Kati Paizee | Technical Writer and Technical Writing Manager
Location: Cape Town, South Africa **| Email**: kati.paizee@gmail.com

Work experience

Technical writing manager at GitLab
June 2022 – November 2024

- Managed a team of nine technical writers, including intermediate, senior, and staff writers.
- Regularly rebalanced team assignments to meet resourcing needs for high-priority projects (such as AI projects) and product groups, while ensuring a manageable workload for writers.
- Set quarterly Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) to drive documentation improvements and to meet long-term goals and roadmap objectives. These included adding new tutorials, restructuring documentation, and reviewing documentation for technical accuracy.
- Reviewed resumes and interviewed candidates (50+) for technical writing and management roles.
- Coached and mentored writers in specific development areas, such as writing skills. Helped identify and set priorities and focus on business objectives.
- Provided feedback on performance and growth during regular 1:1s and annual performance reviews. Provided input to promotions.
- Enhanced workflows to encourage open-source documentation contributions, including leading a docs-only hackathon in January 2023. The hackathon generated hundreds of merge requests from contributors.
- Maintained and improved a suite of data and metrics about the GitLab documentation in spreadsheets, Sisense, and Tableau.
- Improved and streamlined documentation and team processes. For example, optimizing a rotation schedule in the team, and proposing guidelines for adding Vale rules.

Senior technical writer at GitLab
March 2021 – June 2022

- Reviewed, edited, and wrote documentation for new and existing GitLab features in the GitLab documentation. Focused on third-party integrations (such as Jira), and Growth (new users).
- Worked in a docs as code environment. Authored content in Visual Studio Code in markdown, in source control (Git), and ran GitLab pipelines to build content.
- Edited documentation written by developers and other writers for structure, tone, and style.
- Identified gaps and improvement opportunities in the documentation and collaborated with product managers and engineering managers to implement fixes.
- Reviewed documentation contributions from open-source (community) contributors.
- Interviewed and mentored technical writers.
- Worked with UX designers to add and improve copy in the GitLab user interface.
- Contributed improvements to documentation processes, tools, and the style guide.
- Took part in regular chores to address documentation debt, such as broken external links.
- Worked with technical writing leadership to drive OKRs to improve findability and scope of tutorials in documentation.
- Helped to maintain the documentation toolchain, such as fixing pipelines and updating Docker images.
- Took part in cross-team initiatives, including a working group to improve GitLab APIs.

Senior technical writer at Amazon Web Services
July 2019 – November 2020

- Wrote and maintained user guides, API references, and command line interface (CLI) documentation for the Amazon VPC services and AWS VPN services.
- Worked with engineers, product managers, and other subject matter experts to write content for new features and to review and update existing content.
- Responded to documentation feedback from customers in trouble tickets and GitHub pull requests in the open-source AWS documentation repositories.
- Authored content in Oxygen XML editor using Amazon-flavoured DocBook XML, in source control (Git), and ran documentation builds using Amazon tooling.
- Worked with editors to implement AWS writing style in documentation and develop new writing standards where there were none.
- Reviewed trends and metrics to identify gaps and areas of improvement for documentation.
- Created API, CLI, and CloudFormation code examples.
- Provided or reviewed user interface (UI) text for the VPC web console.
- Reviewed new EC2 APIs and made recommendations about naming and structure.
- Provided or reviewed customer-facing error messages for the APIs and web console.
- Tested new features and APIs before release.
- Interviewed (40+) and mentored new writers.
- Took part in company-wide initiatives. These included performing structural reviews of business documents across various departments, and contributing to a mentoring program for aspiring technical writers.

Senior technical writer at Amazon Prime Video
May 2018 – July 2019

- As the first and only writer, established documentation processes for the Prime Video backend engineering team, including a ticket queue, style guide, code reviews, and tenets.
- Helped to lead a project to migrate documentation from Confluence to a docs as code format (Git and Jekyll).
- Onboarded new documentation to the web portal, and managed a documentation roadmap.
- Reviewed, updated, and improved existing documentation and UI text.
- Worked with the web portal team to develop metrics for understanding user interaction with the documentation.
- Maintained an internal wiki with instructions for developers on how to create and update the documentation.

Senior technical writer and documentation manager at Amazon Web Services
March 2013 – May 2018

- Wrote and maintained user guides, API references, and command line interface (CLI) documentation for Amazon EC2, Amazon VPC, and AWS Direct Connect. Significant projects included creating a new user guide for VPC Peering, and writing all the documentation for the release of IPv6.
- From February 2017, I managed a team of two EC2 technical writers in Cape Town.
- Responded to documentation feedback from customers.
- Worked with editors to implement and improve the AWS writing style guide.
- Reviewed trends and metrics to identify gaps and areas of improvement for documentation.
- Created API and CLI code examples.
- Provided or reviewed user interface text for the EC2, Direct Connect, and VPC web consoles.

- Provided or reviewed customer-facing error messages for the APIs and web console.
- Assisted with customer experience reviews of new EC2 APIs.
- Tested new features and APIs before release..
- Mentored new writers and provided managerial support for my team (performance reviews, 1:1s, coaching, mentoring).

Documentation manager and senior technical writer at CSG International
March 2009 – February 2013

- Wrote and maintained user guides for CSG software (telecommunications billing management software). From 2011, I managed a team of five technical writers.
- Migrated the documentation tooling from Emacs to Oxygen XML editor to enhance productivity, and implemented daily documentation builds using Jenkins.
- Formalised documentation processes.
- Provided managerial support for my team (performance reviews, 1:1s, coaching, mentoring).
- Provided technical support and enhancements for documentation tools and builds (Oxygen XML editor, DocBook XML, and Ant builds).
- Maintained the CSG writing style guide.
- Reviewed and edited documentation written by developers, analysts, and other writers.
- Gathered feedback about documentation and implemented improvements where required.

Senior instructional writer at Laragh Courseware
March 2007 – February 2009

Wrote e-learning courses about a variety of software and business topics (MS Office, Adobe, PMBOK).

(Contract) Author for Nelson Thornes Publishers
August 2008 – July 2009

Commissioned to write an IT high school textbook for the Caribbean, *IT for CSEC*, according to the CXC CSEC Information Technology syllabus.

(Contract) Overwriter for Pearson Education
April 2008 – July 2008

Commissioned to restructure and revise a law textbook, *Introduction to Law*, for FET College level.

Education

University   Bachelor of Laws (LLB), University of Cape Town
Bachelor of Commerce in Economics & Law (BCom), University of Cape Town