



# Hendrik Kleinwächter

## AI Advisor & Engineer, Hamburg

I find where AI pays off in your company, and build it with your team.

### >\_Executive summary

AI advisor and engineer based in Hamburg. I find where AI pays off in your company, and build it with your team — production quality, with the technology that fits the business. 20 years in software, building with LLMs since 2023, 50+ AI applications shipped to production. As CTO at AHEAD Automotive I built a RAG diagnostic platform used by more than 50,000 mechanics, and I've led 15+ person cross-functional teams. I've founded three startups; one was acquired by trivago. My engagements are time-boxed — Discovery, POC, Enablement — and end with a handover: when I leave, the capability stays.

### >\_Experience

{ 2026-Today }

#### Independent AI Consulting

AI Advisor & Engineer

I find where AI pays off in your company, and build it with your team — time-boxed Discovery → POC → Enablement engagements, from Hamburg and remotely across Europe.

- \_ Discovery: ranking the AI use cases worth building — a written systems assessment, a prioritized shortlist, and one POC candidate scoped to be buildable.
- \_ POC: building the first proof of concept myself — production quality, with the technology that fits the business — measured against a success metric defined up front.
- \_ Enablement: working sessions with the C-level and hands-on training for developers; every engagement ends with a handover.

{ 2024-2026 }

#### AHEAD Automotive GmbH

CTO

CTO at AHEAD Automotive, a collaborative venture by ZF, Hella Gutmann, Clarios, and Niterra, building SaaS solutions for the automotive aftermarket.

- \_ Launched two major products on time: 1) A RAG-powered application helping thousands of mechanics diagnose and fix cars faster. 2) An industry-leading loyalty program adopted by multiple partner companies.
- \_ Established AI-first engineering principles and enabled the company to adopt a stronger engineering-driven mindset.
- \_ Implemented cost-efficiency measures through pragmatic, user-focused development.
- \_ Built and mentored a 15+ person engineering and product team; managed C-level stakeholder alignment across shareholder companies.

{ 2020-2023 }

#### dyve GmbH

(exit) CTO/Software engineer

CTO and consultant at dyve GmbH, a boutique consultancy and later fully employee-owned company.

- \_ Led the successful transformation of dyve into a fully employee-owned structure, ensuring long-term sustainability and employee engagement.
- \_ Delivered full-stack engineering and technical due diligence projects for clients such as LichtBlick, Toni Kroos, ZF, and Solana.
- \_ Introduced growth-focused engineering practices that improved client acquisition and retention.
- \_ Mentored and scaled a 15+ person engineering team, instilling high-quality delivery standards and agile methodologies.
- \_ Combined hands-on coding with strategic leadership, bridging business goals and pragmatic technology execution.

{ 2022-2023 }

#### Caps&Collars GmbH

Part-time CTO

- \_ Acted as a founding partner, supporting the studio on core engineering topics and product architecture.
- \_ Provided strategic consulting to portfolio ventures in AI and Health Tech, guiding them through digitization and scalable product development.
- \_ Helped shape the company's AI-first approach to building applications, aligning engineering with business growth goals.
- \_ Supported early-stage ventures in adopting robust engineering principles and delivering production-ready solutions.

{ 2019-Today }

#### the\_bread\_code

Founder

- Founder of the\_bread\_code, the world's most-followed sourdough-focused YouTube channel and author of The Sourdough Framework.
- Built a global community with 300k+ YouTube subscribers and 100k+ monthly book downloads through open-source, educational content.
- Published The Sourdough Framework, a 250-page, science-driven guide to sourdough baking, establishing credibility as both engineer and educator.
- Combined engineering mindset with baking expertise, designing scalable content and distribution systems for global reach.
- Recognized globally for making sourdough approachable while maintaining scientific and technical rigor.

{ 2017–2020 }

## trivago

Software engineer / Intrapreneur

Joined trivago after the acquisition of Tripl, working across multiple teams depending on where the business value was highest.

- Contributed to the data engineering team, the user profiling team, and the SEO team, driving initiatives that improved product performance and business outcomes.
- Built a pre-rendering SEO solution within the SEO team that significantly boosted search engine visibility and generated millions of euros in additional revenue.
- Part of a 300+ engineering organization, collaborating with some of the best engineers worldwide - an experience that greatly strengthened my engineering skills and broadened my technical expertise.
- Worked as an intrapreneur, focusing on pragmatic, value-driven engineering initiatives aligned with company strategy.

{ 2015–2017 }

## tripl GmbH

(exit to trivago) Founder / CTO

Founder of tripl, a travel-tech startup focused on personalized recommendations.

- Built and scaled a global travel recommendation engine using statistical twin modeling to deliver highly personalized destination suggestions.
- Led full-stack development and architecture, creating multiple core components of the system.
- Secured acquisition by trivago in 2017, integrating tripl's technology and expertise into their product ecosystem.
- Gained deep experience in startup building, from product ideation to exit, combining technical execution with business growth strategy.

{ 2014–2015 }

## Zeit.io (renamed to dyve GmbH)

Founder

Co-founded Zeit.io, later rebranded to dyve, a boutique consultancy specializing in building MVPs for corporations.

- Focused on creating user-centric, user-first applications that reduced long-term development costs by validating ideas early.
- Helped enterprises rapidly test and scale digital business models through lean prototyping.
- Delivered multiple MVPs as a consultant and full-stack engineer, ensuring pragmatic, user-focused execution.
- Established the company's reputation for speed, quality, and business impact in developing early-stage digital products.

{ 2012–2014 }

## OrdiFy GmbH

(exit) Founder/CTO

Co-founded OrdiFy, a mobile ordering solution for the restaurant industry.

- Developed an app that allowed guests to order directly from their phones, eliminating the need for waiters and improving service efficiency.
- Built an intelligent recommendations feature that increased average order size and boosted client revenue.
- Secured high-profile clients including Berlin's Olympia Stadium.
- Learned valuable lessons on the importance of marketing and sales, realizing that building great technology alone is not enough, and that successful ventures require equal focus on go-to-market and customer adoption.

{ 2009–2012 }

## byMii GmbH

Founder/CTO

Co-founded byMii, a social commerce solution integrating e-commerce technologies into a unified Facebook storefront.

- Designed and built the platform, enabling brands to sell directly through Facebook.
- Secured high-profile clients, including FC Bayern Munich.
- Gained valuable experience and lessons on company structures, co-founder dynamics, and startup growth, which informed future ventures.

{ 2006–2009 }

## DuoBlogger Consulting

Founder

Founded DuoBlogger, a consulting firm supporting online communities in optimizing their monetization strategies.

- Helped forums and communities increase revenue by integrating and optimizing online advertising services.
- Built and grew D3scene, one of the largest gaming-exploit communities of its time.
- Learned early lessons in scaling digital communities, balancing growth with sustainability, and managing diverse online ecosystems.

## >\_Education

{ 2014–2015 }

### Georg August Universität - Göttingen

M.Sc. Business Informatics (incomplete)

Co-founded Zeit.io (later dyve) during studies and chose to focus on growing the company.

{ 2009–2012 }

### PFH - Göttingen

B.Sc. General Management & Entrepreneurship

Awarded a notable scholarship with a focus on entrepreneurship. Combined business studies with several years of prior coding experience, continuing to refine technical skills throughout studies.

## >\_Hard Skills & Engineering Expertise

### AI & Data

- Production RAG Systems (50K+ users, 2M+ queries)
- LLM Integration (GPT-4, Claude, Llama)
- Vector Databases (Weaviate, pgvector)
- ML Pipelines & Model Evaluation
- Data Engineering & Real-time Analytics

### Software Engineering

- AI-Assisted Development & Prompt Engineering
- Full-Stack Development (Ruby on Rails, Ruby, JavaScript, Python, PHP)
- API Design & Integrations
- Cloud Platforms (AWS, GCP)
- DevOps & CI/CD Pipelines
- Docker
- System Architecture & Scalability

### Product & Leadership

- CTO Leadership & Stakeholder Management
- Product Management & Growth Engineering
- AI-First Engineering Principles & Team Building
- Agile Methodologies & Rapid Prototyping
- Scaling Teams & Engineering Culture

## >\_Hobbies

Traveling & foreign cultures

Bread making

Brewing beer

Beekeeping

## >\_Featured Projects

AHEAD — ahead.group

Bread — the-bread-code.io

Book — the-sourdough-framework.com

AI — loafy.ai

YouTube — @the\_bread\_code

OSS — github.com/hendricius

## >\_References

References to previous employers can be provided on request.

## >\_Contact

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## >\_Links

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GitHub — [@hendricius](https://github.com/hendricius)