

Kyle Devereaux Nel



Technical Support Lead · Support Engineering · Web, Hosting & SaaS

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Cape Town, South Africa · Dual South African and British citizen; right to work in South Africa and the UK. Timezone UTC+2. Open to remote or WFH-led hybrid.

PROFILE

I'm a down-to-earth support lead and engineer who loves the web. I've worked on both sides of the ticket: five years as a senior escalation engineer for WordPress.com's enterprise and VIP customers, and years building the sites and tools customers rely on. I'm good with people, and I look past the immediate fix to the bigger picture: what keeps going wrong, what should be self-service, and which unknowns are going to catch the team out later. I do my best work leading a team and helping everyone in it do their best.

Over 10+ years I've managed a customer support team, run engineering and support at a UK agency, and built contact-centre and self-service tools. I'm comfortable explaining technical problems to customers, engineers and management alike.

SKILLS

Support & leadership: Escalation management, Enterprise/VIP support, Team management and mentoring, Onboarding and training, CSAT and resolution-time improvement, Customer webinars, Self-serve courses and documentation, Stakeholder management

Process & tooling: Support workflows and automation, Self-service flows, CRM and chat automation (Zoho CRM / Flow / SalesIQ, Zapier), Linear, Jira, GitHub Projects, Asana

Technical depth: WordPress, WooCommerce, PHP, JavaScript/TypeScript, React, Node.js, MySQL/MariaDB, PostgreSQL, REST APIs, Linux servers, NGINX, Caddy, Docker, GitHub Actions, New Relic, Grafana

AI: AI-assisted support and development workflows, Human-in-the-loop AI tooling, LLM integration, AI security auditing

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Web Developer — iGrow Group of Companies

Cape Town, South Africa · Mar 2026 – Oct 2026

Senior developer across iGrow's four brands (Investments, Rentals, Real Estate International and Execu Move). Much of my work was building tools for the people who deal with customers: the contact centre, rental agents and management. I also mentored the other three developers.

- Built a viewing-booking tool for the contact centre, tied into Zoho CRM for user accounts, leads and bookings. It's used by 25+ contact-centre staff, 10 rental agents and management (with role-based access) for 30+ bookings a day across 200 properties. Prospective tenants could also book viewings themselves, which took people out of a bottleneck to improve booking rates.
- Built automations in Zoho Flow, SalesIQ and Zapier to route incoming leads into the CRM and power chat conversations, and wrote direct API integrations where speed, security or data quality mattered.
- Scoped an agent roster generator to replace manual scheduling: agents grouped by area, a rules engine, and real Google Maps travel times, plus reporting and accountability for management.
- Worked closely with management and non-technical teams to work out what they actually needed, explain what was possible, and turn it into working tools.
- Rebuilt rentals.igrow.co.za with proper caching and a PropData integration keeping 200+ listings in sync. GTmetrix grades went from E/F to A/B, and server load fell as traffic grew.
- Set up Linear and the engineering workflow from scratch, then helped move the team to Jira.

Founder & Full-Stack Developer — devNel

Remote · 2018 – present · Part-time alongside employment; full-time Apr 2025 – Mar 2026

My own consultancy, building WordPress/WooCommerce and modern web projects, plus DevOps and AI work, mostly for non-technical clients.

- Look after clients end to end: scoping, building, hosting, handover and ongoing support, explained in plain language.
- Rebuilt Quiver Café's sites (Astro, Sanity, Cloudflare Workers) so a non-technical owner can run them without a developer, including Yoco payments and Uber Direct delivery they can switch on themselves with one toggle in Sanity.
- Audit AI-focused projects for security and put guard rails around how teams use AI tools.

Software Engineer (Full Stack) — Automattic (WooCommerce.com)

Remote · Sep 2023 – Apr 2025

Moved from support into product engineering on WooCommerce.com, working on discovery, performance, SEO and AI.

- Co-led the React rebuild of the WooCommerce.com Marketplace, still the live marketplace today.
- Built the AI proxy integration used across WooCommerce.com, with prompt-level control, usage tracking and cost reporting.
- Removed 40%+ of plugin-based redirects by writing a CLI tool that moved them to NGINX.

Senior Technical Support Engineer / Project Lead — Automattic (WordPress.com)

Remote · 2018 – 2023

Senior escalation point for WordPress.com's enterprise and VIP customers, and lead on cross-team projects to cut support load through self-service.

- Handled the hardest escalations: custom code, server access and platform-specific problems for VIP clients.
- Named a "Distinguished HE" for customer experience: top 5 of 300+ Happiness Engineers (Automattic's customer support team) in a quarter.
- Led the build of automated plan-downgrade flows, so customers could do it themselves instead of waiting on support.
- Mentored new hires through the buddy programme; helped onboard and keep 4+ colleagues.
- Ran live customer webinars and kept self-serve courses up to date, which reduced support volume.

Technical Director — Illustrate Digital

Cardiff, UK · Feb 2014 – Dec 2017

- Ran engineering, support and project delivery for a WordPress agency. Hired and led a distributed team and owned client relationships.
- Was the escalation point for client issues, and stayed hands-on with both support and development.
- Moved the team to remote-first working with Slack and Asana.

Customer Support Manager — Freestart PLC

Wigan, UK · Apr 2013 – Feb 2014

- Managed a team of 3 customer support staff serving web-hosting clients, reporting to senior leadership.
- Introduced training that improved resolution times and CSAT, and acted as the link between the technical team and leadership on service quality.

LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY

Trustee & Volunteer Team Lead — Freedom Church (non-profit)

Cape Town, South Africa · Dec 2019 – present

Trustee on the board of the non-profit arm. Project-managed the AV and network setup for a new building, from choosing vendors to getting it all working. I lead and roster volunteer teams, drawing on 20+ years of running live-production crews.

EDUCATION

BSc Medical Biology — University of Central Lancashire

2006 – 2008 · First-Class Dissertation