ELI J. RALSTON, MBA

Chief Technology Officer | Chief Information Officer | VP of Technology

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EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Technology executive with 35+ years of experience who consistently identifies the root problems others missed and delivers outcomes that prior efforts could not achieve. Across a career that began in hands-on engineering and grew into enterprise leadership, the pattern has been consistent: diagnose what is actually broken, architect the right solution, and stabilize, modernize, or transform the organization around it.

Track record includes resolving multi-year compliance failures, stabilizing mission-critical systems, and rebuilding technology organizations that had stalled under prior leadership. Trusted by CEOs and executive partners to take ownership of the technology problems that matter most and see them through to resolution. Effective across the full spectrum of organizational need: building from the ground up, modernizing legacy-burdened environments, and stabilizing what has been inherited.

Deep technical roots in C#/.NET and SQL Server engineering, enterprise architecture, cloud platforms (Azure, AWS), cybersecurity, and data strategy, with the executive scope to translate that foundation into organizational outcomes at scale.

CORE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

- Enterprise Technology Strategy & Governance ▪ M&A Technology Due Diligence & Integration
- Cloud & Infrastructure Modernization (Azure, AWS) ▪ Global IT Operations & Service Delivery
- Cybersecurity, Compliance & Risk (SOC2, PCI DSS) ▪ Financial Management & CAPEX/OPEX Optimization
- Platform Modernization & Legacy Transformation ▪ Executive & Board-Level Partnership
- Data Architecture, Governance & Analytics Enablement ▪ Team Building, Mentorship & Organizational Development

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Head of Information Technology

2021 – 2025

Motorcycle Industry Council (MIC) • Irvine, CA

Enterprise-wide technology leadership across four business units | ~80 employees | ~$3M IT budget | Direct team of 7

Inherited a technology organization carrying two unresolved multi-year compliance failures, a fragmented and insecure infrastructure, and an operational model misaligned with a distributed workforce. Rebuilt the entire technology foundation across compliance, identity, cloud, security, and operations while delivering $300K+ in annual cost savings and avoiding $250K+ in capital expenditure.

Compliance & Security Transformation

- Achieved SOC2 Type 1 certification and full PCI DSS compliance. Both had been attempted and failed for multiple years prior to arrival. SOC2 was required by MIC's largest member company following an external breach; PCI compliance had been blocked by an architecturally unworkable environment. Both certifications were driven without direct board access or dedicated executive sponsorship, and with cross-functional dependencies in Accounting, HR, and Legal that required sustained coordination to move forward on schedule.
- Solved the PCI compliance impasse by designing a purpose-built, fully isolated AWS payment subsystem rather than attempting to bring a sprawling five-server, multi-website environment into scope. That architectural shift was the insight prior efforts had missed. Reworked credit card processing APIs across the entire application ecosystem and integrated directly with NetSuite.
- The PCI remediation process uncovered systemic accounting and transaction processing errors across the business. Left unaddressed, those errors would have required hiring multiple additional Accounting staff. Led 18 months of financial workflow remediation at no additional headcount.
- Rebuilt identity and endpoint security architecture for a distributed workforce: deprecated on-premises Active Directory, migrated to Azure Entra ID, deployed endpoint management and traffic monitoring across all user devices, automated Linux patching across 50 monitored websites, and rolled out MFA org-wide with end-user training.
- Achieved approximately 90% reduction in website downtime across 50 properties following infrastructure modernization and automated patch management.

Cost Savings & Financial Impact

- Delivered $307K+ in documented annual cost savings and avoidance: nonprofit Azure tenant migration ($25K/yr), AWS purchasing plan ($36K/yr), AWS artifact cleanup ($6K/yr), and WordPress hosting migration reducing per-server cost by 80%.

- Migrated email generation to AWS, eliminating a service that cost 6x more and had been blocking delivery. The move avoided the need to hire temporary workers estimated at $240K/yr to manage the training support backlog caused by undelivered communications.
- Avoided $250K+ in projected five-year CAPEX by migrating from a legacy on-premises 3CX phone system to Microsoft Teams Phones. The 3CX system had suffered an internal breach, could not be migrated to cloud due to poor original implementation, and caused complete communication outages during any power or internet disruption.
- Unified a fragmented communication environment (Teams, Google Chat, Google Meet, Slack, SMS) into a single Microsoft Teams platform, extending soft-phone access to every employee for the first time.

Modernization & Operational Excellence

- Defined and executed a multi-year technology modernization roadmap across cloud, security, data, identity, infrastructure, and enterprise applications, partnering directly with the CEO, COO, and executive leadership on investment priorities and risk posture.
- Held Tableau renewal flat against a vendor opening offer 3x the prior contract value; doubled LastPass license coverage across the organization while reducing per-user cost. Both negotiations were completed during a period of significant inflationary pressure.
- Consolidated and rationalized vendor relationships, software licenses, and infrastructure to reduce technical debt and improve operational resilience across multi-site environments.
- Rebuilt the IT organization with defined roles, operating rhythms, career pathways, and leadership development, elevating team performance and delivery consistency across engineering, infrastructure, and operations.

Head of Technology (INTRER, 2007–2015) / Senior Director, Application Services (Altus Group, 2015–2021)

2007 – 2021

Integrated Real Estate Resources (INTRER) → Altus Group / ARGUS Software • Irvine, CA

INTRER (2007–2015): Full technology ownership including all application development, networking, security, and infrastructure | Acquired by Altus Group / ARGUS Software (Dec 2015) | Post-acquisition: $10M annual departmental revenue target with full delivery accountability for technical consulting scope, estimation integrity, and team performance | Global team: 10 direct technical consultants + oversight of 12 business consultants and 5 project managers | Teams across Irvine CA, Houston TX, Cherry Hill NJ, and London UK | 30–60 enterprise clients globally | Full hiring and compensation authority

Joined as the first, and for years the primary, technology hire at INTRER, a commercial real estate technology consulting firm founded by Mike Goode. Owned all of technology during the INTRER years: application development, data engineering, networking, security, and infrastructure. Helped sustain and grow the business through the 2007–2009 economic downturn, delivering client work of sufficient quality and differentiation that the firm grew steadily through the recovery. Following INTRER's acquisition by Altus Group / ARGUS Software in December 2015, continued as Senior Director leading global engineering and consulting teams, with many of the same clients, many of the same project patterns, and expanded organizational scope. Served throughout as the primary technical problem-solver and architectural authority for the largest and most complex engagements in the portfolio.

Signature Achievement: Enterprise Data Warehouse Platform

- Architected an analytics-ready data warehouse that solved one of the most persistent challenges in ARGUS-based environments: the underlying application database was highly complex, making downstream integrations and reporting brittle and expensive to maintain. The data warehouse standardized and abstracted the data into a stable, easily consumable layer, eliminating the need to rework integrations each time the core application was updated. For the Altus internal analyst team, this eliminated 3,000 labor hours per quarter of manual data export and standardization. At additional client sites, reporting cycles were reduced from a month to a week. The IP was retained by the firm and the platform was licensed to clients across the U.S., Germany, and Australia.

Technical Leadership & Client Delivery

- Served as the technical closer and architectural authority on enterprise client engagements, brought in at the point where deeper technical complexity required resolution, then led delivery while other team members handled standard workstreams.
- Led global teams delivering large-scale architecture, modernization, data engineering, and integration initiatives for Fortune-level commercial real estate clients across North America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific.
- Directed platform evolution across Azure, Citrix, and multi-application ecosystems supporting high-availability workloads for the industry's largest portfolio owners and operators.
- Designed and delivered the majority of client engagement work through data integration and ETL architecture spanning three distinct patterns of increasing complexity: (1) Automated export-to-import pipelines using SQL queries or structured exports to build and deliver standardized import files to client systems, with or without full automation. (2) Enterprise onboarding and provisioning integrations in which ServiceNow-triggered workflows, via file drop or API endpoint, drove automated user provisioning and permissions processes across at least three separate client environments. (3) Direct API-level property management integrations pulling data from MRI, Yardi, and Sage either via SQL or vendor data libraries, then populating ARGUS Enterprise directly through its underlying API without UI interaction, enabling a significantly deeper level of integration than standard tooling could achieve.

- Served as technical authority for C#/.NET and SQL Server engineering, including code reviews, architectural proofs of concept, and performance engineering across distributed global teams.
- Architected a capstone multi-system integration platform spanning three ARGUS products, built on a SQL- and Windows Service-based workflow engine that processed ETL steps at the individual property level. This was a deliberate architectural decision to prevent cascading failures. In ARGUS environments, a single data error within a bundled package would block importation of all data in that package across all properties. By processing at the property level, errors were isolated: one property's data issue could not halt processing for the entire portfolio. This design pattern eliminated a class of systemic failure that had been accepted as a limitation of the platform.
- Led technology due diligence and integration planning during a major acquisition, serving as the primary technology interface for system assessment, licensing, source code review, and VM consolidation.
- Built a culture of collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement across distributed teams in the U.S., U.K., and India, with full responsibility for hiring decisions, compensation, and performance management.

EARLY CAREER: ENGINEERING FOUNDATION (1988–2007)

Built a 20-year engineering foundation across financial services, aerospace, software product development, and enterprise technology, defined by a consistent pattern of solving problems others declared unsolvable and delivering outcomes faster and more accurately than teams many times larger.

- Microsoft / Great Plains / Solomon Software (1999–2004): Led modernization of the platform's most defect-laden module, which every prior developer had failed to stabilize. Resolved 90 previously unreproducible bugs in three months, rebuilt the core processing engine to run 65x faster with 100% data accuracy, and served as primary resource on the Change Control Board. Performed extensive SQL performance optimization across client environments.
- Dravo Lime (1997–1999): Sole developer for a 750-person organization. Built a lab management system so precisely fit to business operations that an incoming SAP implementation team recommended retaining it over the SAP module. Two years after delivery, the system still ran without developer intervention.
- Mellon Bank / Pittsburgh (1995–1997): Reconstructed a mission-critical $300K/yr contract application from report images and user memory after the original system failed with no recoverable backup, working with the bank's senior mathematician and library research to reverse-engineer financial algorithms. Resolved calculation errors that had persisted in the original system for years.
- General Dynamics (early career): Built a parts test results database that produced the fastest audit in company history at 8 minutes, following an Atlas Centaur rocket engine failure.
- Citizens National Mortgage (1992–1994): Completed 67% of a six-person-month project in a single month. Wrote a secondary market application enabling automated loan funding and built the organization's first reusable code modules.

EDUCATION

MBA, Business Administration *2003 – 2006*

UC Irvine, Paul Merage School of Business

BS, Computer and Information Sciences *1988 – 1992*

Coleman University | First in 30-year institutional history to answer 5 advanced PL/1 programming questions; personally recognized by founder Dr. Coleman Furr

TECHNICAL FOUNDATION

C#/.NET | SQL Server (performance tuning, schema design, indexing) | Azure & AWS cloud architecture | Azure Entra ID / Active Directory | Endpoint Management | Power BI | API-driven integration | PCI-compliant architecture | SOC2 governance | IAM & Zero Trust | SIEM | DevOps / CI-CD | ERP/CRM/HRIS (NetSuite, Microsoft) | ITSM | IaC | SD-WAN | Microsoft 365 & Teams