

## Ben Hancock: Curriculum Vitae

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### About

Creative and experienced data engineer who is always pursuing better ways of doing things. Over the past five years, I've transitioned from mining data for enterprise journalism projects to building robust data systems for innovative news and intelligence products. I excel at communicating with team members about project goals, designing systems to be maintainable and resilient, and keeping organized. Prior to turning my focus to programming, I was an award-winning reporter covering law, economic policy, and international affairs.

### Skills & Technologies

- Apache Airflow
- AWS (boto3)
- Git
- Golang
- Linux (system administration, text processing)
- MarkLogic
- PostgreSQL
- PostGIS
- Python (application development and data analysis)
- XQuery and XML

### Project Highlights

#### State Courts Litigation Surveillance

*Professional project at ALM Media. Oct 2022 - Mar 2023.*

Planned, designed, and implemented a system to ingest heterogeneous data on new litigation activity from state courts across the U.S., in a major expansion of the [Law.com Radar](#) product offering. Developed automated QA processes to ensure data was high-quality and encompassed only desired information. Led our team's adoption of Apache Airflow, while working to rapidly iterate under a compressed time line.

#### Law.com Radar Trend Detection

*Professional project at ALM Media. Jul 2021 - Jul 2022.*

Led the development of Law.com Radar's [Trend Detection](#) feature, which applies automated statistical analysis to public litigation data in order to detect emerging patterns. Built a custom CMS using Flask to allow editorial staff to review results for a "human-in-the-loop" validation and analysis step, and wrote database APIs to expose the results for consumption by a front-end PWA. The feature was [named the winner](#) of the 2023 Eddie & Ozzie Award for Editorial Use of Data.

### **Ancient Places Search**

*Open source personal project. Jul 2023 - Sep 2023.*

Combined open archaeological data from the NYU/UNC Pleiades project with spatial data from Natural Earth using PostGIS, to enable searching for sites by country name. Developed a [web application](#) in Go using the Echo framework, and deployed on Digital Ocean's App Platform.

### **Bay Area Pandemic Dashboard**

*Volunteer project, Code for San Francisco. Sep 2020 - Jul 2021.*

Collaborated with project team to scrape and organize COVID-19 data and news published by local health authorities. The data was presented on the [Bay Area Pandemic Dashboard](#) and made available for direct querying on the web using Datasette. Work included writing Python code to pull from public APIs, fixing scrapers, and reviewing PRs.

## **Work Experience**

### **ALM Media - San Francisco Bay Area**

#### **Sr. Product Data Engineer - Legal (Jul 2023 - present)**

Head data engineer for ALM Media's array of legal news and information products, which serve an audience of litigators, transactional lawyers, and law firm business development staff. Responsibilities include designing, developing, and maintaining data pipelines used for automated content generation and legal analytics; team management; vendor technical communications; and coordination with the dev and project teams. Using a stack built mainly with Python, Airflow, PostgreSQL, and MarkLogic, as well as cloud components on AWS.

#### **Newsroom Data Engineer Lead (May 2022 - Jun 2023)**

Took up the lead of a small data engineering team within ALM's content unit, helping to expand our ability to contribute to a growing mission of delivering data-driven intelligence to customers and the newsroom.

#### **Newsroom Data Engineer (Nov 2020 - Apr 2022)**

Transitioned to an engineering role focused on the data supporting Law.com Radar. Led the development of the product's Trend Detection feature, which uses automated statistical analysis to surface new emerging patterns in litigation to Law.com editors.

#### **Data Editor (Jul 2018 - Oct 2020)**

Senior editor in charge of data-intensive enterprise journalism projects for the litigation desk. Assisted colleagues in identifying and analyzing data, helping break stories about security breaches at major law firms, diversity in the mass tort litigation bar, and other

topics. Led a series of training sessions on data analysis, web scraping, and data visualization for the newsroom.

### **Litigation Reporter (Mar 2016 - June 2018)**

San Francisco-based litigation journalist, covering state and federal court proceedings, including class actions against gig economy companies and the high-profile Uber-Waymo battle. Wrote an award-winning piece about the lack of diversity in the private arbitration system, and led a beat on the emerging litigation funding industry. Also started ALM's first podcast series, "Unprecedented".

### **Inside U.S. Trade - Washington, D.C.**

- Managing Editor (Jul 2014 - Feb 2016)
- Staff Reporter (Jan 2011 - Jun 2014)

News publication focused on U.S. economic and trade policy, read by legislative professionals and diplomatic staff around the globe. Wrote in depth about U.S. agricultural subsidy programs and traveled on assignment to the EU, Guam, Seoul, Singapore, and Vietnam.

### **Various news outlets - Seoul, South Korea**

- Freelance Correspondent (May 2009 - Aug 2010)

Developed and pursued story ideas independently as a South Korea-based freelancer for The Diplomat (Tokyo), The JoongAng Daily (Seoul), Asia Sentinel (Hong Kong), and The Christian Science Monitor (Boston).

### **Yonhap News Agency - Seoul, South Korea**

- Staff Copy Editor (Jun 2008 - May 2010)

Worked with a small team led by veteran Associated Press reporter Paul Shin to edit and consistently improve the quality of the copy of the English desk at South Korea's national news wire.

### **Education**

University of Wisconsin-Madison, BA - Journalism (2007)

### **Languages**

- English (native)
- Korean (advanced)
- French (beginner)