GOMYCODE.

Introduction

Up until now, we have made incredible progess in frontend web development and learned most of what there is to know. However, there is one more thing that is necessary for our frontend application to communicate with the backend server.

To make that communication happen, we use APIs. In this section, we are going to see:

- What is an API?

- What are web services?

- What is the request/response approach?
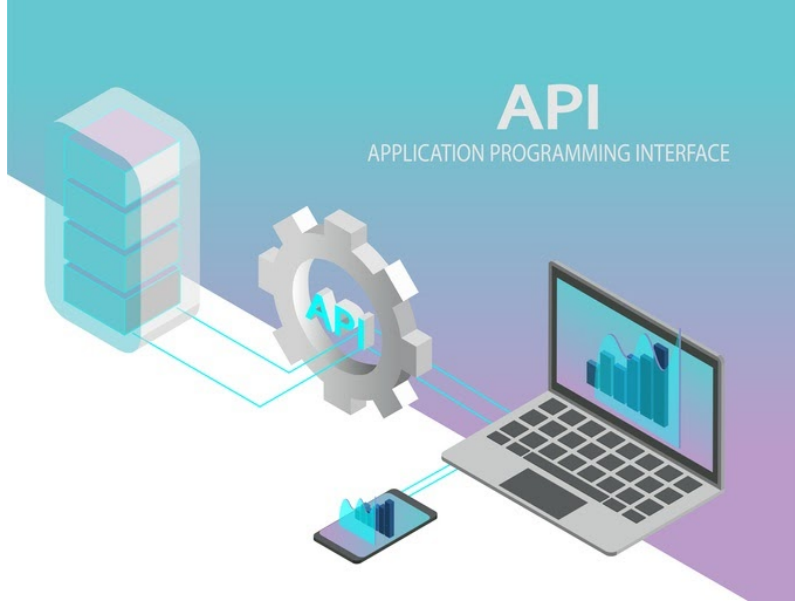

What Are APIs Simply Explained

Understanding API

What Is an API?

The term "API" stands for Application Programming Interface. If you break that down word by word, you can get a pretty good grasp of what it means.

An API is an interface that can be used to develop software that interacts with an existing application.

In practice, an API is "a set of functions and procedures" that allows you to access and build upon the data and functionality of an existing application.

🏴 Example

To describe the concept in further detail, we need to comprehend the basics. Let's start with the analogy of a restaurant menu. When we go to a restaurant to eat, we choose from what is provided in the menu. At this point, we convey our choices to the waiter. He/she then takes our order to the chef who prepares our meal and our food arrives so we can enjoy a nice meal. At this stage, it's only natural to ask ourselves: do we know what the chef used to cook our fish or steak? How was it prepared? This back-and-forth analogy serves as a starting point for our explanation.

Why? Because with an API, we really don't know what's going on behind the scenes at the restaurant. All we really know is that we gave our order, it was processed and out comes our dinner on a nice plate.

Let's get back to the web development world. The API provides us with data that we do not necessarily know how it has been created or served.