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# DOCUMENTATION REPORT

# Part of the BACHELOR DISSERTATION

## **Next-Gen Web Solutions**

A comprehensive analysis of enterprise-focused web solutions, unveiling strengths and weaknesses.

Bachelor	Applied Computer Science
Elective track Graduation	Software Engineer
Academic year	2023 - 2024
Student	Arthur De Witte
Internal coach	Mattias De Wael (HOWEST)
External promoter	Tom Stijnen (H.Essers)

howest.be

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April 30, 2024

# Foreword

#### write the foreword

The foreword contains the usual thanks. All those who helped with the final paper are thanked. The persons who made the most significant contribution are thanked first. Write the name, position and title of persons correctly. Indicate your name, place and date at the bottom (optional). A signature is not appropriate here. Because the word in advance is strongly personal, it is often written in the I form.

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CHAPTER

1

# Introduction

## 1.1 General

In web development, there are numerous solutions for creating websites. These solutions streamline website creation by simplifying complex tasks, standardizing and abstracting away common tasks, increasing DX and ultimately UX.

#### The Paradox of Choice

The abundance of web solutions/frameworks presents a challenge known as the paradox of choice [1]. This challenge is particularly pertinent for enterprises, which face additional criteria such as release cycles, licensing, support, state management complexities, backing, and longevity — all crucial factors considering the long-term maintenance requirements of the software.

#### Common Challenge

Whether you're a *(frontend)* Software Engineer, Project Manager, Technical Architect, Startup Founder, or simply someone intrigued by the web, you've likely encountered this dilemma.

#### Collaborative Project

This dissertation is a collaboration with the IT department of H. Essers, a major European Transport and Logistics company headquartered in Genk, Belgium. Their objective is to develop custom software solutions to optimize business processes. The department mainly comprises Java and IBM AS/400 (now called "IBM i" [2]) developers. They utilize the Vaadin full-stack framework for Java. Despite its advantages, the team has faced limitations within Vaadin that require more effort than initially anticipated.

## 1.2 The problem

User interfaces are crucial components of any application, and although websites have been around for many years, the industry is constantly evolving. Nowadays, development teams have a variety of web frameworks, architectures, and principles to choose from, making it difficult to decide which one is the best for a given task. This research aims to provide an answer to this difficult question.

## 1.3 Research question

What is the most suitable web solution for what kind of application?

### 1.3.1 Web Solutions

Research has been conducted into:

Solution	Year Released	Version Reviewed
React	2016	18.2.0
Vue	2014	3.4.15
Svelte	2016	4.2.12
Angular	2016	17.3.0
Lit	2019	3.1.2
Hilla	2022	2.5.7

Table 1.1: Researched Solutions

# 1.4 Experiment

The same project was built in each solution to ensure equal and objective evaluation.

## 1.4.1 Project Requirements

These requirements will provide valuable insights. The assessment is conducted objectively using the details stated in 1.4.2.

- General Layout (see Figure B.1)
- Interactive Search (with URL query reflection) (see Figure B.2)
- (data) Grid (see Figure B.3)
- (data) Grid in (data) Grid (see Figure B.4)
- Normal Forms (with validation) (see Figure B.5 and Figure B.6)
- Wizard Forms (see Figure B.7 and Figure B.8)
- Internationalization
- Drag and Drop (see Figure B.9)
- Progressive Loading
- Global State Management and Reactions
- Reflective Routing (see Figure B.10, Figure B.11, Figure B.12, Figure B.13, and Figure B.14)

#### 1.4.2 Evaluation

Because the research question is broad, it will be answered by dividing it into smaller evaluation points, which are ranked objectively using a suitable method.

- Community <sup>1</sup>
- Professional Support <sup>2</sup>
- Documentation (interactive?) <sup>3</sup>
- Ecosystem <sup>4</sup>
- Usage by other enterprises <sup>3</sup>
- (added) Size of solution <sup>5</sup>
- Relative performance of solution <sup>3</sup>
- Complexity <sup>6</sup>
- Server Side Rendered (SSR) <sup>7, 8</sup>

#### Likert Scale

Some evaluation will be done using a Likert Scale [3], with the values:

BAD/NOT PRESENT < MEDIUM/OK < GREAT.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Points by size, see A.1

 $<sup>^2</sup>$ Predicate

 $<sup>^3</sup>$ Likert Scale

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Points are 70% by quality and 30% by size, see A.2.2 and A.2.3 respectively

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Likert Scale, but smaller is better

 $<sup>^6\</sup>mathrm{Evaluated}$  using the Likert Scale by easiness/speed to learn, state management, boilerplate, and API integration

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Likert Scale, MEDIUM/OK being available through a well-supported and known extension

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>SSR is better for SEO dependent applications

CHAPTER

## 2

# Experiment

### 2.1 React

#### 2.1.1 Overview

React is a library [4] created by Meta (originally known as Facebook). Its recommended usage is in combination with JSX [5] (see 2.1.2). The library is primarily intended for the render layer and does not include native support for features such as routing and I18N. However, this does not mean that you cannot easily incorporate these features, as the library is part of a vast community ecosystem that includes many high-quality packages that specialize in various areas.

React uses a different approach than plain JavaScript by utilizing the VDOM [6] (see 2.1.4) to manage content instead of directly manipulating the DOM. It attempts to detect changes using the reconciliation algorithm (see 2.1.5) in the browser at runtime [7].

#### 2.1.2 JSX

The rendering logic often gets tightly coupled with other ui logic. Instead of separating things by putting markup and logic in separate files, we can achieve our separation of concerns [8] by creating loosely coupled units called *components*. These components should ideally be pure, making the logic predictable, testable, and allowing us to make render optimizations like memoization [9], [10].

We can use JavaScript XML (JSX), which is neither JS nor a string. Instead, it combines (as the name implies) XML/HTML syntax with JS capabilities (demonstrated in Listing 2.1). We can easily create components by defining a method that returns JSX, essentially currying [11] its context (arguments, state, and more; demonstrated in Listing 2.2).

Listing 2.2: Simple JSX component

## 2.1.3 Update Process

The update process of React is highly reliable. It involves testing the entire Reactmeta codebase, which comprises over 50,000 components, to determine if deprecating a method requires many changes. Only after this testing, does the React team decide if deprecation is necessary. If it is, they release a warning to the open-source community, which remains for one version. After that, the deprecated item is completely removed. In case many changes are needed to address the deprecation warning, scripts are built to make the migration as automatic as possible [13].

#### 2.1.4 Virtual DOM

The Virtual DOM (VDOM) is a mirrored version of the real DOM. Represented as in-memory objects (eg. Listing 2.3) which can easily be traversed (as no DOM needs to be parsed), checked for changes, and used for other optimizations. For example, if a type of a VDOM element is changed it will tear down the old tree and rebuild the tree from scratch, but if the type is the same it will only update the attributes. Or if a key is set the reconciler can easily detect what items need to update (2.1.5, [7], [14]).

Although the VDOM incurs more overhead as the browser has to keep the entirety in memory, it offers greater flexibility for the reconciler. For instance, the React reconciler can not only process the DOM but also native iOS and Android displays (with React Native) [14]. Additionally, the VDOM enables more unique optimizations such as the pull technique instead of push, which allows the prioritization of user interactions over background tasks [13]. Moreover, it allows the renders to be batched instead of each one being its own operation.

```
1
     type: "button",
2
3
     props: {
        className: "button button-blue",
4
5
        children: {
6
          type: "b",
7
          props: {
             children: "OK!"
8
9
10
        }
     }
11
   }
12
```

Listing 2.3: JSON representation of VDOM element [15], [16]

Listing 2.4: HTML equivalent of Listing 2.3

## 2.1.5 Reconciliation Algorithm

There are generic solutions to the algorithmic problem of diffing and transforming one tree into another. However, the existing algorithms are expensive at  $O(n^3)$  [17]. Because this is too expensive for a web framework, the react reconciler implements a O(n) algorithm based on two assumptions [7].

- 1. "Two elements of different types will produce different tries." which is why if the type is different the tear will be torn down.
- 2. "The developer can hint at which child elements may be stable across different renders with a *key* prop."

## 2.1.6 State Management

State management in React relies on hooks, which are specialized functions. These hooks serve specific purposes within React components. Unlike traditional JavaScript assignments, manipulating state in React requires the use of hooks and their associated methods. Additionally, React enforces immutability, meaning once state is set, it cannot be directly changed. This immutability adds complexity to learning React, as it imposes restrictions on how actions can be performed.

When a state is updated in React, the reconciler detects these changes and initiates a refresh of the entire component in the next tick. To optimize performance and avoid unnecessary refreshes, it is recommended to:

- Split components into smaller, more manageable pieces.
- Minimize side effects within components.
- Utilize memoization where applicable.

By following these practices, developers can ensure efficient state management and enhance the performance of React applications [9].

#### **Sharing State**

In React, there are various methods for sharing state, with one popular approach being to lift the state up (Figure 2.2) [18]. This method aligns with the principle of a ""single source of truth"" [19], meaning that while the state isn't confined to just one place, there's a central component responsible for managing it. This eliminates the need for duplicating state across components, thus reducing error-prone practices.

However, this approach has its drawbacks. For nested components, the state must be passed down through each level, leading to code bloat and unnecessary dependencies between components. To address this issue, a context provider can be employed. This provider enables all nested children, regardless of depth, to access and respond to the state without requiring explicit prop drilling or predefined component structures (Figure 2.3) [20].

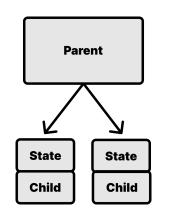


Figure 2.1: per component state

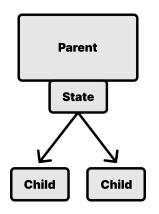


Figure 2.2: state lifted up (shared state)

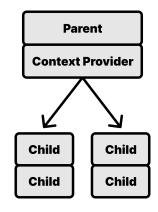


Figure 2.3: context provides state to all

### 2.1.7 Redux

Incorporating context to manage state is useful, but it's typically confined to the parent component. In most projects, developers opt to place the global state in the root (app) component (Figure 2.4). While this approach suffices for a few states, it becomes unwieldy when multiple states need to be shared.

To mitigate this challenge, developers often turn to Redux, a state management library. Redux operates akin to a global context, with each state, termed a "store", linked directly to the Redux provider (Figure 2.5) [21]. This setup ensures that each state maintains its own logic and adheres to consistent, standardized definitions.

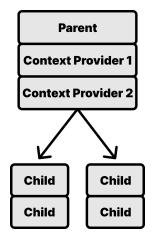


Figure 2.4: serveral providers provide state to all

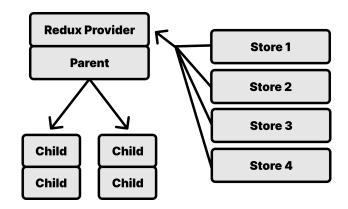


Figure 2.5: several Redux stores provide state to all

# 2.1.8 Strengths

- JSX is intuitive and easy to write
- big ecosystem
- well-known and used among developers

- documentation is great (includes interactive examples)
- big community (over 230,000 members on Discord)
- lots of enterprise usage, even in the Fortune 500 companies [22]
- not that performant compared to native JS, but a one-click addon called *Million* [23] makes this problem go away
- professional support is widely available on top of the community support

#### 2.1.9 Weaknesses

- VDOM overhead
- client-side rendered (solution: Next.js or canary "use server" directive [24])
- State management can be complex. Even if you are familiar with bigger components, managing their state can become difficult quickly.
- basic dependencies (*React, Redux, I18N*) that get sent to the client are about 12MB which is relatively big and can slow down the initial load

#### 2.1.10 Scores

Method	Score
Easiness/speed to learn	1
State management	0.5
Boilerplate	0.5 (components: 1, state management: 0)
API integration	0 (default browser fetch API)

Table 2.1: complexity

#### relative performance

Method	Score
Community	1 (Table A.1)
Professional Support	1
Documentation (interactive?)	0.5
Ecosystem	0.9 (Table A.4)
Usage by other enterprises	1
(added) Size of solution	0.5
Relative performance of solution	-
Complexity	0.5 (Table 2.1)
Server Side Rendered (SSR)	0.5

Table 2.2: React general scores

2.2. Vue

Chapter 2. Experiment

## 2.5 Lit

### 2.5.1 Overview

write this

## 2.5.2 Strengths

write strengths

• strength!

## 2.5.3 Weaknesses

write weaknesses • weakness! :(

# 2.6 Hilla

### 2.6.1 Overview

write this

## 2.6.2 Strengths

write strengths • strength!

### 2.6.3 Weaknesses

write weaknesses • weakness! :(\_

CHAPTER 3

# Conclusion

#### conclusion and recommendation

Here you formulate the answer to the research question. This does not include any new results that you have not previously cited. Do not use subsections here. Conclude your conclusion with a powerful closing sentence that briefly summarises your conclusion in one sentence.

# AI Engineering Prompts

Note: While LLMs are excellent, they are not flawless, so the prompts have been used as a guide rather than a definitive one. There has been no copy-pasting, but rather a rewriting process to match the AI's output.

## 3.1 Rewriting of text

Role: English Language Expert

Language: English

Context: Computer Science Thesis

Task: Rewrite the following text slightly according to the notes

Notes:

- Clarity: Ensure that the main ideas are clearly expressed and easy to understand.
- Simplicity: Use plain language and avoid jargon or complex terminology whenever possible.
- Conciseness: Trim unnecessary words or phrases to make the text more concise and to the point.
- Structure: Organize the text logically with clear headings, subheadings, and transitions between paragraphs.
- Consistency: Maintain consistent formatting, tone, and style throughout the text.
- Active Voice: Use active voice to make sentences more direct and engaging.
- Variety: Vary sentence length and structure to keep the reader's attention and avoid monotony.
- Clarity of Purpose: Ensure that each section or paragraph serves a clear purpose and contributes to

the overall message.

- Audience Awareness: Consider the needs and knowledge level of the target audience when choosing language and examples.
- Visual Elements: Incorporate bullet points, lists, and visuals where appropriate to break up dense text and improve readability.
- Transition Words: Use transition words and phrases to guide the reader through the text and connect ideas smoothly.
- Contextualization: Provide context or background information where necessary to help readers understand unfamiliar concepts or terms.
- Parallelism: Use parallel structure for lists or series of items to improve clarity and readability.
- Avoidance of Ambiguity: Clarify ambiguous terms or phrases to prevent confusion or misinterpretation.
- Proofreading: Correct any grammatical errors, typos, or inconsistencies.
- Output: The text is formatted using LaTeX, if there are any terms or acronyms that should be defined, define them and put them at the top separated from the text.

  Text:

<text here>

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14 Bibliography Bibliography

APPENDIX A

# Metrics

# A.1 Community Size Rating

The largest statistic gets chosen out of: GitHub stars or Discord members.

Range	Score
< 500	0
< 1,000	1
< 3,000	2
< 6,000	3
< 12,000	4
< 25,000	5
< 50,000	6
< 100,000	7
< 150,000	8
< 200,000	9
> 200,000	10

Table A.1: scores for size of community

# A.2 Ecosystem Ratings

### A.2.1 GitHub Stars

Range	Score
< 500	0
< 1,000	1
< 3,000	2
< 6,000	3
< 12,000	4
< 25,000	5
< 50,000	6
< 100,000	7
< 150,000	8
< 200,000	9
> 200,000	10

Table A.2: scores for amount of stars

# A.2.2 Quality

Quality is determined by stars, documentation, and testing coverage. It is assumed that libraries with many users/stars and great documentation coverage have high quality. For feasibility reasons, this is checked for the top 25 downloaded dependencies.

Symbol	Note
*	predicate
-	not applicable
+	refers to the scores from Table A.2

Table A.3: special symbols

#### React

nr	Tag	Stars <sup>+</sup>	Documentation*	$\mathbf{Tests}^*$
1	facebook/react	10	yes	yes
2	vercel/next.js	8	yes	yes
3	facebook/react-native	8	yes	yes
4	facebook/create-react-app	8	yes	yes
5	mui/material-ui	7	yes	yes
6	ant-design/ant-design	7	yes	yes
7	storybookjs/storybook	7	yes	yes
8	enaqx/awesome-react	7	yes	-
9	leonardomso/33-js-concepts	7	yes	-
10	shaden-ui/ui	7	yes	yes
11	gatsbyjs/gatsby	7	yes	yes
12	facebook/docusaurus	7	yes	yes
13	remix-run/react-router	7	yes	yes
14	ionic-team/ionic-framework	7	yes	yes
15	meteor/meteor	6	yes	yes
16	pmndrs/zustand	6	yes	yes
17	appwrite/appwrite	6	yes	yes
18	streamich/react-use	6	yes	yes
19	brillout/awesome-react-components	6	yes	-
20	styled-components/styled-components	6	yes	yes
21	TanStack/query	6	yes	yes
22	react-hook-form/react-hook-form	6	yes	yes
23	chakra-ui/chakra-ui	6	yes	no
24	preactjs/preact	6	yes	yes
25	jaredpalmer/formik	6	yes	yes
_	Average	6.8	1	0.956

Table A.4: react ecosystem ratings

Score:  $(6.8/10 + 1 + 0.956)/3 = 0.878666 \cdots \approx 0.9$ 

## A.2.3 Size

The size is based on the amount of GitHub results for the solution name.

## Next-Gen Web Solutions

Range	Score
< 10,000	0
< 20,000	1
< 50,000	2
< 100,000	3
< 250,000	4
< 500,000	5
< 750,000	6
< 1,000,000	7
< 2,500,000	8
< 5,000,000	9
> 5,000,000	10

Table A.5: scores for size

### appendix B

# **Project Requirements**

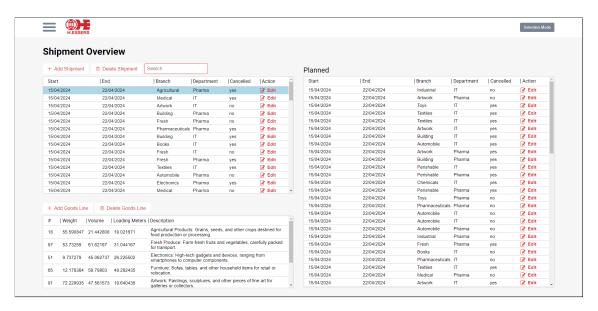


Figure B.1: general layout - https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-layout

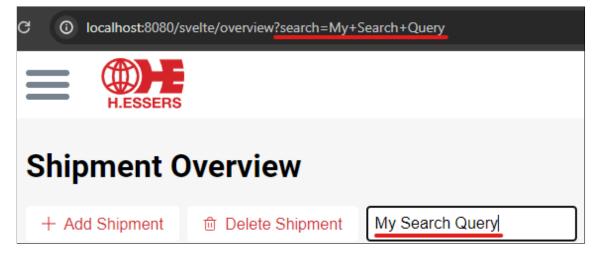


Figure B.2: interactive search - https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-search

Start	End	Branch	Department	Cancelled	Action
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Agricultural	Pharma	yes	☑ Edit
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Medical	IT	yes	
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Artwork	IT	no	
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Building	Pharma	no	
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Fresh	Pharma	no	
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Pharmaceuticals	Pharma	yes	
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Building	IT	yes	
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Books	IT	yes	☑ Edit
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Fresh	IT	no	☑ Edit
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Fresh	Pharma	yes	☑ Edit
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Textiles	IT	yes	☑ Edit
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Automobile	Pharma	no	
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Electronics	Pharma	yes	
15/04/2024	22/04/2024	Medical	Pharma	no	

 $Figure \ B.3: \ grid \ \hbox{-https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-grid}$ 

Start   End		Branch	Department	Cancelled	Action			
15/0	04/2024	22/	04/2024	Industrial	IT	no		
#	Weight	Volume	Loading Meters	Description				
65	27.126638	64.966286	31.183498	Books and Printe for libraries or re	ed Material: Novels, to	extbooks, and per	riodicals bound	
79	2.9077778	96.06974	25.74276	Chemicals: Various substances used in manufacturing, agriculture, or research.				
15/0	04/2024	22/	04/2024	Artwork	Pharma	no	Edit	
15/0	04/2024	22/	04/2024	Toys	IT	yes	Edit	
15/04/2024		22/	04/2024	Textiles	IT	yes	Edit	
15/0	04/2024	22/	04/2024	Textiles	IT	yes	Edit	
#	Weight	Volume	Loading Meters	Description				
40	79.72203	54.74606	48.205166	Fresh Produce: Farm-fresh fruits and vegetables, carefully packed for transport.				
54	91.31288	21.084251	45.297527	Books and Printed Material: Novels, textbooks, and periodicals bound for libraries or retailers.				
18	34.621483	87.52795	31.122179	Agricultural Products: Grains, seeds, and other crops destined for food production or processing.				
15/04/2024 22/04		04/2024	Artwork	IT	yes	Edit		
15/04/2024		22/	04/2024	Building	IT	yes		
#	Weight	Volume	Loading Meters	Description				
47	42.280685	33.08796	39.832283	Medical Supplies: Life-saving equipment, pharmaceuticals, and surgical instruments.				
54	50.115967	94.481834	2.2499146	Books and Printed Material: Novels, textbooks, and periodicals bound for libraries or retailers.				
81	49.358315	30.164183	8.355484	Agricultural Products: Grains, seeds, and other crops destined for food production or processing.				
6	90.32398	97.41022	13.202429	Chemicals: Various substances used in manufacturing, agriculture, or research.				

Figure B.4: grid in grid - https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-grid\_in\_grid

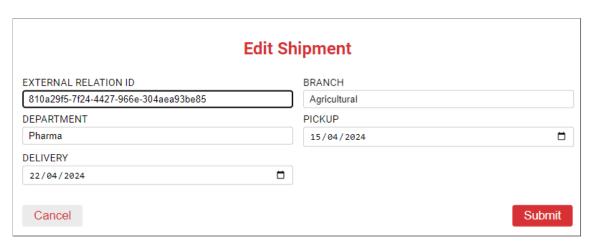


Figure B.5: form: https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-form\_1

NUMBER WEIGHT		/EIGHT	VOLUME LOADING ME	LOADING METERS		
ovida	a number.					
	RIPTION					
					\dd	
#	Weight	Volume	Loading Meters	Description	Action	
18	55.590	21.442	19.021671	Agricultural Products: Grains, seeds, and other crops destined for food production or processing.	Û	
97	53.73259	61.62197	31.044167	Fresh Produce: Farm-fresh fruits and vegetables, carefully packed for transport.	⑪	
51	9.737279	45.062	26.225502	Electronics: High-tech gadgets and devices, ranging from smartphones to computer components.	⑪	
65	12.178	59.79803	48.292435	Furniture: Sofas, tables, and other household items for retail or relocation.	Û	
91	72.229	47.561	19.640436	Artwork: Paintings, sculptures, and other piece of fine art for galleries or collectors.	s 🛍	
77	38.35904	70.86745	45.38122	Electronics: High-tech gadgets and devices, ranging from smartphones to computer components.		
64	93.228	43.245	40.926376	Medical Supplies: Life-saving equipment, pharmaceuticals, and surgical instruments.	Û	
74	82.90547	77.645	11.974808	Textiles: Rolls of fabric or finished garments, ready for distribution.	Û	

Figure B.6: form with grid - https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-form\_2

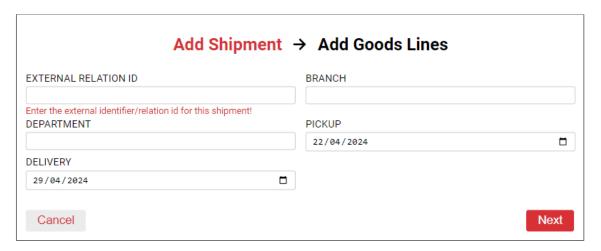


Figure B.7: wizard form: https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-wizard\_1

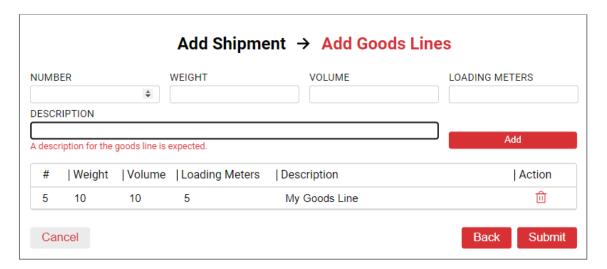


Figure B.8: wizard form with grid - https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-wizard\_2

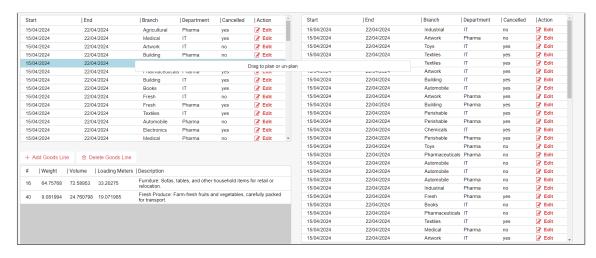


Figure B.9: drag and drop - https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-dnd

## localhost:8080/svelte/overview/bacc43cd-0b8a-4da8-bdc4-48591d54d42b/goodsline

Figure B.10: reflective routing - https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-routing\_1

### localhost:8080/svelte/overview/6d13e224-88de-46b0-bb1e-f332fa1e9a19/edit

Figure B.11: reflective routing - https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-routing 2

#### localhost:8080/svelte/overview/action?selected=6d13e224-88de-46b0-bb1e-f332fa1e9a19&type=plan

Figure B.12: reflective routing - https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-routing\_3

ocalhost:8080/svelte/overview/action?selected=6d13e224-88de-46b0-bb1e-f332fa1e9a19%2Cbacc43cd-0b8a-4da8-bdc4-48591d54d42b%2Cb44928a1-cd71-4ef8-bd66-8488cf709dca&type=plan-many

Figure B.13: reflective routing - https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-routing\_4

#### localhost:8080/svelte/overview/6d13e224-88de-46b0-bb1e-f332fa1e9a19/goodsline/new

Figure B.14: reflective routing - https://link.arthurdw.com/ngws-routing\_5