

Aditi Desai

Software Engineering Leader | Technical Transformation | Agile Delivery | Innovator | Travel Enthusiast

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SUMMARY

Results-driven engineering leader with experience leading global software organisations across various industries and domains. I bring experience in building and scaling engineering teams, and optimising engineering execution by investing in robust delivery systems that drive strategic business outcomes.

As a leader, I am passionate about solving complex business problems across technology, people, process, and culture, my playbook comes from real experience across different organisations and roles. I leverage my technical expertise, agile delivery, and coaching experience to empower people and teams.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Scaling & Delivery Excellence

- Scaled and led a 30-person distributed engineering organisation across UK and Mumbai at R3, with full accountability for delivery, quality, and performance
- Reduced PR cycle time to under 48 hours at Simply Business by putting engineering metrics to work for coaching, not just reporting
- Cut time-to-market by 50% at TUI through continuous delivery and shift-left initiatives across 8 partner scrum teams
- Led ISO 27001 certification across a greenfield engineering department, embedding SDLC best practice from day one
- Set up and scaled a new engineering base in Mumbai, expanding delivery capacity at R3 while keeping costs flat

People, Culture & Commercial Impact

- Delivered new insurance products and distribution channels across UK and US markets, including landmark partnerships
- Founded and led a 4 to 6 person Product Discovery & Innovation team, reducing wasted investment via lightweight, low-code demand validation
- Drove a DE&I hiring initiative reaching 20 to 25% representation of women and Black engineers, a sustained, structural outcome
- Voted and won Manager of the Year at Simply Business
- Owned the full people loop across growing distributed teams: hiring, onboarding, performance, and retention

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Engineering Strategy Execution | Organisational Scaling | Product Delivery Excellence | Agile & OKR Frameworks | Technical Governance | Team Topology Design | Team Mentorship & Career Development | Cross-Functional Leadership | Stakeholder Communication & Roadmap Alignment

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Head of Engineering / Director of Engineering, R3 Limited

Aug 2023 to Dec 2025

R3 delivers currency and financial technology solutions - Fintech - London

- Co-Led engineering for R3's CBDC platform, a greenfield distributed ledger system for tokenised central-bank money (retail & wholesale)
- Scaled and led a 30-person distributed engineering organisation across UK and Mumbai, with full accountability for delivery outcomes, engineering quality, and team performance
- Championed the adoption of AI-assisted development tools, including GitHub Copilot, Claude Code, and ChatGPT/GPT-4, through a structured programme of experimentation and pilots across testing, code review, and documentation generation
- Established team norms and agreed principles for responsible AI tool use, covering code ownership and review standards
- Co-Led ISO 27001 certification across the engineering department on a greenfield codebase, embedding SDLC best practice while laying foundations for a scalable AI development practice
- Introduced quarterly product increments with tangible client demos, improving delivery predictability and stakeholder confidence in a complex, regulated programme
- Partnered with C-suite and product leadership on AI adoption strategy, engineering org design, and process innovation, translating executive vision into executable engineering direction

Senior Engineering Manager (Transform Group), Simply Business

May 2019 to Jul 2023

InsurTech providing insurance for SME businesses in the UK/US - Insurance - London

- Led engineering teams to deliver new insurance product capabilities and distribution channels, including direct, embedded, and partnerships for Transform engineering group
- Introduced a team of engineers focussed on Product Discovery and Innovation for designing and testing new ideas in the insurance market, paving the way for new value streams, products, and features
- Managed and coached multiple product focussed teams with ~20 engineers whilst building and scaling high-performance teams
- Worked with senior engineering leaders, architecture owners, and product leaders to drive key design and architectural decisions that solve and break down complex business problems to tangible technical components for iterative value delivery
- Assisted senior management in team topologies, capacity planning, metrics, talent, and retention strategy
- Partnered with Talent team as Hiring Manager for hiring, interviews, and placement of engineers and new roles
- Partnered with product & engineering leaders and business stakeholders to understand objectives, budget targets, build roadmaps to develop and execute tech strategy

Sr. Technology Manager, TUI

Feb 2017 to May 2019

A leading global travel and leisure experience company - Travel - London

- Led delivery and deployment of new product features and projects to TUI web and retail sites as part of a GBP 5m budget, responsible for 8 partner scrum development teams
- Enabled a continuous delivery pipeline and shift-left initiatives, including feature-driven development, Git branching strategy, and test automation, reducing time to market by 50% within 6 months
- Drove key solution decisions and approvals aligned with the strategic vision of the department, ensuring value-driven prioritisation for the technical backlog
- Standardised and maximised use of the agile toolkit to improve team collaboration and efficiency

CERTIFICATIONS

AI for Business Transformation: Generative AI, Agentic AI and Beyond

Imperial College Business School, Executive Education, 2026

Introduction to Generative AI for Software Development

DeepLearning.AI, 2026

Team Software Engineering with AI

DeepLearning.AI, 2026

Certified Scrum Master

Scrum Alliance

EARLY CAREER

Change Manager (Tech Transformation), TalkTalk Group PLC

Apr 2016 to Feb 2017

London

- Delivered a fully responsive payments journey on a new technology platform
- Delivered a Content Management System for the Sales and Service areas of Talk Talk Online
- Managed multiple stakeholders and technical teams onshore and offshore from inception to delivery, tracking and reporting key project and delivery KPIs

Technology Manager (Agile Delivery), Thomas Cook Group PLC

Sep 2012 to Mar 2016

London

- Led high transactional web applications through iterative development sprints across client and near-shore delivery teams
- Drove consistency and predictability of delivery by enabling self organising Scrum teams and actively managing risks and blockers
- Reviewed the continuous delivery pipeline for improvement opportunities and reported weekly digital operations to business stakeholders

Technical Lead, Accenture

Dec 2007 to Sep 2012

UK

- Technical lead for Thomas Cook's Oracle ATG e-commerce workstream across European sites, leading UK and offshore teams in India
- Delivered SEO focused page design, holiday packaging and pricing presentations, and new payment integrations
- Integrated third party services including TripAdvisor, affiliates, and tracking solutions

Software Engineer, Infosys

Nov 2005 to Dec 2007

India

- Started career after a degree in Electronics and Telecommunications Engineering
- Trained in Computer Science and Java programming
- Worked as a Java, Oracle Commerce engineer across several client projects

EDUCATION

Mumbai University

Bachelor of Technology, Electronics and Network Communications

SKILLS

Engineering Leadership, Organisational Scaling, Team Topologies, Agile & OKR Frameworks, Technical Governance, System Design, ISO 27001, AI-Assisted Development

TECH STACK WORKED WITH

AWS, Kubernetes, Kotlin, Terraform, REST API, Docker, Ruby on Rails, Snowflake, Snowplow, Looker, Contentful, Jenkins, Git