

Donovan Solms

Johannesburg, South Africa · ds@donovansolms.com · GitHub (<https://github.com/donovansolms>) · @donorail (<https://x.com/donorail>) · LinkedIn (<https://linkedin.com/in/donovansolms>)

SUMMARY

I build trading products that feel effortless. Currently shipping **Signal** under **Monorail**; previously led **Astroport** across the Cosmos ecosystem. ~20 years building software, ~8 years deep in crypto and DeFi, with three CTO/co-founder seats and end-to-end ownership of every product I've led.

SELECTED WORK

2026 — PRESENT

Signal

Monorail's live trading terminal for football prediction markets.

Built for trading during the match — live probabilities, event-linked trades, and one-tap action on the moments that move the market. End-to-end build: product conception, design, indexing, integration, and trading.

View live product — <https://getsignal.trade>

2025 — PRESENT

Monorail

Swap aggregator on Monad.

Routes traders to the best execution across 24 protocols through a novel synthetic-orderbook aggregation model — the top native swap aggregator on Monad, \$22M traded in the first four months with zero incentives. End-to-end build: routing logic, execution engine, frontend, and a consistent visual language across the product surface.

View live product — <https://monorail.xyz>

2022 — 2025

Astroport

The leading DEX on Terra, expanded across the Cosmos ecosystem.

Joined as a backend engineer in March 2022, when Astroport was Terra's largest AMM at ~\$190M peak daily volume. Continued building through the Terra collapse and took over leading the project in late 2023. Over the next two years, expanded Astroport across five chains, including the main hub migration. Multi-chain protocol R&D, governance, treasury operations, and a long-running engineering team.

View live product — <https://astroport.fi>

EXPERIENCE

2022 — 2025

Lead · Astroport

Terra's largest AMM at ~\$190M peak daily volume, then expanded across five Cosmos chains. Joined as a backend engineer in March 2022 and continued building through the Terra collapse; took over the project in late 2023 and led it for two years, including the main hub migration. AMM design, governance, treasury operations, and a long-running engineering team.

2020 — 2022

Co-founder and CTO · Dr Derma · Acquired

Medical platform enabling dermatologists to operate a medical-grade online practice across South Africa. Architected the platform, ensured regulatory compliance, defined the technology and feature roadmap, and built processes for a remote-only team.

2018 — 2021

Core Contributor · Scala

Open-source cryptocurrency. Worked on the core node software and ecosystem tooling — added IPFS and ZeroNet capabilities to the node, implemented a distributed blockchain downloader, and shipped a user-friendly miner for multiple platforms.

2017 — 2020

Chief Technology Officer · iLivelt

Next-generation personalised video at scale — architecture and team leadership for international product rollouts. Worked directly with top clients on bespoke solutions and built proof-of-concept projects to determine business feasibility.

2014 — 2017

Senior Software Engineer · iLivelt

Built a client-facing API for personalisation services and scalable data-processing pipelines for mobile network clients; maintained and extended the core messaging services. Promoted to Chief Technology Officer in 2017.

2013 — 2015

Co-founder and CTO · Trevolta

Online travel-crowdfunding platform. 500k users in two months (peak 100k in a single day); ZAR 1.5M (~\$165k USD) seed round; *Wall Street Journal* and *Los Angeles Times* coverage. Trevolta's platform also funded the relocation of six rhinos away from local poachers.

2013 — 2014

Co-founder and CTO · Cirqls

Social-graph-based trust and recommendations for classifieds. The first startup pitch accepted by the Seed Engine Startup Accelerator (under Marc Elias, ex-StartupBootcamp Amsterdam); R 100k seed.

Founder · Multitouch SA

Pre-iPhone-era open-source multi-touch platform. The Syre Multitouch Platform let anyone build interactive applications using Adobe ActionScript 3 and Flash. Software powered an interactive floor at a top local radio station and interactive bars at a major dance event; cited in academic papers and PhD theses.

SIDE PROJECTS

Cryptwire (2021) — realtime trading infrastructure and analytics for cryptocurrency markets. Architected and built end-to-end: backend services in Go, GraphQL API in Node, Angular frontend, exchange and trading-bot integrations.

DEX arbitrage bot (2022) — built to deeply understand Uniswap V2-style exchanges. Real-time trade and event extraction from the chain, cross-chain opportunity detection, and a flash-swap Solidity contract written, tested, and deployed across Binance Smart Chain, Avalanche, and Fantom. Go + Solidity.

SKILLS

LANGUAGES	Go, TypeScript, Solidity, Python, Node.js, C#, PHP
FRONTEND	React, Angular, viem, ethers
BACKEND	Go, Node.js, GraphQL, NATS, Protocol Buffers
DATA	Postgres, TimescaleDB, MySQL, Redis
INFRA	Kubernetes, Docker, AWS, GCP
BLOCKCHAIN	EVM (Ethereum, Monad, BSC, Avalanche, Fantom), Cosmos SDK / CosmWasm, Solidity flash-swap contracts, IPFS

EDUCATION

University of Pretoria (DNF) — BIS Multimedia. Building multimedia products through software engineering and visual design — software engineering, information management, design, philosophy, and mathematics.

University of Pretoria (DNF) — Bachelor in Information Technology (2005–2006). Software engineering, information management, philosophy, and mathematics.

PUBLICATIONS & AWARDS

Multi-Touch Handbook (2009) — co-authored two chapters on multi-touch hardware and software with Seth Sandler et al.

Mobile Marketing Association Award for Best Mobile Display (2009) — for the Livemobile Football “mobisite,” a near-real-time match-following UI for nine of the world’s biggest football competitions, optimised for low data usage and high engagement.

TALKS & INTERVIEWS

Meet IPFS (2021) — conversation with the Scala cryptocurrency team on using IPFS to secure a blockchain against 51% attacks, and the design of `libipfs` for interacting with IPFS from C++ via Go.

Scalability of personalised video generation on Oracle Cloud (2019) — interview with Ross Dawson on performance-testing Oracle Cloud against other vendors for personalised PDF and video generation at scale.