

Alex Birdsall

FULL STACK WEB DEVELOPER

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I care about solving problems and I hope to build beautiful, logically interesting things, working in a team that cares about learning and mentorship.

Jan '17–Present The Emoji Dictionary

php 7 I've been doing side consulting for The Emoji
Apache Foundation's crowdsourced Emoji Dictionary. The initial
build scripts work has focused on human-readable URLs, rewriting
SEO queries, building appropriate database indexes, and
other SEO and performance fundamentals, as well as
extracting shared templates and refactoring old code for
better semantics and maintainability.

Aug '16–Present Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law

ES2015 Cornell Law School picked up the Lawfetcher project,
yarn rebranding it as RIO (Read It Online) and hiring me on
karma test runner to maintain and expand it. I refactored and completed
build scripts test coverage of the domain logic; wrote code to parse a
browser caching broader set of citation types and link to more sources;
converted the build chain to transpile modular ES2015
application code and tests; and implemented a browser
cache-busting scheme using md5-based filename
fingerprinting (modeled after [Rails' asset pipeline](#)),
enabling both frequent, iterative code deployment and
efficient caching.

Jan '16–July '16 **Flock**

Rails 4 As software engineer for an HR and compliance startup,
rspec I worked with the entire stack from stylesheets to server
Middleman ops. I maintained Middleman static sites for the
Backbone company's landing page and blog as well as its Rails app.
SCSS I personally implemented secure and user-friendly
encryption & auth integrations with TraxPayroll and Greenhouse.io, which
involved complicated data mapping, multiple forms of
encryption, and, at times, working with out-of-date and
contradictory documentation. I organized both the
stylesheets and javascript directories, each comprising
dozens of files (some, at the time, several thousand
lines); and in general, worked hard to advocate for
consistency of data modeling, API boundaries, and
abstraction on a codebase, initially built by foreign
contractors, that left much to be desired in those
regards.

Aug '15–Dec '15 **Lawfetcher**

Javascript A freelance project in collaboration with Prof. Peter W.
npm Martin of Cornell Law. A free tool for legal writing, it
jasmine semantically parses US legal citations and program-
build scripts matically builds direct links to the full text in various
browserify free and subscription services. Techniques borrowed
from OOJS, functional- and aspect-oriented
programming paradigms; more regular expressions
than you can shake a stick at.

Jan–Mar '15 **Magoosh**

MySQL I worked as a junior dev with Magoosh, a leader in
Rails 3 online test prep based in Berkeley. I shipped many
CoffeeScript features, including auto-tagging for support tickets, an
HAML instructor dashboard, an in-house A/B testing library,
Bootstrap and a photo upload system for static pages. I focused
intensely on improving the design quality and
professionalism of my code.

Sept '14 **Susteq**

Ruby on Rails I was part of a team that, in one week, built and
PostgreSQL deployed a Rails app for Susteq, a Dutch non-profit. We
HAML worked with the client to develop and implement a set
SASS of features to monitor data from water points and sales
kiosks across Kenya and dynamically generate graphs
and tables using NVD3.js.

Jul–Sept '14 **Dev Bootcamp**

Ruby An immersive 19-week web development program.
Ruby on Rails Over the final 9 weeks alone, I worked over 1000 hours
Sinatra at the San Francisco campus in an intensely
Javascript collaborative environment that emphasized hands-on
jQuery learning, empathy, communication, and problem-
*NIX solving.
HTTP
HTML
CSS

Summer '12 & '13 **Portland Community College**

While employed at Art 4 Life, independently pursued interests in Statistics and Computer Science. Where I discovered how much I enjoy programming.

Nov '12–Jun '14 **Art 4 Life**

As Head Teacher, I ran the daily operations of an after-school art program for 2nd and 3rd graders at North Portland's Chief Joseph Elementary. Between coming up with daily projects and managing a group of 30 kids, a constant exercise in communication and off-the-cuff creativity.

Class of '08 **Cornell College**

B.A. in English, minor in Music. Received 2007 Winnifred Van Etten Award for Creative and Scholarly Excellence.

Though seemingly unrelated, my studies centered on an interest in how human expression exists within and is influenced by logically analyzable systems like syntax, music theory, or grammar. I have found this to be surprisingly good preparation for the work of programming.