, Apache ZooKeeper, OpenSearch, Valkey, Cassandra, Web, UX, AI, AI Agents, Anthropic Claude, Generative AI, Agentic AI, Prompt engineering
- **Leadership & Process:** Security certification, SSDLC, Threat modelling, Critical thinking, Soft skills, Agile, Scrum, Leadership, People management, Hiring and recruiting, Mentoring, Process management, Multitasking, Ownership, Knowledge management, Proactivity, ITIL

Experience

Canonical - Technical Author III Duration: June 2024 to Present

Lead documentation for Data Platform department and its charmed products: charmed operators for Apache Spark, Apache Kafka, Apache ZooKeeper, OpenSearch, Valkey, Cassandra.

- Own documentation for Charmed Apache Spark, Charmed Apache Kafka, Charmed Apache ZooKeeper, Charmed OpenSearch, Charmed Valkey, and Charmed Cassandra within the Data Platform team. Revamped and migrated all content to a Sphinx-based docs-as-code solution and automated the full CI pipeline: staging/preview builds, formatting, Vale-based prose linting, spelling and broken-link checks, and style-guide compliance.
- Rewrote the Apache Spark charm tutorial to better showcase key features and simplify onboarding.
- Reviewed and manually tested how-to guides, resolving critical UX issues and instruction errors.
- Drove documentation standardisation across charm projects, developed content plans, and contributed to the department's documentation roadmap.
- Created and maintained an internal knowledge base to support collaboration across multiple engineering teams.
- Developed Ulwazi, a new Sphinx theme designed to support the future of documentation at Canonical. Contributed to the prototype's design and implementation, built automated testing, and designed the search UX, driving adoption and external contributions.
- Authored and reviewed documentation for security certification processes; created security documentation aligned with Secure Software Development Life Cycle (SSDLC) compliance requirements; facilitated threat modelling sessions as part of the SSDLC process.

Vaticle LTD (TypeDB) - Senior Technical Writer Duration: November 2022 to May 2024

First and only technical writer at the company, working with all engineers and managers to build and maintain documentation for every product in the TypeDB ecosystem.

- As the first technical writer in an engineering team, established a collaborative documentation process, authored a style guide, reduced documentation technical debt, and migrated the documentation platform from Markdown (Jekyll) to AsciiDoc (Antora) on Netlify.
- Designed and implemented the information architecture for a product suite including the open-source TypeDB DBMS, the TypeDB Cloud DBaaS offering, and a self-hosted enterprise solution, covering introductory content, a learning course, detailed manuals, and a query language reference.
- Developed and maintained documentation for TypeDB and its ecosystem tools: TypeDB Cloud, TypeDB Console, TypeDB Studio, and drivers (Rust, Python, Java, Node.js, C#, C).
- Developed and maintained documentation for the TypeQL query language, including a dedicated TypeQL style guide.
- Developed sample applications, tutorials, and end-to-end examples covering every supported client-library language.
- Maintained the documentation content repository, conducted PR reviews, and upheld editorial policy.
- Tested and documented new releases; conducted interviews with subject matter experts to obtain and document missing knowledge.
- Partnered with software engineers to integrate CI/CD automation and test frameworks, enabling automatic generation of API reference documentation, and embedded documentation into the product release policy.
- Contributed to product innovation and user experience improvements through research, documentation of major updates and technical advances, participation in feature design and documentation infrastructure discussions, and refinement of the messaging framework.

VK Cloud Solutions (ex. Mail.Ru Cloud Solutions) - Lead Technical Writer (Private Cloud & VK Cloud teams) Duration: November 2020 to November 2022

Internally promoted to lead the Private Cloud (on-premise) documentation team (Nov 2020 - Nov 2022); promoted agan in September 2022 to concurrently lead the VK Cloud (public cloud) documentation team as well. Held both team-lead roles in parallel until leaving the company due to relocation.

- Promoted to lead a second documentation team (VK Cloud public cloud, team of 5) in September 2022 while continuing to lead the Private Cloud team of 10 - a recognition of delivery and leadership on the Private Cloud effort. The concurrent dual-team tenure lasted until I left the company in November 2022.
- Private Cloud team (Nov 2020 - Nov 2022): built the team from scratch, recruiting and training ~15 people across technical writers, analysts, QA, and DocOps; ended with a standing team of 10 (4 technical writers, 4 analysts, QA, DocOps).
- Ran day-to-day leadership for both teams: Agile ceremonies (sprints, planning, daily scrums, retrospectives), style-guide alignment, peer and cross-review processes, and an internal Confluence knowledge base for the documentation organisation.
- Directed documentation for three enterprise B2B products, including private and public cloud platforms.
- Produced a broad range of documentation, including portal content, tender bids, technical specifications, design notes, test procedures, user and admin guides, API references, and tutorials.
- Delivered the full on-premise cloud platform doc set (600+ pages): terms of reference, user guide, admin guide, test programme, and related artefacts.
- Supervised documentation for 6+ projects and multiple internal modules/components, and owned the information-security certification process end-to-end for two major enterprise products, ensuring compliance.
- Built a docs-as-code stack with AsciiDoctor, Antora, Docker, and Git, reducing time to market from 3-4 days to same-day delivery.
- Helped found and then led an internal professional community of technical writers, organising meetups and training sessions.
- Organised technical reviews and interviewed subject matter experts; analysed source code directly when needed to ensure documentation accuracy.
- Main technologies: OpenStack, openstackcli, Keycloak, Zabbix, ELK / OpenSearch, Docker, AsciiDoc, Git, Linux, SSH, Jira, Confluence, Postman, JSON, Python, Terraform, Kubernetes (K8s).

GeekBrains - Dean (part-time project) Duration: January 2021 to June 2021

Founded and led the Technical Writer faculty at GeekBrains.

- Designed the full training program for the Technical Writer faculty (8 training courses) and recruited authors and trainers for multiple courses.
- Developed 2 training courses personally.
- Found, filtered, and coordinated course authors and trainers.
- Participated in marketing activities for the faculty.

Ailet Solutions - Lead Technical Writer (part-time project) Duration: March 2020 to March 2021

Part-time project alongside the primary Mail.Ru/VK Cloud role: built the documentation function from scratch for a retail image-recognition product.

- Held as a part-time engagement concurrent with the Mail.Ru Group / VK Cloud Solutions role.
- Developed technical and user documentation.
- Eliminated 1.5 years of technical debt in documentation.
- Implemented the docs-as-code approach.
- Created the documentation team from scratch.

Mail.Ru Group / VK Cloud Solutions - Senior Technical Writer (Tarantool) Duration: July 2019 to November 2020

Senior/Lead technical writer for the in-memory DBMS Tarantool and the Tarantool Data Grid enterprise product.

- Authored bilingual (English and Russian) open-source documentation for the in-memory DBMS Tarantool, supporting more than 7,000 global installations across large domestic enterprises and internal clients.
- Led security certification for Tarantool Data Grid: organised the certification process, designed information security requirements, partnered with engineers to implement required security features, and produced 35+ certification documents.
- Eliminated more than a year of documentation technical debt for Tarantool Data Grid, improving accuracy and trust.
- Developed project documentation and/or applications/bids for 10+ tenders.
- Developed proposals for KPIs and metrics for documentation.

VNII GOChS, EMERCOM of Russia - Head of Research and IT Departments Duration: April 2016 to July 2019

Led the research department and the IT department at the All-Russian Research Institute for Civil Defence and Emergencies (VNII GOChS) under EMERCOM of Russia.

- Established System-112 and AIUS RSChS test labs to research and demonstrate emergency communication technologies and procedures. Provided consulting and technical expertise for System-112 integration projects. Led the research department, contributing to the federal System-112 programme in Russia and the AIUS RSChS-2030 project.
- Designed and performed author supervision over a system integrator to implement Disaster Recovery and Emergencies Management automated systems for the Kyrgyz Republic, with a $4M per-project budget.
- Won and delivered World Bank Group contracts for automated emergency-service systems in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan: authored the technical proposals and tender bids at the bidding stage, then produced the follow-on feasibility studies, technical reports, and delivery documentation once awarded. Oversaw implementation of emergency-management systems for these and other global and local clients across Russia and abroad.
- Built the System-112 lab and demo stand (12 universal PCs and a dedicated server room) to research and showcase dispatchers' procedures and technologies, and coordinated System-112 integration work with external research centres and IT companies.
- Led the Institute's IT department with a team of 5 system administrators, supporting 500+ PCs, three server rooms (9 server racks), CCTV, and related infrastructure while maintaining security and operational reliability.
- Introduced ITIL standards in the IT department to expedite task delivery and improve efficiency.
- Created 328 hours of curricula for 4 courses, delivered 136 hours of lectures and seminars on technical standards, automated systems in emergencies, and information technologies for students and professionals.

VNII GOChS, EMERCOM of Russia - Researcher (Junior to Senior) Duration: July 2011 to April 2016

Progressed from Junior to Senior Researcher, focusing on the federal System-112 programme in the Russian Federation.

- Reviewed technical documentation for System-112 across regions of the Russian Federation.
- Developed legislation for System-112 in Russia.
- Provided expert support to EMERCOM of Russia on System-112 technologies.
- Organised and participated in government acceptance tests for System-112 in Russia.
- Communicated with The European Emergency Number Association (EENA).
- Contributed to R&D tasks and reports on System-112.
- Developed concepts and documents for the Head Designer of the System-112 test lab.

Bauman Moscow State Technical University (BMSTU) - Software Developer Duration: July 2008 to January 2011

Student-era software developer role at BMSTU supporting university operations and events.

- Helped organise university events.
- Produced documents and automated documents processing.
- Processed and analysed information.
- Developed software, including Win32 applications and web scripts.
- Deployed and managed web portals, forums, and an FTP server.
- Technologies: Delphi, PHP, VBA, LAMP, CMS.

ZAO AMT - Junior Software Developer Duration: July 2006 to September 2008

Developed software for aerospace and physical monitoring of gas and oil pipelines.

- Developed a module to correlate reference points between different data sets from different years of monitoring data for the same pipeline.
- Developed a module to find the same defects on the same pipeline across multiple datasets from different years.
- Developed a module to visualise the progression of defects over time.
- Worked on smaller GUI tasks.
- Performed extensive testing and debugging.

Selected Projects

- **Universal special software for system-112:** Patent covering universal special software for System-112, the Russian Federation's unified emergency number service. Filed and granted while working at VNII GOChS / EMERCOM of Russia.
- **Ulwazi Sphinx theme:** New Sphinx documentation theme designed to support the future of documentation at Canonical. Contributed to design and implementation of the prototype, automated testing, search UX design, and adoption.

Education

Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy). Thesis completed and defended in 2014; official diploma issued in 2015 due to bureaucratic procedures. Technology / Information Technology **July 2014**
VNII GOChS

Specialist Degree (Equivalent to Master of Engineering) Spaceship Engineering (Aerospace, Aeronautical and Astronautical / Space Engineering) **2011**
Bauman Moscow State Technical University (BMSTU)

Bachelor's degree Computer Science **2011**
Bauman Moscow State Technical University (BMSTU)

Credentials

- Databases and SQL for Data Science
- Troubleshooting Your Network with Wireshark
- 3000 Mentorship Minutes
- English language school certificate
- Python for Data Science and AI

Additional

Languages: English (5/5 (Full Professional)), Russian (5/5 (Native or Bilingual)), German (Elementary)