

Stephen McNamara

FOUNDER, CEO & CTO — OPEN FINANCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

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Technology executive with three decades in payments and crypto. I'm at my best on the hard calls in complex environments, and building teams capable of making them without me. I've grown engineering organisations from first hire to 100+, and shipped at the frontier: mobile payments in the 2000s, e-commerce at scale to 2013, enterprise Bitcoin in 2014, one of the first Ethereum Layer 2s in 2018. I'm currently building an inheritable multi-chain assisted self-custody vault.

EXPERIENCE

Uphold Labs — CEO, Uphold Labs Aug 2021 – Present

- Report to the group CEO, leading a high-velocity team of 10 that takes 0 → 1 crypto-enabled financial products from idea to market.
- Own the P&L for Uphold Vault, an assisted self-custody product since extended into inheritance: past \$1m/yr in subscription revenue, with zero downtime and zero loss of customer funds.

OMG Network / SYNQA — EVP Strategy, then Chief Operating Officer May 2018 – Dec 2020

- Shipped Plasma, one of the first working child-chain implementations on Ethereum, establishing the network as a Layer 2 pioneer.
- Led delivery of OMG Network V1 mainnet beta — protocol from testnet to production, and the rebrand of OmiseGO into OMG Network.
- Launched a Plasma-based P2P payment network at up to 4,000 TPS and ~90% lower fees than Ethereum mainnet; the architecture was selected by Tether for its stablecoin sidechain.

Huawei Technologies — Head of Blockchain R&D Strategy Dublin, Ireland · Oct 2017 – Apr 2018

Rakuten — CTO, Rakuten Blockchain Lab Belfast, UK · Aug 2016 – Oct 2017

- Grew the Rakuten blockchain lab following their acquisition of Bitnet's IP, delivering DLT prototypes and a production Bitcoin wallet with group teams in Tokyo.

Bitnet Technologies — CTO & Co-Founder Jan 2014 – Aug 2016

- Co-founded an enterprise bitcoin payment processor for large merchants; raised a \$14.5m Series A led by Highland Capital Partners. Platform ran in production across Rakuten's US, German and Austrian marketplaces; IP and team acquired by Rakuten in 2016.

Visa / CyberSource — Head of Technology / CTO Foster City, CA · Jul 2011 – Jan 2014

- Ran technology for a platform serving 295,000+ merchants and roughly a quarter of all US e-commerce spend at the time of Visa's \$2bn acquisition.
- Set the post-acquisition technology strategy; delivered a new platform architecture and developer API suite.

CyberSource — Chief Software Engineer Belfast, UK · Aug 2008 – Jul 2011

- Founded CyberSource's Belfast development centre from zero — hired and trained an engineering and product organisation of 100+, with new products in market inside the first year.

EARLIER CAREER

Liberty Mutual Insurance — Principal Software Engineer 2006 – 2008

Valista — Architect, PaymentsPlus 2000 – 2006

ApTest — Director of Engineering 1997 – 2000

IONA Technologies — Principal Engineer, Orbix 1993 – 1997

SIDE PROJECTS

Whistle — A privacy-first, open-source group location sharing app built on Nostr and MLS. End-to-end encrypted: no accounts, no servers, no tracking, no permission required.