

Richard Parkins



Director of Technology / Head of Engineering / Principal Architect

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Director-level leadership

Building teams

Technical leadership

Architecture & Assurance

Azure & AWS

Security-by-design

Platform & Delivery

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Senior technology leader with 30+ years of experience spanning hands-on software engineering, enterprise and solution architecture, and Director-level leadership. Proven track record designing and delivering secure, cloud-native platforms at national scale while building and leading high-performing engineering organisations. Known for combining deep technical credibility with pragmatic leadership, operating comfortably from code and architecture reviews through to executive governance and board-level discussion.

LEADERSHIP & TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES

- **Technology & Engineering Strategy:** defining vision, roadmaps, and operating models aligned to business outcomes
- **Architecture Leadership:** enterprise, solution, and platform architecture across Azure and AWS estates
- **Hands-on Technical Depth:** microservices, APIs, event-driven systems, data integration, and distributed systems
- **Security & Risk:** IAM, PIM, WAF, OWASP, threat modelling, and secure-by-design delivery
- **Cloud Platforms:** Azure & AWS, Cloudflare PaaS/IaaS, networking, identity, resilience, and observability
- **DevOps & Delivery:** CI/CD, infrastructure as code, reliability engineering, and developer enablement
- **Engineering Leadership:** org design, hiring, mentoring, performance management, and succession planning
- **Governance & Assurance:** design authorities, architecture reviews, GDS-aligned assurance, and audit support
- **Commercial & Stakeholder Engagement:** executive communication, supplier management, and bid support

SELECTED PROGRAMMES & TRANSFORMATIONS

- **Department for Education (DfE):** Principal Architect and Head of Engineering across multiple Azure-hosted national services; responsible for target architectures, security posture, delivery assurance, and operational resilience.
- **Comparethemarket – Pricing Platform:** Lead Architect for multi-year transformation from on-prem monolith to AWS microservices; enabled daily deployments, improved resilience, and reduced operational cost by ~25%.
- **Real-time Quotability & Partner Risk Monitoring:** Designed event-driven services and observability tooling to protect revenue and reduce incident detection and recovery from days to minutes.

TECHNICAL SKILLS & TOOLING

Detailed, resource-level experience across cloud platforms, data stores, integration patterns, delivery pipelines, security controls and operational tooling.

Languages & Frameworks	C#, .NET (Core / Framework); Java; JavaScript / TypeScript; Node.js; Python (automation, scripting)
Data Stores	SQL Server (design, optimisation, HA/DR); PostgreSQL; MongoDB; Cosmos DB; Redis
Cloud Platforms	Azure: App Services, Functions, AKS, Storage, Service Bus, Event Grid, Azure SQL, Key Vault AWS: EC2, ECS, Lambda, RDS, DynamoDB, S3, CloudWatch, API Gateway
Architecture & Integration	REST & OpenAPI-driven APIs; Event-driven architecture (CQRS, Service Bus, SNS/SQS, EventBridge, RabbitMQ, TibCo); Microservices & modular monolith decomposition; DDD; Consumer-driven contract testing
DevOps & Delivery	CI/CD: GitHub Actions, Azure DevOps, TeamCity; IaC: ARM, Bicep, Terraform; Containerisation: Docker, Kubernetes; Feature flags & progressive delivery
Security & Compliance	IAM, RBAC, PIM, secrets management; OWASP Top 10; WAF configuration; Threat modelling; Public sector audit & compliance
Observability & Operations	Application Insights; Azure Monitor / Log Analytics; CloudWatch; Centralised logging & alerting; Incident management & PIRs

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Technical Director / Head of Engineering – Talent Consulting (2021–Present)

- Built and led permanent multidisciplinary engineering capability (engineering, architecture, DevOps, QA).
- Principal Architect for Department for Education programmes, providing hands-on architecture leadership and assurance.
- Designed cloud-native platforms on Azure, covering identity, integration, data, and operational tooling.
- Established reference architectures, engineering standards, and communities of practice across portfolios.
- Regularly present technical strategy, delivery status, and risk at DD-level and senior governance forums.
- Supported bids and technical propositions contributing to multi-million-pound public sector contract wins.

Key Architecture Leadership – CPD & Family Hubs (DfE) (2021–2023)

- Lead / Principal Architect for the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Family Hubs programmes within the Department for Education portfolio.
- Architectural ownership of Azure-based, cloud-native services supporting nationally significant outcomes for education professionals and vulnerable families.
- Defined target architectures covering identity, access management, API-led integration, data flows, reporting, and operational tooling, aligned to GDS and DfE standards.
- Led architectural decision-making across multiple delivery teams and suppliers, including service boundaries, data ownership, and integration patterns.
- Embedded security-by-design in collaboration with cyber and assurance teams (IAM, network segmentation, secrets management, audit readiness).
- Provided hands-on architectural oversight across discovery, alpha, beta, and live phases, including design reviews, ADRs, and delivery assurance.
- Regular engagement with senior stakeholders to communicate architectural trade-offs, delivery risks, and long-term sustainability considerations.

Applications Architect – Comparethemarket (2017–2021)

- Architectural owner for the core Pricing Platform and partner risk services supporting high-volume consumer traffic.
- Led decomposition of a large on-prem monolith into AWS-based microservices using API-led and event-driven patterns.
- Introduced resilience patterns, observability, contract testing, and automated security scanning across the platform.
- Improved deployment frequency from monthly to daily while reducing incidents and mean time to recovery.

- Mentored senior engineers and tech leads; chaired technical forums to improve cross-team alignment.

Consultant dev - EasyJet — Seat Selection Services (2016/2017)

Built customer-facing seat selection capability, hosted on Microsoft Azure using an MVC + KnockoutJS approach.

- Engineered an Azure Service Bus integration to support a 3rd-party provider calling a REST API for real-time pluscard validation during booking.
- Implemented a PHP client to interact with Windows Azure Service Bus for the 3rd-party integration.
- Supported secure, resilient async processing patterns and operational troubleshooting across the integration.

Consultant dev - Tesco Entertainment — Digital Retail Platform (2015/2016)

Enhanced www.tescoentertainment.com and supporting services within an Agile (SCRUM) delivery model.

- Developed a conceptual Android app (Java) enabling purchase and download of MP3 tracks within time and budget, alongside ongoing .NET delivery.
- Maintained and extended features on the Endeca search service powering the core entertainment experience.
- Delivered the “was/now/save” price cross-out capability across ~400,000 products through to live release.

Director - TouchScreenData Ltd (2004/2015)

Small company building dotnet and PHP services

- Won contract to provide online platform for the antiques market
- Green field antiques platform in dotnet, hosted on fasthosts
- LAMP development, various small scale projects for charity and retail sector, coca cola, children's trust

EDUCATION

BEng (Hons) Electrical & Electronic Engineering — Loughborough University (First Class)