Michael Edward Gross, CISM

Enterprise technology executive. VP / Director of IT. Hands-on.

CENTERTON, AR MICHAEL@COFFEETOKENS.CAFE LINKEDIN SECRET CLEARANCE (PREVIOUSLY HELD)
U.S. NAVY VETERAN

Twenty-plus years of leadership, fifteen at the executive level, aligning enterprise applications, data infrastructure, and cybersecurity in lean federal and corporate environments. The through-line is turnaround work: consolidate what's siloed, automate what's manual, and hold the compliance line while the numbers improve.

WHAT I'M KNOWN FOR

ERP & CRM optimization
NetSuite, Sage, SAP, Salesforce and HubSpot. B2B ERP-to-ordering integrations, data model mapping, API connectors.

Practical AI & emerging tech
Patent-pending AI storage layer, MCP database connectors, governed coding assistants in production.

Data analytics & governance
Warehousing, self-service BI, ETL pipelines, interactive data dictionaries, KPI frameworks executives actually use.

Cybersecurity & compliance
CISM-certified. Portfolio cyber risk programs across NIST, FISMA, HIPAA, CTPAT, SSAE 16 / SOC 1.

Strategy & financial stewardship
Multi-year IT roadmaps, CapEx/OpEx budgeting, value-creation modeling, P&L ownership.

Lean execution
Workforce optimization across PM, engineering and support. Agile and DevOps models, infrastructure and cloud scaling.

EXPERIENCE

2025 - present
Bentonville, AR

Director of Information Technology

Outdoor Cap Company

Multi-site consumer-products manufacturer. Consolidated IT across four brands - Outdoor Cap, Junk Brands, Classic Caps, and Legendary - covering enterprise applications, software engineering, security, and analytics.

- Merged siloed engineering, support, infrastructure and analytics teams into one organization, removing a management tier and standardizing a root-cause workflow.
- Pioneered a governed AI program: enterprise coding assistants, automated ticket routing. Product management went from 4 PMs to 2 and the service desk from 3 to 2, with a 96.2% closure rate and 30% lower ticket volume.
- Stood up an MCP server giving AI least-privilege, fully audited access to ERP production databases over token auth and TLS.
- Delivered 'Atlas', the production-floor scheduling system that moved the embroidery floor onto a new layout against a 3,500 caps/day target.
- Launched enterprise IT portfolio reporting and self-service BI, removing IT as the reporting bottleneck.
- Renegotiated backup storage across a ~34 TiB estate for significant annual savings.

2022 - 2025
Washington, DC

Division Chief, then Program Manager

U.S. Department of Labor

- Led the National Identity Verification Program as Division Chief for UX research and testing, integrating USPS and Login.gov to serve 157,000+ claimants across nine states. 2024 Service to the Citizen Award.
- Accountable for the department's $2B ARPA technology portfolio. Testified before the GAO across three inquiries, re-planned the portfolio through a sudden $1B rescission, and accelerated security accreditation by 37 days.

2021 - 2022
Nashville, TN

Virtual Chief Information Security Officer

Clearwater

- Built a portfolio cyber risk management program from scratch for a private equity firm's eight healthcare and health-tech acquisitions.
- Assessed over 250 information security controls and established board-ready risk dashboards, which generated three follow-on engagements.
- Led an eight-person pre-launch technical review of a national consumer health platform's MVP, validating data privacy and API security before deployment.

2016 - 2021
Austin, TX

Chief Information Officer

TMF Health Quality Institute

Federal Medicare and Medicaid quality contractor. Full P&L and operational accountability for technology strategy, security compliance, engineering, and multi-state data center operations across 45+ staff.

- Wrote the organization's first five-year IT roadmap and migrated legacy PowerBuilder applications to a low-code BPM platform, cutting future development labor by 30%.
- Captured over $1.2M in annual vendor savings, including a $936K contract consolidation, and rebalanced contractor-to-employee staffing for $700K a year while closing skill gaps.
- Grew local and cloud SAN capacity from 5 to over 40 petabytes, improving disaster recovery and analytics headroom.
- Ran the waterfall-to-Agile transition and stood up the enterprise PMO: on-time delivery moved from 62% to over 92%, satisfaction up 25 points.
- Architected the first production RPA, machine learning and OCR pipeline, saving analysts 1.6 hours per review and $600K annually.
- Held NIST, CMS and HIPAA Authority to Operate with zero major audit findings.

2013 - 2016
Round Rock, TX

Director, Information Technology Division

Veterans Administration Financial Services Center

Federal healthcare claims and community payment processing. IT operations and comptrollership for 100+ personnel, 700+ servers, 4 petabytes.

- Controlled an $80M annual operating budget under Franchise Fund rules, and partnered with CMS on eligibility transaction improvements worth $600K year over year.
- Led 50+ engineers and contractors building the Healthcare Claims Processing System on Pega BPM and Oracle ESB.
- Sustained 95%+ FISMA compliance with clean SSAE 16 and SOC 1 opinions, holding the center's Authority to Operate.

2009 - 2010
Lexington, KY

Chief Information Officer (Facility)

VA Medical Center, Lexington

VA hospital network serving veterans statewide. Took over a struggling IT organization mid-crisis.

- Directed a team of 31 federal civilians, 3 contractors, and 2 interns, with technical oversight of 62 servers, a 15TB SAN, and 2,500+ workstations across five medical facilities.
- Led the 9-month design and rollout of a bed-management system later adopted by 147 VA medical centers nationwide.
- Rebuilt help desk operations on ITIL best practices, clearing 800+ aged tickets and lifting SLA performance from 81% to 92% in three months.
- Restored a peer facility's IT asset-tracking accuracy from below 70% to 95%, bringing it into full compliance with national standards.

2007 - 2009
Pennsylvania account

Services Principal

Dell

- Grew the Pennsylvania account to $110M in scope. Led the B2B integration between PA's SAP ERP and Dell's ordering systems, cutting ordering cycles by 24 hours.

2010 - 2013
New Cumberland, PA

Chief of Configuration & Requirements

Defense Logistics Agency

- Program-managed the Distribution Standard System - a $65M OMB capital program across 28 global distribution centers, 5M+ line items and $37B in annual transactions.

1987 - 2007
U.S. Navy

Where it started

United States Navy - twenty years, concluded 2007

- Eight enlisted years in nuclear operations aboard a nuclear-powered submarine: assistant work center supervisor, plant maintenance coordinator, QA inspector. Zero-defect safety compliance.
- Commissioned, then progressive leadership across enterprise IT and cyber. Retired as Lieutenant Commander.
- As Supply Officer, managed full logistics, contracting, and budget formulation, culminating in a 7th Fleet-wide logistics overhaul.
- Early in that assignment, led civilian and Navy personnel through database consolidations and stood up one of the Navy's first unclassified email systems and satellite file transmission capabilities.
- Chaired architecture review boards through a data center consolidation that cut server count 67% and sysadmin staffing 50%.
- As information assurance lead, raised global cybersecurity accreditation compliance for 24,000+ users from 34% to 94%, and halved audit times with Lean Six Sigma.

PATENT PENDING

A versioned, semantically-indexed artifact store as the native user-facing storage layer for an AI operating interface

USPTO provisional application no. 64/103,768, filed July 2026. Developed independently to address structured data, version control and latency limits in enterprise-scale autonomous agent integrations.

EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

M.S., IT Management
Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey. Thesis: configuration management evaluation guidance for high-robustness systems.

B.A., Mathematics
University of Oklahoma, Norman.

Master's Certificate, IT Project Management
The George Washington University.

CISM - ISACA
Certified Information Security Manager, active since 2011.

ITIL Foundations

ISACA AI Fundamentals
In progress.

Secret clearance, previously held across the Navy and civilian federal roles

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