



Vygandas Pliastas

CTO / Engineering Manager / Consultant



100% Job Success



Expert-Vetted on **upwork**

Engineering leader with 20+ years of experience driving digital innovation in regulated industries. Specialising in high-performing teams, AI & LLM, SaaS, e-commerce, scalable architectures, and aligning tech with strategic outcomes.



CTO/CPO (32h/w, consulting, started as Fractional CTO)

AI Powered Marketers

US startup, building LLM chat for marketing and SEO experts.

- Started by taking over product roadmap and got in the middle between CEO and engineers
- Restructured whole team by finding better suited people for more optimal costs
- Started tracking finances and runway; worked on 3 shakedown rounds of random expenses.
- With my own hands architected new v2 system to replace vibe-coded version
- Led security improvements initiatives on the v1
- Hired and managed Head of Marketing by signing-off on marketing initiatives, designs, content
- Hired Content Manager and implemented workflow with the CEO and rest of the content team
- Implemented email cold outreach system, trained CEO to do demos
- Implemented own basic marketing strategies getting 1000 new signups per month
- Made sure v1 system works async with AWS lambdas and can scale when usage scales
- Hired a Designer and led product UI and UX initiatives and improvements
- Researched for the best LLM agents implementation, deep-agents, orchestration



Head of Engineering (20h/w, consulting, started as mgmt. consulting)

Accounting and ERP platform

LT company, one of the largest and most known in bookkeeping

- Led core engineering team working on stabilising and optimising whole cloud ERP platform
- Worked with vendors on optimising 3rd party integrations and performance
- Built a core roadmap and led its implementation
- Led initiatives on reducing issue count
- Assessed chain of command, requirements flows, bottlenecks, worked on improvement plans and executed those

Latest Experience

Been working on couple of long-term independent contracts helping companies to deliver more effectively.



Head of Engineering (40h/w, consulting capacity)

Everything you need to run your whole clinic.
UK startup, building AI-driven software for aesthetic clinics.

- Took over the entire product from agency developers, rewrote the SDLC
- Hired and led a new team: backend, frontend, QA, design, product
- Built internal operations team and drove tech-product roadmap
- Architected new infrastructure, implemented CI and deployments, created QA environments



Engineering / Product Manager / Consultant (40h/w)

Longer, fuller lives with digital-first care and research.
300+ employee health-tech, \$250M+ raised from top VCs, Class IIb.

- Led 40-engineer on €30M+ clinical features used in clinic deployments
- Took care of delivery velocity across Web, iOS, Android, Backend, QA
- Implemented OKRs to align org with regulatory and business milestones (whole eng. dep.)
- Worked on career plans and upskilling initiatives implementation



Engineering Manager (40h/w, consulting capacity)

Elite network of top 3% freelancers worldwide.
Global marketplace for elite freelancers, \$1B+ valuation, fully remote.

- Grew from engineer to EM to dual EM/PM role across cross-functional squads
- Hired, mentored, and upskilled engineers into team leads and managers
- Led team with highest eNPS in the org, ran 4 company-wide hackathons, and initiated A/B infra overhaul



R&D Manager (started as consulting, then full-time)

Luxury concierge platform for elite members.
Velocity Black – UK-based startup, \$30M+ raised, acquired by Capital One.

- Opened and led Vilnius branch; hired team, managed legal, ops, support, gov relations
- Orchestrated EU R&D Grand €800k+ of total €1.8M+; oversaw roadmap and delivery
- Shaped product strategy, hired 15+ devs, and bridged London HQ with Baltic operations
- Architected flagship project and built a team for it which improved app effectiveness with ML



Senior Software Engineer (full-time)

Metasearch engine for travel services, flights, hotels, rental cars
Kayak – Acquired for \$1.8B, 100M+ monthly users

- Built and optimized SEO-focused pages and experiments driving organic traffic
- Contributed React-based UI components and microfeatures across product areas
- Delivered growth hacks tied to PR campaigns, boosting page visibility and rankings
- Gained experience at working with enormous realtime traffic

Work highlights

Big companies, big new skills, impactful work

Strategic Technology Leadership

- Aligning tech execution with business vision and investor expectations
- Leading €MM+ product initiatives in high-stakes, regulated industries (e.g. healthcare)
- Defining and executing product & engineering strategy from MVP to scale

Systems Thinking & Process Design

- Designing scalable architectures, SDLCs, and workflows across departments
- Building engineering cultures grounded in autonomy, feedback, and accountability
- Implementing OKRs and performance systems that drive org-wide clarity and focus

High-Impact Team Building

- Hiring and mentoring cross-functional teams (backend, frontend, mobile, QA, PM, design)
- Coaching senior engineers, EMs and PMs into best version of themselves increasing effectiveness
- Restructuring underperforming departments into focused, outcome-driven units

Product Execution & Delivery

- Leading product discovery, roadmap definition, stakeholder alignment
- Driving delivery across squads, from early-stage MVPs to production-scale rollouts
- Coordinating complex feature delivery, including integrations with external systems (e.g. SNOMED CT, ERP)

Operational Efficiency & Cost Reduction

- Reducing engineering costs by up to 50% while improving system uptime and delivery speed
- Replacing inefficient outsourced vendors with lean, in-house teams
- Automating workflows in recruiting, QA, and product operations

Risk, Compliance & Quality

- Navigating ISO, GDPR, EU MDR, FDA Class IIb compliance for digital health solutions
- Leading high-integrity development in environments with audit and documentation needs
- Defining quality gates and testing protocols for mission-critical systems

AI, LLM & R&D

- Worked on AI/LLM products since it became feasible since 2024
- Leading technical discovery and proof-of-concept development for new initiatives
- Building internal labs and exploratory squads to test technical hypotheses

Most experience

Drawing from my entire career, these are the areas where I bring the most experience and impact.

Healthcare

Experience gained at Huma and Aesthetidocs, working on projects such as Hospital-at-Home, clinical trial platforms, aesthetic medicine CRMs, and patient management systems.

SaaS

The majority of my career has revolved around SaaS products - whether through full-time roles, consulting engagements, or personal projects.

B2B / B2C

My core expertise lies in B2B - roughly 80% of the companies I've worked with or consulted for operate in this space. The remaining 20% includes select B2C engagements, often tied to performance marketing or e-commerce optimization.

Social Networks

I developed a niche social platform for modeling agencies and photographers scouting for models - a fully functional social network. I understand how to design engagement loops and build sticky, purpose-driven social experiences.

Marketplace

I've worked full-time at Kayak, HomeToGo, Comvel, and Restplatzboerse/Ferien—travel and accommodation marketplaces. In addition, I've consulted for several other marketplaces, focusing on engagement and conversion optimization.

E-commerce

Most of the projects I've worked on were in e-commerce. These typically involved integrated payments - ranging from one-time purchases to subscriptions. Some platforms included vendor payment distribution and margin handling, giving me extensive, hands-on experience.

Ad-tech / Mar-tech

I previously ran a marketing agency focused on improving CRO, ROAS, and overall ROI for e-commerce clients. I also built advanced SaaS tools—including a system that automatically synced e-shop products, selected top-performing items for advertising, created and deployed Google Ads, and continuously optimized bids and availability based on clicks and conversions.

Sectors and Business Models

ISO 13485 (Medical Device Quality Management Systems)

Delivered software within ISO 13485-certified environments, ensuring engineering processes supported traceability, documentation, and audit readiness for medical device compliance.

EU MDR – Class IIb Certification

Led engineering teams building mobile health apps certified as Class IIb medical devices — the same regulatory class as surgical tools like laparoscopes — requiring rigorous risk management, validation, and documentation protocols.

FDA 21 CFR Part 820

Complied with U.S. FDA requirements for quality system regulations, supporting structured engineering practices for software submitted as part of digital health solutions.

GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

Managed development of systems handling sensitive personal and health data in full alignment with GDPR, ensuring secure-by-design engineering and audit trails.

UK MHRA, CE, UKCA Regulatory Standards

Built and maintained software deployed in regulated clinical settings across the UK and EU, supporting CE and UKCA certification efforts through compliant engineering documentation and SDLC practices.

ISO 27001 – Information Security Management Systems

Worked in environments with ISO 27001-certified infrastructure and practices, supporting data security, access control, and system integrity in health-tech systems.

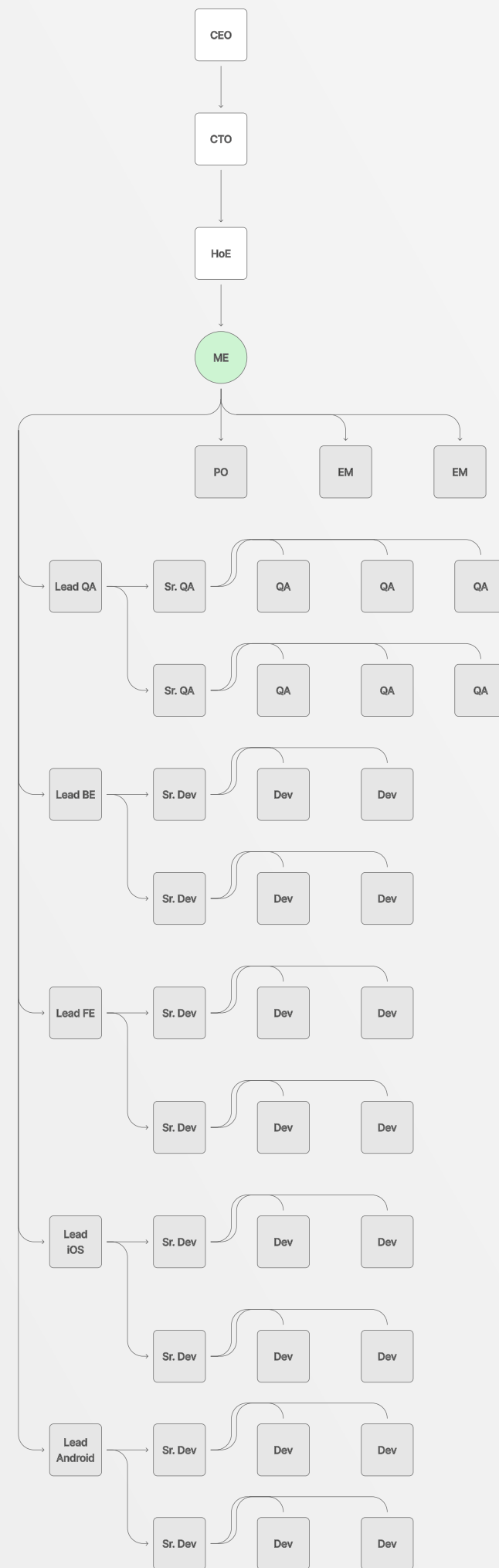
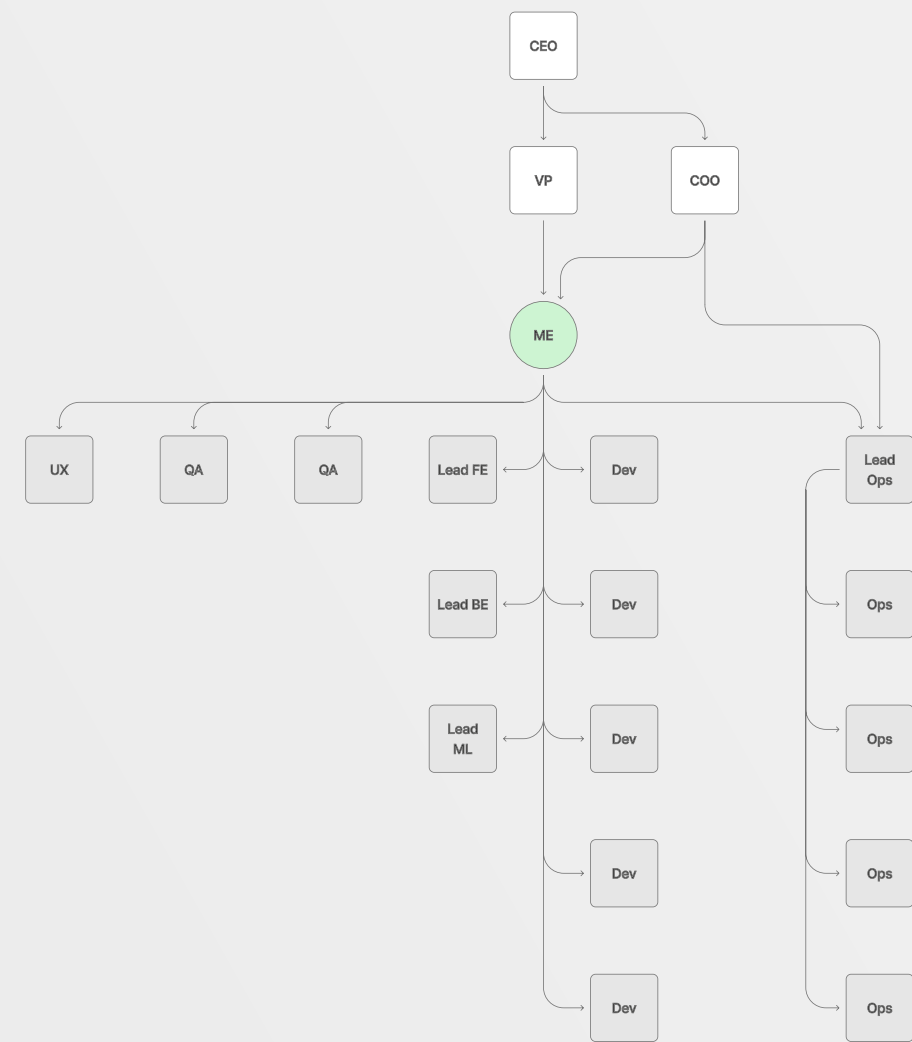
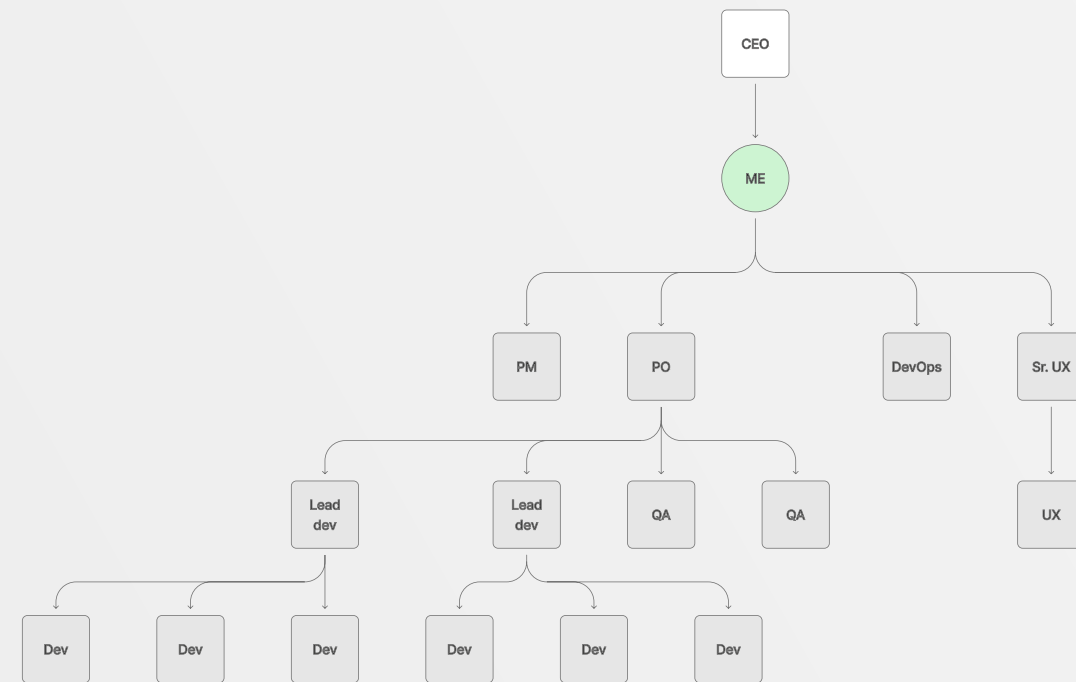
Regulatory Experience in Engineering Leadership

Aug, 2025 ▶ ...	Saaga Solve • CTO/CPO • 14-23 DR • Contract* • Remote, US
Jun, 2025 ▶ Jan, 2026 + ad-hoc	Rivile • Head of Engineering • 2-12 DR • Contract* • Hybrid, LT
Aug, 2023 ▶ Jun, 2025 + ad-hoc	Aesthetidocs • Head of Engineering • 15 DR • Contract* • Remote, UK
Mar, 2022 ▶ Apr, 2023	Huma • Engineering Manager / Product Manager • 40 DR • Contract* • Remote, UK
Jan, 2020 ▶ Mar, 2022	Toptal • Engineering Manager • 8 DR • Contract* • Remote, US
Jun, 2019 ▶ Jan, 2020	Velocity Mobile • R&D Manager • 15 DR • Full-time • On-site, Remote, LT, UK
Aug, 2018 ▶ Jun, 2019	ScreenCloud • Team Lead • 6 DR • Contract* • Remote, UK
Jan, 2018 ▶ Aug, 2018	SearchNode • Team Lead • 2 DR • Contract • On-site, LT
Sep, 2017 ▶ Jan, 2018	HomeToGo • Senior Front-end developer • 0 DR • Contract • On-site, LT
Jul, 2015 ▶ Aug, 2017	KAYAK • Senior Software Engineer • 0 DR • Full-time • On-site, Remote, LT, DE, US
May, 2014 ▶ Jul, 2015	Comvel GmbH • Developer • 0 DR • Contract • Remote, DE
Nov, 2013 ▶ Apr, 2014	Softify • Developer • 0 DR • Contract • On-site, LT
Jan, 2013 ▶ Nov, 2013	Present Connection • Front-end developer • 0 DR • Full-time • On-site, LT
May, 2012 ▶ Dec, 2012	Baltic Car Equipment • Developer • 0 DR • Full-time • On-site, LT
... 2006 ... ▶ Dec, 2012	Freelancer • Developer • 0 DR • Contract • On-site, LT

Work experience

20+ years from the very beginning

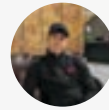
Note: Roles marked with * began as short-term freelance contracts and evolved into long-term engagements. They are listed here as core work experience.



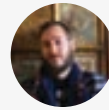
A bit more interesting

Org charts

Experience managing in various organizational structures



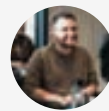
Vygandas was employee #1 of our Lithuania branch, and his hard work was crucial in getting the new office and team up and running.



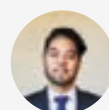
Vygandas is great to work with and brings a depth and breadth of experience. He's thoughtful and detail-oriented and is able to switch quickly from big-picture planning to granular project management.



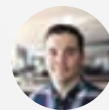
Great professional and team leader.
Very calm and friendly professional. Feels like everything will be ok, all the time.
This helps maintain the team morale in the right place.
When calling him to a Design Brainstorming or Process, he is the one that provides the boldest ideas.
I really hope we get to work together again in the future.



Vygandas is a great leader & manager with deep knowledge & experience in many different areas – marketing, programming, management, sales, etc. I have worked closely with him for 6 months on a day-to-day basis and have only the best things to say. He made sure that our team runs proficiently and performs consistent results. Vygandas is an ambitious, hard-working and results-oriented leader. The thing I loved the most about working with him is that he has an easy-going attitude and doesn't resist going the extra mile when sharing his professional knowledge with co-workers.



I worked closely with Vygandas on a day-to-day basis as the product manager of the team he managed. We frequently discussed ways to optimize the team and to prioritize features. It was truly a pleasure working alongside Vygandas as he will go above and beyond to support his team. He excels when it comes to capacity planning and providing high-level estimates on LOE for the initiatives on the roadmap. His management style is pretty straightforward – ensure that everyone is equipped to succeed. This includes removing blockers, researching the unknowns, and getting the right people in the room. This mentality is the reason for the success of the team, why his direct reports thrived and how the Product team was able to manage stakeholders and expectations. I would highly recommend Vygandas for a management position at any company that requires building strong teams and effective, strategic planning.



Vygandas and I worked together on growth initiatives, primarily on roadmapping and prioritization. Vygandas does a great job in managing his engineering team and collaborating across the engineering organization to make sure that his team works on high impact projects. While I only worked with Vygandas for a few months, I enjoyed his leadership style and hands-on approach to scoping.

Feedback

What people say about me. There are many more, but it all doesn't fit in here...

(Text kept original)

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/vygandas>

<https://www.upwork.com/freelancers/vygandas>



Tech experience

I've been coding since I was 13. Here are some of the core technologies I enjoy and actively keep working hands-on to keep my skills sharp. Star is for my first choice.

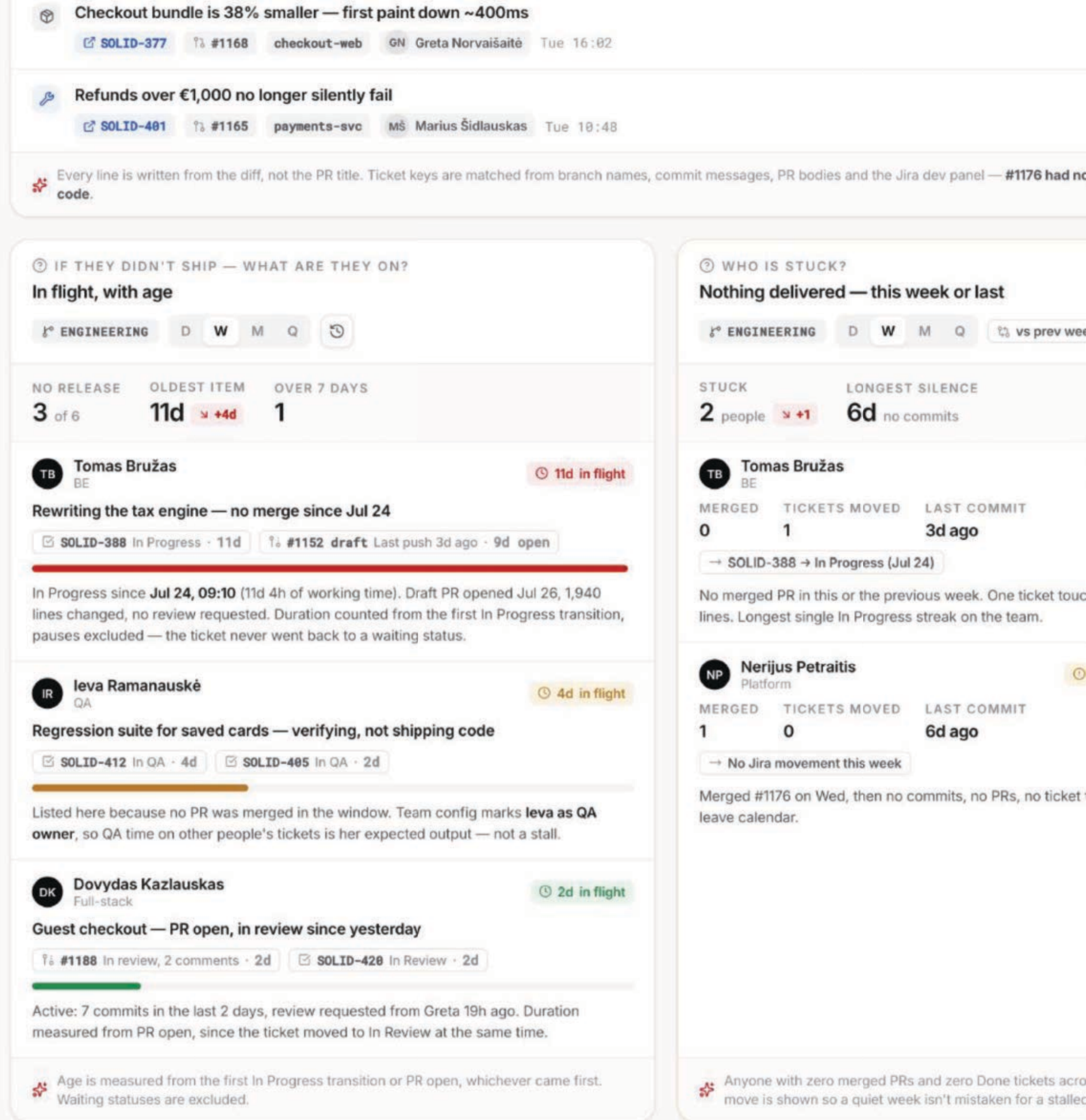


AI Manager

My pet-project. 😊

Know what every team you run actually did this week.

You are accountable for more teams than you can sit in on. Solidmatics reads the work they already produce (the code, the tickets, the messages, the meetings) and tells you in plain English what actually moved. The same read you would do yourself, if you had the hours.





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2011 2013 **Kaunas University of Technology** • Master • Software Engineering

2007 2011 **Kaunas University of Technology** • Bachelor • Information Systems

2004 2006 **Vilnius University Young Programmers' School** • Modules in Programming basics and mathematics

Education

Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees, plus hundreds of additional courses completed on platforms like Udemy and LinkedIn Learning.



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