

MIKEWEST

Mike West is a web application developer who has professionally programmed for the web since 1998. By working on a wide variety of projects ranging from UI consulting to highly-scalable PHP websites, Mike has developed the experience and expertise to deliver quality solutions that *work* and build value for their users.



Applicable Buzzwords

PHP, JavaScript, AJAX, CSS, HTML, Perl, Ruby, UI
i18n, l10n, SQL, XML, XSLT, Object-Oriented

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Education

In 2003, I graduated from the **University of Texas at Austin** with a degree in Philosophy and minors in Computer Science and German. This liberal-arts background is fairly unusual among programmers; I see it as a distinct advantage. Philosophy, combined with my experience as a debater in high school, provides solid mechanisms for analyzing problems and crafting solutions in a clear and systematic way.

I left Texas in December 2005, eventually landing in Munich, Germany. Currently, I'm part of the team at Yahoo! Deutschland, building and maintaining the European versions of the simply massive **news.yahoo.com**

Expertise

I do the vast majority of my programming work in **PHP**: at Yahoo!, PHP is my team's language of choice, powering everything on the News site. At Dallas Airmotive my team designed and built a large-scale, **object-oriented PHP** system that touched every part of the organization. At RightNow, I customized a PHP CRM for clients' individual needs and integrated it into various backend systems. **Apache** and **MySQL** running on some flavour of **Unix** drive all three of these systems.

JavaScript has also become a critical part of any web application's **UI**. I've published a number of articles regarding its unobtrusive use, and released an easy to integrate, event-driven **AJAX** library as open source (MIT license).

Elegant JavaScript-based UI improvements must, of course, be intertwined with well constructed HTML documents. Generally, I hand-code sites' **CSS** and **HTML**, adhering to standards as strictly as is reasonable.

I have used **XML** and **XSLT** fairly extensively as a clean mechanism for data transfer between application components, both server-side in PHP and client-side through JavaScript.

Beyond my frontend proficiencies, **I understand SQL** and can design and work with complex relational databases. **I can communicate intelligently** with technical and non-technical audiences. Relatedly, **I can write documentation** for my team and for the end-user.

Recent Experience

Web Developer at Yahoo!

Nov. 2006 – Present

In 2006 I helped build the current iteration of Yahoo! News in the European market. I worked closely with the engineering, user experience, and product groups to construct a frontend framework that simultaneously supports users in *five languages*, and serves well over ten million hits daily without breaking a sweat. Through the latter half of 2007 and first half of 2008, I was the sole web developer on the project, responsible for frontend maintenance from top to bottom. This is the biggest site I've ever worked on, and it's a thrill.

Application Engineer at RightNow Technologies

Mar. 2005 – Jan. 2006

I worked directly with clients to customize RightNow's complete CRM solution to meet their needs and to integrate it into pre-existing backend systems. My role ranged from small tweaks to the software's UI, up to sweeping rewrites that created completely new functionality. Both on- and off-site, I served clients like Motorola, Orbitz, and PricewaterhouseCoopers, and was responsible both for scoping each project and implementing the scoped changes.

Web Programmer at Dallas Airmotive

Aug. 2003 – Mar. 2005

I helped design and implement Turbine Update: a suite of applications responsible for internal ticket tracking for IT and maintenance departments, and for a client-facing system allowing customers to track their engines' repair status. It's a large, object-oriented PHP system that touches literally every department in the company.

My responsibilities included aspects of the project's entire life-cycle, including gathering initial requirements, documenting specifications, designing database models, building various user interfaces, writing large chunks of the backend interfaces, and squashing annoying bugs. I also wrote the end-user documentation.