



NICK HOWELL

Executive Operator | Ecosystem Builder | Vision-Led Execution

Who Am I?

I'm a technologist turned strategist — someone who has spent decades bridging the gap between what technology can do and what businesses need it to do. I've launched platforms, built cross-functional partnerships, and helped redefine how companies think about cloud, edge, and enterprise architecture.

What sets me apart is not just technical range, but the ability to build momentum — across teams, across companies, across markets. I know how to earn trust, drive alignment, and scale ideas from concept to execution.

I'm focused on senior leadership roles where I can drive strategy, build teams, and turn vision into execution — especially in fast-moving environments where momentum matters. That's where I thrive.

Executive Mission

I'm relentlessly focused on aligning innovation with execution — building strategies, teams, and ecosystems that create long-term value. I believe great leadership is rooted in clarity, empathy, and momentum — and I bring all three to every challenge I take on.

Core Strengths

- Emerging Technology Strategy
 - Developer & Community Enablement
 - Platform Incubation & Product Launches
 - AI/Metadata Infrastructure Design
 - Cross-Functional Business Leadership
 - End-to-End GTM Strategy Execution
 - Strategic Influence Through Communication
 - Customer-Centered Innovation & Empathy
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Professional Experience

▼ NetApp (2011 – Present)

▼ Global Field CTO – Cloud/ISV/GTM Strategy (2019 – Present)

As part of the founding team for NetApp's Office of the CTO, I carved out a unique role that blurred the lines between strategy, storytelling, and community building. I didn't just represent our cloud vision — I helped shape it, evangelize it, and scale its impact. From executive briefings to major conferences, I translated technical direction into community traction.

Whether launching our first developer ecosystem, building ISV alliances, or driving merger conversations, I focused on aligning technical truth with business growth. My goal was always to connect innovation with execution — and bring people along for the ride.

Highlights & Achievements

- Co-founded and scaled the Office of the CTO for Cloud, influencing long-term roadmap and technical vision.
- Built NetApp's first developer ecosystem strategy, launching a community of 4K+ engineers across Discord, forums, and live events.
- Led DevRel and technical storytelling for NetAppTV and YouTube, hosting and scripting episodic content that reached tens of thousands.
- Incubated and launched NetApp Nucleus, a global user group initiative redefining customer engagement, community structure, and field activation.

- Drove ISV partnership strategy and collaborated on early-stage M&A evaluations to identify new growth vectors.

▼ Global Technical Lead – Cloud-First Partners (2018 – 2019)

As NetApp began ramping its Cloud Data Services offerings, I stepped into a pivotal enablement role for our partner ecosystem. Working closely with executive leadership, I helped translate the strategy behind our cloud portfolio into real-world value for channel partners — building the materials, relationships, and messaging they needed to launch and succeed in the cloud space.

Highlights & Achievements

- Led partner GTM efforts for Cloud-First Services, ensuring partner readiness across technical enablement, messaging, and delivery alignment.
- Created and delivered solution-focused training that translated NetApp's evolving cloud portfolio into real-world partner value.
- Enabled strategic alignment between NetApp's cloud roadmap and partner execution through technical storytelling and field engagement.

▼ Technical Marketing Engineer – Virtualization Solutions (2011 – 2015)

During my time as a TME, I focused on bridging the gap between product teams and practitioners in the field. I created trusted technical content, trained partners and field engineers, and helped shape NetApp's early virtualization strategy. My work became the connective tissue between engineering, product, and the real-world challenges customers faced in adopting hybrid infrastructure.

Highlights & Achievements

- Developed NetApp's original best practices for VMware integrations, driving consistency across customer environments and internal teams.
- Delivered live technical trainings to field engineers and partners, earning a reputation as the go-to subject matter expert for virtualization solutions.

- Launched and hosted the NetApp Communities Podcast — a precursor to TechONTAP — as a modern platform for education and advocacy.

▼ Cohesity (2015 – 2016)

Global Field CTO / Chief Evangelist (2015 – 2016)

I joined Cohesity in its stealth phase as employee #46, reporting directly to both the COO and CEO. I quickly took the lead on driving its public narrative and GTM strategy.

Collaborating directly with the executive team, I helped shape our external messaging and internal alignment across business development, marketing, and product strategy.

My work bridged early product management and technical storytelling, supporting strategic decisions and roadmap prioritization. I regularly briefed analysts and influencers, turning early feedback into tactical insight that helped refine our offerings and market fit.

Highlights & Achievements

- Joined Cohesity pre-launch as employee #46 to help define and scale GTM, business development, and messaging strategy alongside C-level leadership.
- Supported early product management prioritization by aligning roadmap focus with analyst, partner, and customer input.
- Led executive briefings and analyst/influencer outreach to help shape industry perception and build momentum pre- and post-launch.

▼ IPC Healthcare (2006 – 2011)

Head of Datacenter Ops – Virtualization Architect (2006 – 2011)

At IPC, I led the datacenter modernization initiative that transformed a highly fragmented infrastructure into a secure, scalable virtualized environment. This work directly supported our readiness for IPO and regulatory compliance while unlocking major cost and performance efficiencies.

Highlights & Achievements

- Consolidated Active Directory domains across 27 remote sites into a unified enterprise-wide infrastructure.
- Migrated 1000+ servers to VMware, introduced Cisco Nexus 10Gb networking, and centralized datacenter operations.
- Virtualized mission-critical applications including Oracle, SQL Server, and Exchange.
- Prepared HIPAA and SOX documentation for IPO-readiness; conducted biannual audits to ensure sustained compliance and resilience.

▼ National Network Data Svcs (1998 – 2006)

Infrastructure Engineer & Federal Contractor (1999 – 2005)

This was my proving ground. I didn't just rack servers — I helped build the actual environments they lived in. From powering up entire datacenters to modernizing some of the earliest enterprise IT stacks, this era defined my technical roots. Working as a contractor meant adapting quickly — sometimes installing infrastructure, other times designing it — across financial institutions and federal agencies. That flexibility, paired with a Top Secret clearance, allowed me to step into sensitive and mission-critical roles long before most people my age had even set foot in a datacenter.

Highlights & Achievements

- Designed and deployed Active Directory infrastructure during NT4 to Windows 2000 migrations across multiple Fortune 500 clients.
- Built Bank of America's national intranet backbone, streamlining internal communications and document management systems.
- Held Top Secret clearance (1998–2003), supporting secure federal programs requiring strict confidentiality and resilience.

Education & Certifications

- US Merchant Marine Academy - Mechanical (Marine) Engineering
- Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (2000/2003)
- Cisco Certified Network Professional (CCNP)
- VMware Certified Professional (VCP)

Executive & Leadership Development

- Executive Powerspeaking and presentation training for keynotes, panels, and strategic communications
- Keynote presenter at dozens of global conferences with consistently top-rated session feedback

Leadership Beyond the Resume

I've always gravitated toward complex, high-stakes team environments — even early in my life and career. While at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, I competed in the Newport to Bermuda Race, a 635-mile offshore sailing challenge that demanded precision, endurance, and trust under pressure. A few years later, I led a 40-person international World of Warcraft raid team, coordinating strategy and execution across time zones multiple nights a week. Both experiences shaped my leadership instincts long before I ever held a formal title — setting me on a path that's defined my approach in the corporate world ever since.

Nothing is impossible Fail Fast Tomorrow is another day

Where I've Been & Where I'm Headed

I've been in tech for almost 30 years now. I didn't plan it — I just kept saying yes to interesting problems and trying to work with smart people.

Along the way, I watched folks like Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Pat Gelsinger, and Satya Nadella shape the world we live in. I learned a lot just by paying attention — how they handled pressure, how they told stories, how they adapted.

I came up during Y2K and 9/11. I lived through the rise of virtualization, the move to the cloud, the Kubernetes boom, and now AI.

It's been a hell of a ride. Some of it was fun, some of it was hard, and all of it left a mark.

These days, I'm less focused on what I can build for myself — and more interested in what I can help build with others. If I've picked up anything along the way, it's that momentum matters, people matter, and none of us do this alone.

Thanks for reading.



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