

RYAN K. McDONALD

Senior Platform PM · Platform, AI & Operational Systems · Security & Data Infrastructure

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Senior platform PM building and owning platform systems at Bank of America, Splunk, Yahoo and Disney. Engineering-rooted. I operate inside the technical system, not above it. I read code and work directly alongside engineering on architecture decisions. My work is figuring out what the platform should become, sequencing the roadmap to get there, and holding ownership through the complexity that prevents most programs from shipping. Patent for Fast Channels delivery architecture.

SELECTED IMPACT

- **\$60K/month in coordination overhead removed at Bank of America.** Restructured decision rights across 3 organizations on a stalled SIEM modernization.
- **\$500K in platform funding unlocked at Splunk.** Adoption results made the argument. No business case document required.
- **\$5M in enterprise renewals held at Yahoo Edgecast** through 2 acquisitions. Disney and Discovery on the line. Re-sequenced the roadmap around what customers said in renewal calls.
- **10 weeks to 3 weeks time-to-value at Splunk.** Rebuilt onboarding as a product surface. Same CS team.
- **Patent for Fast Channels delivery architecture.** Competed directly with Yahoo Edgecast's platform. Later became the basis for recruitment there.
- **Designed and trademarked AOSI® (Agent Orchestrated Self Improvement).** Built the Founder OS pipeline, shipped Check-In by Ascendvent to production, open-sourced the architecture on GitHub.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Product Manager (Contract) Bank of America via Apex Systems

Oct 2025 – Mar 2026

Owned program governance and operating model for a SIEM modernization spanning security operations, engineering and compliance across 3 organizations.

- The program had produced zero detections in 6 months. Decision rights were undefined across security ops, engineering and compliance. Restructured ownership across all 3 organizations and removed ~\$60K/month in coordination overhead tracked against PI planning cycle output.
- Separated detection research from production commitments. Once those were decoupled, teams could forecast reliably and commit to a delivery schedule.
- Took the program from no shared plan to a milestone Splunk and Anvilogic migration sequence. All 3 organizations signed off on the same roadmap for the first time.
- Standardized detection onboarding workflows. Reduced rework on the way into production.

Founder & Product Lead Ascendvent

2024 – Present

Developed AOSI (Agent Orchestrated Self Improvement®), a trademarked AI-native product development methodology. Built the tooling, shipped the first product, and open-sourced the architecture.

- Built the Founder OS, an 11-stage AI-gated product development pipeline running on a custom MCP server. Preflight validation gates each stage. PRD generation uses a Karpathy-style generate-score-improve loop with Sonnet writing and Haiku scoring.
- Shipped Check-In by Ascendvent to production at [checkin.ascendvent.life](#). AI-native

TECHNOLOGIES

Platforms

Splunk Enterprise Security, Anvilogic, SIEM/SOAR, video streaming (HLS, DASH), ad tech (GAM, Freewheel, Conviva, Nielsen)

Engineering

Python, SQL, TypeScript, JavaScript, REST API design, Git, AWS

Observability

Grafana, New Relic, SignalFx, CloudWatch, container orchestration concepts (Kubernetes, Docker)

AI and Agents

Claude Code, MCP server development (public on GitHub), AgentOS design, RAG orchestration, LLM API integration, agent workflows (n8n)

Frameworks

OKR systems, SAFe/PI planning, Agile/Scrum, Jira, Confluence

COMMUNITY & WRITING

Author of [SignalHorizon](#), 60+ essays on systems thinking, AI workflows and platform operations.

Built and ship [TechYeet Gaming](#), monthly newsletter for the tech and gaming community.

EDUCATION

B.S. Computer Science

Operations Management concentration
Clemson University

SaaS built with Claude Code, Next.js, Supabase, Stripe and Playwright. Priced at \$15/month against \$29/month competitors.

- Built and open-sourced 3 MCP servers including a Product Operating Model server and ShaleYeah for oil and gas analysis. Public proof of agentic architecture judgment.
- Ran 50+ VoC interviews. Killed the original hypothesis when unit economics did not support the model. Pivoted to B2B practitioners after discovery identified operational overhead as the real constraint.
- Publishing systems thinking on Signal Horizon. 62 posts on operating models, product organizations and agent infrastructure.

Senior Product Manager

2022 - 2024

Splunk

Owned the security content platform within Splunk Enterprise Security. Security content was scattered across multiple locations. Customers were doing detection work in CI/CD pipelines outside the platform and pushing it back in, which created friction in both directions.

- Security content was scattered and customers were building detections in their own CI/CD pipelines outside the platform. After interviewing users, shifted the roadmap to version control and content management features built around their existing workflows. Drove 12% adoption lift across 2,000+ enterprise customers.
- Adoption metrics, not a formal business case, unlocked \$500K in additional platform funding.
- Converted onboarding from a services handoff into a self-serve product experience. Reduced time-to-value from 10 weeks to 3 with the same CS team.
- Replaced activity-based reporting with activation and retention dashboards so leadership could see real product health.
- Championed a bring-your-own-repo architecture for automatic content ingestion. This approach is now core to tools like Anvilogic.

Senior Technical Product Manager

2021 - 2022

Yahoo Edgecast

Owned core streaming product through 2 back-to-back acquisitions (Limelight to Verizon to Yahoo). The company changed hands twice while customer contracts had to hold.

- Retained \$5M in enterprise renewals including Disney and Discovery. The roadmap had to move around what customers were actually saying in renewal calls, not around what engineering had already started.
- Delivered geo-blocking and live time-shift under hard deadlines during both ownership transitions. The company had every excuse to miss. Contracts stayed intact.
- Built session-based playback end-to-end, giving live-stream viewers pause, rewind and replay. 35% engagement lift within months. That is what the retention commitments were built on.
- Reduced cloud storage costs 18% through session caching. Same experience for the user, fraction of the DVR infrastructure cost.

Associate Director, Product

2019 - 2021

Cognizant

Healthcare population management during COVID across Kaiser Permanente and Abbott BinaxNOW rapid testing. Took over BinaxNOW mid-pilot with scale arriving faster than the platform was ready for.

- Drove Abbott to ~65% of the U.S. rapid test market at peak by holding verification fidelity over feature velocity on NAVICA. Result records had to be trusted enough for travel, employer return-to-work and school access. That was the call that mattered.
- Scaled BinaxNOW from pilot to 50M tests per month in 6 weeks. That meant

coordinating across manufacturing, supply chain, regulatory compliance and the NAVICA digital health app simultaneously.

- Coached 2 project managers through a pivot into product management. Both took over PM roles. Clients requested their work on follow-on contracts after they brought dev sprints, user discovery and story mapping into engagements that had not seen those practices before.

Business Strategy Manager

2017 - 2019

Accenture Strategy

- Grew Spectrum AudienceTrak from 100 to 5,000 users in 3 months. The measurement layer had been sitting unused. Persona-based onboarding redesign grounded in customer interviews got it into the hands of the field teams who needed it.
- Launched an AI-driven broadcast outage detection system. Gave operations 72-hour advance warning on incidents that were previously catching them off guard.

Technical Product Manager

2015 - 2017

Disney ESPN

- Owned video player frameworks across ESPN's web and mobile properties. Started as an A/V engineer. Moved into product as the platform decisions, vendor evaluation and monetization architecture, became mine.
- Led the Flash-to-HTML5 migration. Owned the vendor tradeoffs and architecture decisions. 25% engagement increase and 60% improvement in ad insertion success.
- Built end-to-end delivery measurement across Conviva, Nielsen, Freewheel, GAM, New Relic and SignalFx. First time leadership had unified visibility into player performance, ad delivery and audience behavior across properties.
- Led the ad-tech POCs that shaped ESPN's move to Google Ad Manager. Evaluated vendor tradeoffs, documented the risks and gave leadership a clear basis for the decision.

Technical Consultant

2011 - 2015

Accenture Technology

Led enterprise integration architecture and platform modernization for large-scale telecom and media clients.

- **Designed and patented the Fast Channels delivery architecture** covering core channel delivery and ad insertion. The solution competed directly with Yahoo Edgecast's platform and later became the basis for recruitment there.
- Directed a 25-engineer team across enterprise integration and platform modernization. Defined system boundaries, API contracts and dependency sequencing across provisioning, search, monitoring and operations.
- Established technical governance and release sequencing models that caught integration failures before they reached production.