Chief Technology Officer (CTO)

Keesing

TOP OF MINDS
Executive Search

Requirements

- At least 15 years of experience
- In an international matrix organization
- Within a B2C organization, such as retail, media, or FMCG
- Background in platform modernization, ERP and data landscapes
- Experience with post-merger integration
- Track record in AI-driven innovation
- Skilled stakeholder and project manager
- Entrepreneurial, flexible mindset

📍 **Amsterdam**

Keesing Media Group has long been a global leader in braintainment, offering both print and digital puzzles. To keep the company and its content future-proof, ongoing innovation is essential. The CTO drives this agenda, shaping the group's technology strategy and accelerating AI-driven initiatives, with a strong focus on scalability and post-merger integration.

About Keesing Media Group

Keesing Media Group brings fun and challenge to puzzle enthusiasts around the world. Since its founding in 1911 with the first Dutch puzzle magazine, Denksport, the company has grown into an international organization with seventeen offices across thirteen countries. With over 950 colleagues, Keesing produces more than two hundred million puzzles annually, ranging from classic crosswords and sudoku on paper to interactive digital games that connect, challenge and inspire people of all ages and backgrounds. Braintainment lies at the heart of the company's offering, combining enjoyment with mental stimulation.

Keesing's international expansion has been fueled by a mix of organic growth and strategic acquisitions. Since becoming private equity-owned in 2017, the company has actively pursued an active buy-and-build strategy, most recently under the leadership of BC Partners. This approach has led to more than twenty acquisitions, considerably expanding Keesing's European footprint and enhancing its offline and online portfolio.
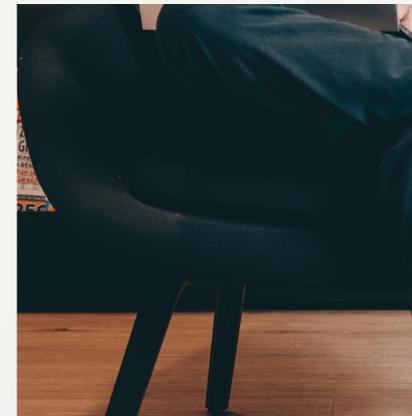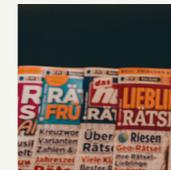
Chief Technology Officer (CTO)

Keesing's numerous acquisitions and expanding international footprint create a variety of technological challenges. Each newly acquired company must be smoothly integrated, and the technological backbone must fully support both national and global business processes. At the same time, the puzzle platform – the organization's core business – requires continuous development. Several promising digital B2B and B2C products are also ready for launch, making this an especially exciting moment for the CTO to join the team.

Ensuring the long-term competitiveness of the core puzzle creation platform (IPS) is a top priority. The platform must remain innovative and market-leading, including through the integration of AI tools. The CTO defines engineering standards, oversees the platform's architecture, and develops long-term roadmaps to ensure the platform remains innovative while maintaining security and a clear market position.

Acquired companies contribute to the strength of the puzzle platform when integrated effectively. The CTO takes the lead in post-merger integration, making sure new businesses fit Keesing's standards and that platforms and processes operate smoothly, can expand as needed, and remain fully aligned with the organization.

To support the company's continued growth and expanding scope, the CTO strengthens Keesing's technology backbone. Core systems and applications are maintained to ensure reliability and scalability, while the migration of local or legacy systems to a centralized environment is guided carefully. At the same time, this expert builds a robust data governance structure and a strong DWH/BI framework, aligning all business intelligence initiatives with strategic objectives and operational KPIs, with cybersecurity seamlessly integrated into the design.

There is also significant potential in further developing Keesing's digital products. The international rollout of the new B2C Play platform is currently underway, with the CTO responsible for its execution. This role also encompasses technology procurement, vendor management, and various strategic BI initiatives.

Cross-department AI strategy

Another key focus for the CTO is the development and execution of a group-wide AI strategy. The role emphasizes using AI applications and innovations to make the platform and workflows – particularly editorial processes – more efficient, with strong governance integrated throughout.

The technology team consists of around seventy-five professionals, including four experienced department heads and a senior business consultant who all report directly to the CTO. As a member of the executive team, alongside the CFO, HR Director, and Managing Directors of major regions, the position reports directly to CEO Philip Alberdingk Thijm.

> *As CTO, you have the opportunity to further modernize an international technology ecosystem and implement AI strategies within a successful international company. You will have both the mandate and the resources to bring a technological vision to life, including the integration of acquired companies."*

- **Philip Alberdingk Thijm, CEO**

This is a challenging position for a seasoned technology leader with a proven track record in complex, international, multi-entity environments, preferably within a buy-and-build or private equity setting. Strategic insight is combined with the ability to lead cross-functional teams and manage external partners and stakeholders effectively. Bringing pragmatic, future-ready technology solutions and a passion for puzzles, the new CTO will drive the digital transformation of a successful, fast-growing international company.

Interested?

Keesing Media Group is working with Top of Minds to fill this vacancy.
To express your interest, please contact Duco Nijpels at
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