

MARK RIPLEY

Fractional CTO (Chief Technology Officer) / Technical Advisor

Games · XR · AI · Early-Stage & Scale-Up

UK · Remote / Hybrid

Executive Summary

Fractional CTO (Chief Technology Officer) and technical founder with extensive experience supporting startups, studios, and investor-backed teams building complex game, XR, and AI-driven products. Trusted by founders, CEOs, and boards to stabilise delivery, define technical strategy, and reduce execution risk during high-uncertainty phases.

Experienced operating at executive and board level while remaining hands-on where needed, specialising in immersive platforms, real-time engines, and multidisciplinary teams spanning engineering, product, and creative disciplines.

What I'm Typically Brought In To Do

- Act as **Fractional CTO / Interim CTO** for early-stage and scaling teams
- Define or reset **technical strategy, architecture, and delivery plans**
- Audit **codebases, pipelines, and team structures** to identify risk
- Lead **engineering leadership**, hiring, mentoring, and team scaling
- Translate creative or product vision into executable technical roadmaps
- Support **funding rounds, pitches, and technical due diligence**

Leadership & Delivery

- CTO-level ownership of technology, people, and delivery outcomes
- Close collaboration with founders, CEOs, investors, and boards
- Roadmapping, prioritisation, and budgeting under startup constraints
- Aligning business goals with pragmatic technical decisions
- Clear stakeholder communication across technical and non-technical teams

Experience

Mark Ripley Ltd

Fractional CTO / Technical Consultant · Jan 2022 – Present · Remote

Fractional CTO supporting early-stage startups and creative studios building XR, game, and AI-driven products. Typically engaged to bring clarity, momentum, and delivery confidence during critical phases.

- Act as CTO or senior technical lead for investor-backed startups and established studios

- Define **technical strategy and software architecture** aligned to business goals
- Audit engineering teams, codebases, and CI/CD pipelines to identify delivery risk
- Hire, mentor, and support senior engineers and technical leads
- Support founders during **funding, pitches, and technical due diligence**

Selected engagements

Nexus Studios · Jul 2025 – Dec 2025

- Supported delivery of two high-profile immersive applications commissioned by Meta
- Led **AI integration** using computer vision and machine-learning-driven interaction systems
- Worked closely with creative, production, and engineering teams under tight constraints

Anagram

Fractional CTO · Jan 2023 – Oct 2024

- Set technical direction for award-winning XR titles and internal platforms
- Led engineering teams across Unity, Quest3, Pico, HTC, and bespoke tooling
- Led engineering of Inside Mental Health product, aimed at healthcare professionals
- Supported hiring, mentoring, and long-term technical planning
- Led delivery risk management on a ever-changing creative brief

Fish Bladder

Fractional CTO · Jul 2022 – Dec 2024

- Defined technical strategy for immersive and AI-assisted products
- Delivered production-ready Unity plugins for mobile platforms
- Built and refined **computer-vision-driven interaction systems**
- Assisted with funding preparation and technical positioning

MetaverseME

Chief Technology Officer (CTO) · Jan 2022 – Jul 2022

- Owned technical strategy and delivery for an early-stage crypto, digital-self platform
- Technical DD on new technologies, including AR geolocation, emotional analysis, blockchain/NFT services, a deterministic multiplayer engine and facial feature capture.
- Defined architecture, hired engineers, and led internal and external development teams
- Established development pipelines, tooling, and delivery processes

Maze Theory

Chief Technology Officer (CTO) · Oct 2020 – Dec 2021

- Led engineering and technical strategy for a narrative-driven games studio, >100 staff
- Managed internal teams and external partners across multiple platforms

- Oversaw delivery, platform submissions, and live operations

Earlier Career & Executive Leadership

Friendly Giants

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) · Feb 1999 – Nov 2001

Chief Executive of a fast-growing digital studio delivering high-visibility interactive products for major global brands.

- Worked directly with **CEOs, senior leadership teams, and boards** of multinational organisations
- Led delivery for globally recognised media, entertainment, and technology companies
- Scaled teams, revenue, and operations while maintaining delivery quality
- Secured external investment and strategic partnerships

Additional Leadership Roles

- **CEO**, Cheeky Group
- **CTO**, HeadcastLab
- **Co-Founder**, Branching Narrative

Technical Skills

- **Leadership & Strategy:** Technical strategy, software architecture, engineering leadership, team scaling, hiring and mentoring, delivery leadership
- **AI:** Via Local LLMs, nVidia Inception Programme, AWS, OpenAI API, Niantic, Sam2/3, YOLO, GoogleCloud Vision; optimised Tensorflow pose recognition
- **Web:** JavaScript, React, Node.js, WebGL, webAR, Canvas, Pixi
- **Cloud:** AWS, Google Cloud, Playfab(Azure), Docker, PHP, MySQL, LAMP, mongoDB
- **Game Engines:** Unity, Unreal, Godot
- **Languages:** C#, C++, C, Swift, Objective-C, Kotlin, Java - J2SE, J2ME, Applet, Servlet
- **Native:** iOS, Android, Unity Native Plugins - PC, Mac, iOS, Android, PS4, PS5, XB, Android
- **VR, MR & AR** - since 2016 – PSVR2, Apple Vision Pro, Meta Quest, HTC, Pico, Oculus
- **Source Control:** Git LFS, Perforce, Mercurial, Subversion – admin, setup, maintenance, PRs
- **CI:** Jenkins, Team City, various build servers, Unity Cloud
- **Publishing:** Sony, Microsoft, Nintendo console platforms, Apple and Google mobile platforms, Steam and Epic PC platforms, Meta/AppLab

Keywords: Chief Technology Officer, Fractional CTO, Interim CTO, Technical Strategy, Engineering Leadership, XR, VR, AI, Unity, Unreal Engine, Godot, Computer Vision, Machine Learning, AWS