Abdullah Salem Alzahrani

Chief Technology Officer (CTO) | Software Engineering & Architecture | Startup & Venture Building

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia · +966 54 471 8781 · abdullah@metaphor.sa · linkedin.com/in/imabdulsal · imabdulsal.dev

SUMMARY

Technology leader with 20+ years of building software, from government and enterprise systems to regulated e-invoicing infrastructure. I grew from software developer to development team leader at Umm Al-Qura University, then founded INVORA, an AI-powered e-invoicing infrastructure startup, and served as CTO of a venture builder. Leadership never replaced hands-on work: I am still active in architecture, development and deployment.

I turn early-stage ideas into working systems, and I build the teams, reusable technical infrastructure and engineering practices that let others deliver at speed. That approach led me to found Metaphor, a Saudi venture-building system where I work alongside founders in industries such as FinTech, RegTech and HealthTech.

CORE SKILLS

- **Technology leadership:** CTO-level technology strategy, engineering team building, SDLC and delivery governance, vendor and stakeholder management, board and founder advisory.
- **Architecture and engineering:** cloud-native platforms on Azure (AKS, Terraform, GitOps), enterprise integration, identity and single sign-on, developer tooling and CI/CD, hands-on .NET, Angular, React and Flutter.
- **Product, FinTech and ventures:** regulated e-invoicing and compliance, MVP definition, startup and venture building, technology commercialization.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

INVORA — Founder; Chief Technology Officer
2023 – present

AI-powered e-invoicing infrastructure · Founder since 2023, CTO since 2026

- Founded INVORA on the insight that startups spend scarce funding rebuilding necessary, non-differentiating infrastructure such as regulated e-invoicing.
- Built the first product, technical foundation and product direction in about six months, then hired and built the engineering team.
- Lead technology, architecture and engineering for modular, regulation-aligned e-invoicing services, delivered through a mobile app, API integration with startups' systems, and an app on the Salla app marketplace.

InPro — Chief Technology Officer
2024 – 2026

Venture builder that builds startups alongside founders

- Led technology across ventures in a venture-builder model designed to fill the gap between software vendors and part-time CTOs.
- Defined the MVP as a business-learning tool, matching software scope to the assumptions each startup needed to test.
- Designed pricing models ranging from full-service payment to cash plus equity, based on a multi-factor venture assessment.
- Reworked the building model around AI-assisted development as software-building economics shifted.

Deanship of IT, Umm Al-Qura University — Development Team Leader
2011 – 2023

Software Developer (2011), Senior Software Developer (2014), Development Team Leader (2015 – 2023); contracted through the Deanship's IT operator companies

- Led the development team from 2015 to 2023 while continuing hands-on software development.
- Designed the user experience and GUI components of the university's admission gateway, used university-wide to register student applications across degree types.
- Developed the Council and Committee Management System and designed its user experience.
- Planned and built, with the team, a standards-based single sign-on platform on open-source tools; it became the authentication point that vendors' systems integrate with.
- Built the frontend team and its developer tooling (CLIs, project templates, scaffolding, CI automation), and helped introduce Microsoft ALM practices with Visual Studio and TFS.
- Worked on major university systems (admission and registration, recruitment, CMS, ECM, ERP, BI) as developer, integrator, tester or team lead, across in-house builds and packaged vendor systems.

- Served on the internal audit team for the national digital-transformation measurement (Yesser, 2018 – 2019) and on compliance, strategy and award committees.

Rawafid Foundation — Software Developer — 2007 – 2011

Human-sciences research center

- Built public websites, publication platforms, internal systems and document-management systems.
- Took on IT operations, service providers and contracts, and advised leadership and the board on technology investments and feasibility.

Independent Software Developer — 2003 – 2007

- Built end-to-end systems for government and healthcare clients, including a digital Zakat assessment system for the Department of Zakat and Income Tax, Makkah branch (2004), and an epidemiological database proof of concept (2006).

OPEN SOURCE AND SPEAKING

- **ZURB Foundation — core contributor (from 2013).** ZURB is a Silicon Valley product design company (est. 1998) and creator of Foundation, an open-source front-end framework. Contributed JavaScript, Sass and component work, then collaborated with ZURB on QA, planning and client-project reviews.
- **Microsoft Fluent UI (Office UI Fabric) — open-source contributor (2017 – 2020).** Diagnosed the root causes of a build-system bundling failure, fixed an RTL positioning defect in shared positioning logic (merged 2019), and improved contributor documentation (merged 2020).
- **Speaker — UI and front-end engineering with Foundation, Saudi Arabia (2017).** ZURB produced two short videos for the talk: announcement and in-presentation clip.

ADVISORY, LEADERSHIP AND VENTURES

- **Metaphor — Founder.** A Saudi venture-building system that works alongside founders on business, user experience and technology, with labs for FinTech, RegTech, HealthTech and SpaceTech.
- **Startup advisor and CTO-as-a-Service (2018 – present).** Advise startups on software development, product building and technology governance, including FinTech technology assessments and due-diligence readiness.
- **IT Committee Lead — Fourth Scientific Conference for Higher Education Students, Makkah (2013).** Reviewed the core peer-review management system and coordinated vendors for ticketing, access control, live streaming, networking and hall technology.

TECHNICAL TOOLKIT

AI-first across the stack: AI is built into every area below, from coding and architecture to cloud operations, testing and release.

- **Engineering:** .NET, Angular, React, Next.js, Flutter, TypeScript; relational databases, caching and message queuing.
- **Cloud and platform:** Azure, AWS, Google Cloud, Kubernetes, Infrastructure as Code (Terraform), GitOps.
- **Delivery:** CI/CD pipelines and developer tooling.

CERTIFICATIONS AND COURSES

- Technology Entrepreneurship: Lab to Market — HarvardX (verified certificate), 2024
- Creative Thinking (workshop) — Misk Foundation, 2021
- AZ-900 Microsoft Azure Fundamentals (course) — Microsoft Official Course, 2020
- Building Interactive Prototypes using JavaScript (DEV279x) — Microsoft / edX (verified certificate), 2019

EDUCATION

- Information Technology undergraduate studies — Saudi Electronic University, 2014 – 2017 (about three years of coursework while working; degree not completed)
- Bachelor's degree in Islamic Law — Umm Al-Qura University, 2010
- Commercial Diploma in Accounting — Commercial Secondary Institute, Makkah, 2003

LANGUAGES

Arabic · English