Utku Ünal

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I'm a tech enthusiast passionate about Technology, Geophysics, Big Data, AI, and creating innovative solutions. I have worked as a professional in Istanbul for IT companies (HP, CA, Fujitsu, Oracle) for more than 25 years as individual contributor, manager and director in consulting and technical support departments. Currently I work at Destek AS as CTO in Istanbul.

I have a computer engineer degree from Bogazici University and I have a masters in geophysics from Bogazici University's KOERI (Kandilli Observatory and Earthquake Research Institute). Currently I am doing my PhD in Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, School of Graduate Studies, Geophysical Engineering (Remote with minimal visits). My area of research is using deep learning for earthquake parameter analysis with seismological big data. Feel free to explore the links below to learn more about me and my work (Orchid: 0009-0008-6124-4013).

Experiences

CTO at Destek A.S., Istanbul
2025-…

- As a CTO at Destek A.Ş., I focus on developing end-to-end cloud and AI applications that put business-critical applications at the center. My vision is to combine security, high availability, disaster recovery, and scalability with cloud-native platforms like Kubernetes, enabling organizations to innovate faster while staying resilient.

- With an application-first approach, we integrate AI-driven applications into cloud infrastructures, transforming data into intelligent services that enhance decision-making, automation, and customer experience.

- I lead Cloud and AI Presales, Architects, DevOps, Infrastructure Consulting, Project Management, IT Operations, In-house software development teams.

PhD Candidate in Geophysics at *Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Hybrid*
2023-…

- Development of machine learning algorithms for seismic phase picking and earthquake parameter analysis
- Working with seismic big data (Seismogram recordings for Turkey) for training and testing
- Implementing machine learning algorithms within Earthquake Research Center workflow.

PTA Volunteer/Member, Benjamin Franklin International School, Barcelona
2018-2023

- Contributing to Schools's vision and 5-year plans
- Development and implementation of coding sessions for pre-k
- Organizing and leading activities for Parent Teacher Association Participating in organization of various activities within school.

Master's Studies in Artificial Intelligence at UPC (Polytechnic University of Catalonia)
2019-2022 (thesis phase transitioned into PhD research on AI in Geophysics))

- Unsupervised Learning, Supervised Learning, Machine Learning, Deep Learning
- Multi Agent Systems
- Image Analysis and Recognition

Cluster Leader for Central Asia & Turkey, Oracle Consulting
December 2014-December 2016

- Leading sales and delivery teams of Oracle Consulting (40+ people).
- Measured on bookings, revenue and profit.
- Bookings achieved 6M+ USD/year with major projects on OFSAA, DWH, Big Data, MW, software development for major banks and telco in Turkey.
- Implemented successful organization transformation focusing on efficiency and competitiveness.
- Ensured a strong delivery control to finalize existing challenging software development projects.
- Changed a negative-margin, weak-backlog, weak-funnel business to a profitable one with a healthy funnel.
- Key customers: Odeabank (OFSAA), Isbank (OFSAA), Yapi Kredi (DRM), Vodafone (IDM SW Development), Tofas (CRM), Turkcell (DB)

Services Director for Turkey & Balkans, Fujitsu Technology Solutions
July 2013-November 2014

- Leading delivery teams (150+ people): Maintenance & support, managed infrastructure services, professional services, business& application services.
- €20M+ USD P&L responsibility.
- Project landscape consists of several multi-million-euro projects in state organizations that includes various services components all around Turkey.
- Created and sold one of the first DAAS project in Turkey.
- Implemented successful organization transformation focusing on efficiency and competitiveness (Creating service delivery partners all around Turkey that result in downsizing).
- Built a partner ecosystem to enable partner branded service program which boosted services sales.

- Key customers: Garanti (POS), Min. of Finance (Systems and desktop management), Turkcell (Systems management), National E-Procurement (SW Development)

Executive Consultant for Datacenters, Central Asia and Turkey, Huawei
March 2012-March 2013

- Enabling Cloud Computing and Datacenter business in the region. Solution development by mobilizing HQ resources to satisfy challenging customer requirements. Sales strategy development with account teams.
- Working with C-levels to realize investments by showing Huawei's value with complete ROI analysis on various dimensions and with creative financial models.

Technology Services Consulting Manager for Turkey, HP
April 2010-November 2011

- Leading consulting teams for datacenter, network, security, infrastructure solutions Leading consulting teams for datacenter, network, security, infrastructure solutions and education services.
- Full P&L responsibility.
- Turkcell Security Improvement Program (Data Confidentiality & Data Protection), Anadolu Sigorta Business Continuity, Turkcell Datacenter Design, Vodafone Datacenter Assessment.
- Key Customers: Turkcell (Telecom), Vodafone (Telecom), Anadolu (Insurance)

Delivery Manager for Turkey & Greece, HP Enterprise Services
April 2008-April 2010

- Setting up HP's first datacenter in Turkey.
- Leading onsite customer teams and operations teams in HP's Datacenter in Istanbul and in HP's Disaster Recovery Center in Ankara (40+ people)
- Ensuring ITSM-ISO2000, ISO27001-Security based operations are in place at key managed services accounts.
- Managing cost part of the outsourcing business P&L (Yearly 6M USD cost).
- Key customers: Aviva & Groupama (Outsourcing Services & Disaster Recovery), Groupama, Turk Telecom (Outsourcing Services)

Client Manager for Turkey, HP Enterprise Services
April 2006-April 2008

- Single point of contact with customer's C-level for HP's outsourcing contract at key enterprise customers.
- Measured on customer satisfaction, renewal and upsell.
- Key customers: Aviva (Insurance), Groupama (Insurance)

Project Manager/
Senior Consultant/
Technical Consultant, HP Consulting Turkey
June 1995-April 2006

- Identity and Access Management, Application Development projects of which some are multi-million USD regional projects.
- Senior consultant for IT Infrastructure security, ISO27001, Ethical Hacking, IT infrastructure, systems and network management projects in Turkey and Middle-East region (Egypt, UAE, Israel, Lebanon, Greece).
- Technical consultant for network and system management and security projects.
- Key Customers: Yapı Kredi Bank (Identity & User Access Management, Network & System Management-NSM), Superonline (NSM), Turk Telekom (IT Security, Mail Systems), Turkcell (PKI Implementation), TEB (Network Monitoring), Milli Savunma Bakanlığı (NSM), Merkez Bankası (Network Security), İşbankası (Ethical Hacking), Akbank (Secure Electronic Transaction, Ethical Hacking), TEB (NSM), Datacenter and IT Security projects in Egypt, Lebanon, Israel, UAE, Greece.

My Research

Unal U., Bekler T. Detection of P and S Wave Phases by Machine Learning using Northwestern Türkiye Local Seismic Network Data. Pure Appl. Geophys. (2024).
https://doi.org/10.1007/s00024-024-03636-4

Unal U., Bekler T., Bekler F. N. The Effectiveness of Machine Learning Algorithms in Identifying P and S Phases of Earthquakes in Türkiye. Türk Deprem Araştırma Dergisi (2025).
https://doi.org/10.46464/tdad.1597618

Education

2023-….   Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Remote, Ph.D. Geophysics
1993-1996 Boğaziçi University Istanbul, M.S. Geophysics
1987-1993 Boğaziçi University Istanbul, B.S. Computer Engineering

Native in Turkish, fluent in English, advanced in Spanish.