




Syk Houdeib


@Syknapse <JS-React Frontend Developer />

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I'm a frontend developer based in Madrid, with a focus on the last-mile sector since 2018. My journey began at Lola Market, a startup specializing in on-demand grocery, which was later acquired by Glovo, and subsequently by Delivery Hero. During that time I worked on marketplace and operations tools.

As a career-changer who transitioned into tech from teaching at the age of 40, I've written a [widely-read article](#) about my path, sharing insights from my experience.

I'm passionate about solving problems through code and thrive in environments where continuous learning fuels my curiosity and growth as a developer.

Beyond my technical role, I actively mentor juniors and advocate for career-changers and increased diversity in tech, I enjoy incorporating my teaching experience into my role.

Skills

JavaScript

React

TypeScript

Next.js

Jest

Redux

► Experience

Glovo, Madrid (full remote) – 2021 - 2024

Software Engineer II

Glovo is a delivery app, market leader in Spain with a strong international presence and is considered one of the most relevant unicorns in Spain. They acquired Lola Market in 2021 in a push to expand their Q-commerce division and I formed part of the tech team entrusted with that task. We developed a brand new back-office SaaS solution from scratch to manage the grocery delivery operations.

Tech:

React, TypeScript, Jest, React Testing Library, Next.js, Auth0, KrakenD, Material UI, Google Maps, React Context, GitHub, GitHub CI/CD, Yarn, Lokalise, i18next, Emotion, Node, DayJS, ESLint, React Hook Form, Prettier

Highlights include:



Creating the new project

As part of the squad in charge of creating the SaaS tools I played an influential role in deciding the early direction of the project, the overall architecture, the tech stack, and the best practice and code style guide. I helped in always keeping in mind the business needs and expectations and choosing the tools that will help us achieve those goals. And ensuring productive meetings that focus on the utility and practical aspects and not on pointless tech debates.



Delivering the product

Under strong time pressure we managed to successfully finish the v1 and deploy it to production on time to meet the product requirements. We then started iterating, making improvements and adding new features. Our internal architecture following the needs of the product, starting simple to meet the deadlines and only adding more complexity when it became strictly needed to scale.



Documentation

There's nothing better than a well-documented project. And I completely took advantage of this being a new project to make sure it had the best documentation possible.



Features

Fully internationalised (translations and timezones). Access controlled by Authorisation using Auth0. User restricted content based on roles and permissions. Operations tools including maps to create and show areas and locations, delivery fleet management, and orders.



Mentoring and leadership

Continued my role as a mentor. And since the start of 2024 took on leadership role for the frontend team. Worked to keep the team on the same page with a clear vision of the roadmap. Maintained high standards and led the efforts to keep our project consistent and scalable.

Lola Market, Madrid – 2018 - 2021

Frontend Developer

Lola Market is a Madrid startup that provides on-demand grocery. I joined as a junior with no experience as part of a team of two frontends. I've been involved in all the development tasks of the department over the years. From the web app, to the back-office tools, to emails.

Over that time we became the market leader in Spain and eventually got acquired by Glovo.

Tech:

React, Next.js, Redux, Immutable, Saga, Yarn, Algolia Search, StoryBook, MJML, Backbone, jQuery, Bitbucket

Highlights include:



Making the site responsive and mobile friendly

Going from a 100% desktop site to a mobile first site.



Full migration from Backbone to React + Redux

Experimenting with the right tech stack. Starting development in React. Deciding to migrate all legacy code.



Internationalisation of the platform

We implemented translations from scratch across the entire site. Handling prices in different currencies. Handling time and date in different timezones.



White label theming

Changing all our CSS files to JSS to allow for different themes. Integrating the site with a third party mobile app using themes and feature flags. Integrated our platform with Cabify (a transport Spanish unicorn) and AliExpress.



SSR with Next.js and SEO improvements

Created server side rendering for all our pages. Made many SEO improvements, and optimised performance with web vitals, which saw a dramatic rise in organic traffic and first page indexing for searches of products on the platform.



Hiring and mentoring

Led the hiring process of a new frontend developer. Selection, interviews, code test. Became a mentor for the new junior team member, helping with the code and tooling **onboarding**. Doing pair programming to work on tasks together. Resolving doubts. Spotting areas for improvement and setting up workshops to explore the subject together



Create bespoke back-office tools

Working with business and operations departments to create back-office tools. Such as building a warehouse management tool from scratch, a stock management tool, and maintaining dispatching tools.



Email system

Setting up a brand new email templating system with MJML and React to serve responsive HTML emails to the backend transactional emails.

Some of my daily tasks and tools are:

- Using **Git** and **Git Flow/semver** to manage versions/branches/releases
- Participating in cross departmental **refinement meetings** to develop feature ideas based on data and **A/B test** results
- Working with UI/UX teams to come up with the best solutions to the problems we are trying to solve
- Working closely with the backend team to develop the API with performance in mind
- Developing new **features**, fixing **bugs**, dealing with **hotfixes**, maintaining code, doing **scout** duties to improve code quality and **scalability**
- Doing **code reviews** for all frontend pull requests. We put a lot of emphasis on **code quality**. We use **Prettier** and **ESLint** to keep everything uniform and clean
- Participating with the QA team in the review process. Working with them on **Cypress** end to end test implementations.
- Managing **releases**, **deploying**, monitoring, and keeping the repos organised



Education

BA(Hons) Creative Music Technology

University of Hull. Scarborough, UK – 2003 – 2006

Graduated with a **First Class BA Honours** degree with a 90% score on the final long study

Nanodegree Front End Web Developer

Udacity, online – 2017

Received a full Google scholarship.

More about me

Languages



Fluent in

English, Spanish, Lebanese, and Arabic

Other experiences

English teacher *Madrid & Granada – (2008 - 2018)*

- Worked mainly with primary school kids
- Became the **coordinator** of an academy responsible for a team of 15 teachers

Restaurant business *Beirut, Amman, Ankara, Sharm el Sheikh, & Bournemouth – (1996 - 2003)*

- Became an international trainer for Hard Rock Café at 19yo. Opened new cafés around the Middle East and trained dozens in service and the use of the POS system.
- Managed a pizzeria in England for 3 years

The interesting stuff



Comfortable with leadership roles and coordinating teams, even though my main focus for now is on coding.



I love to write. You can [read some of my tech articles here](#). I've been published by FreeCodeCamp, Hackernoon, HoneyPot's .Cult, and Better Programming.



I'm very proud of my 32k+ GitHub stars and 33k forks that my Github projects have received. I'm active in the dev community through my Twitter, GitHub projects, and my articles. I enjoy participating in the community and giving a hand to those on a similar journey to mine.



I'm a lifelong learner and deeply curious with an incurable desire to learn and understand everything! Apart from programming, I'm excited about linguistics, music, history, sciences, everything!



I like to say that I was born in hummus, I'm a Marmite citizen, and I live in Patatas Bravas. This is in reference to being born in Lebanon, being a British national, and living in Spain. And of course my love of food and cooking.



I started a rock band as a teen.



I enjoy swimming and running.
