Juho Vepsäläinen

I've been working with computers since I was a small kid though I became more serious about programming only during my university studies. It was during that time that I became interested in open source and eventually the path led me to found my own company, SurviveJS Oy, built around educating people about JavaScript. I also became involved in the founding of Finland's first React and GraphQL conferences and at the moment operate as a conference director.

I moved to Vienna from Finland around 2017 and since then I've become perhaps more cosmopolitan and cultural person. The time I've spent in Austria has made me appreciate Finnish culture and I returned to Rautalampi, Finland in 2021 after witnessing the impact of the pandemic on city life and culture in general.

By now, I'm an experienced developer, author, and consultant. I'm a known figure in the community and I've been awarded for my efforts (Blue Arrow Awards). I've also been listed twice on the influential ICT persons of the year by Tietoviikko (2019, 2020).

Education - 2001-2004

- 2001-2004 – **Abitur/Technician (electronics)**, *Jyväskylä Educational Consortium*, Electronics and general education (English etc.)
- 2005-2011 – **Master of Science**, *University of Jyväskylä*, Mathematical Information Technology (final grade 4/5), Mathematics (3/5), Growth Venturing (4/5). ECTS total 366.

Pre-freelancing Experience - 2005-2011

- 2005-2009 – **Volunteer, Maintainer**, *Blender*, Wiki maintenance, software development (C, patch review, design)
- 2008-2010 – **3D Modeler, Programmer, Research Assistant**, *University of Jyväskylä*, 3D modeling (Blender) and development (Django, AS2, MediaWiki) for research purposes
- 2010-2011 – **Contractor**, *Mixart New Media LLC*, JavaScript and HTML5 Canvas development

- 2011 Summer – **Software Designer**, *Fudeco Oy*. I developed a Django based backend and a frontend (jQuery) related to forums (moderation) for a local media consortium

Freelancing Experience - 2011-2014

I was a freelancer between 2011 and 2015. My first actual case was in 2010-2011. During that I developed a Canvas element based drawing tool for RateMyDrawings.com. Technologically it was based on RequireJS (module system) and RightJS (jQuery clone).

During 2012 and 2013 I participated in the local startup scene and went through a couple of failures. Incidentally a hobby project, http://jster.net/ (http://jster.net/), became the biggest success of this era.

For NDA reasons I cannot disclose details on my work always but the following should give you idea of the type of work I performed during this period:

- Maintenance on healthcare related ASP.NET MVC project
- QR code based discovery portal using Django
- UI based on given PSD using Django for Fudeco, an earlier employer
- Photo editor (JS, jQuery) and scraping (Node.js) for http://brgen.no/ (http://brgen.no/) . This includes work with Ruby on Rails too.
- NetDNA (Node.js, Angular, Ionic) - https://github.com/MaxCDN/iptell (https://github.com/MaxCDN/iptell), https://github.com/MaxCDN/osscdn (https://github.com/MaxCDN/osscdn), https://github.com/MaxCDN/ionic-mobile-maxcdn (https://github.com/MaxCDN/ionic-mobile-maxcdn)
- Widget development, including backend, on a significant website platform
- Slideshow editor concept design and prototype - https://github.com/bebraw/template_editor (https://github.com/bebraw/template_editor)
- Scrapers for an iPhone app
- Angular.js consultancy (multiple projects)
- React.js consultancy (single project)

Entrepreneur at SurviveJS - 2015-

Given freelancing wasn't the most fulfilling way for me to live my life, I deduced that I should change my direction. As a result I started authoring technical books related to topics such as React, webpack, and maintenance under the SurviveJS brand. So far I've sold over 5000 books self-published. In addition, I've performed training and consulting related to the topics.

During this period I had to develop my technical writing and marketing skills and in short doing this changed everything and eventually led me to moving to Vienna, a new environment.

I was awarded for my efforts in 2017 as I was named as the Finnish Code Ambassador by Blue Arrow Awards.

In 2018, I began to organize technical conferences in Finland with a small group of other developers in a voluntary manner. The first event, React Finland held in April, was a great success. It sold out two months before the conference and had around 300 attendees. The three day conference gave us enough confidence to organize another event in October. GraphQL Finland was smaller in scope and although not sold out, it had over 150 attendees and was well received by the community.

The second edition of React Finland in 2019 was even a greater success and it reached 400 attendees while gaining highly favorable feedback. The event was a major step for the brand and overall execution of the event was on a good level. As a director, I was responsible for the overall planning, certain technical bits (asset generator, site), and marketing (content marketing supported by other initiatives).

The third edition of React Finland in 2020 has been full of challenges due to the ongoing pandemic and it has taught a lot about crisis messaging and management while forcing the team to cope with the shifting business environment.

On SurviveJS side, I've focused more on consulting since 2017 due to demand. I've listed some of my clients below:

- Kapsch - Angular and webpack consulting (workshop) in collaboration with an external developer
- eBay - Workshops (webpack, React) and on-site consulting
- Kleiner Perkins - Remote consulting as a pair in an internal development project (React, design systems)
- ViewAR - On-site consulting as a pair in an internal development project (React, GraphQL, design systems)
- Adverity - On-site/remote consulting to improve internal development tooling (webpack)
- Stagirite - Remote consulting for an upcoming product

In addition, I've run numerous of workshops in countries around Europe. Sometimes these have been done for a specific business and occasionally I've run them in conferences. The topics have been mainly webpack and React related although I've done occasional marketing consulting as well.

During my time in Vienna I was one of the organizers of ViennaJS, React Vienna, and Tech Movie Night meetups while being active and known figure in the community. I picked up the basics of German and appreciation for different cultures in that period.

Open Source Experience

My story with open source begins with Blender. Incidentally I came upon the project through a university course during which I needed to perform some 3D modeling. As it happens one thing lead to another and I ended up modifying the codebase and submitting changes as patches. My previous experience with embedded C came in handy. Eventually I became a maintainer of the node editor of the application and even visited annual Blender Conference a few times, once a speaker.

Since then I have done plenty of development on my own. Most of my projects are available under my GitHub account (https://github.com/bebraw (https://github.com/bebraw)). Besides these some reside below the account of a local geek collective, Geek Collision, which I helped to establish (https://github.com/geekcollision (https://github.com/geekcollision)). I've listed a few examples below. Not all of them might be popular but that doesn't mean they aren't useful.

- webpack-merge - https://github.com/survivejs/webpack-merge (https://github.com/survivejs/webpack-merge) – webpack-merge is the de facto solution for merging webpack configurations and it has millions of downloads every week.
- Sidewind - https://sidewind.js.org/ (https://sidewind.js.org/) – Sidewind is my take on state management within HTML to achieve light, interactive HTML markup.
- Gustwind - https://gustwind.js.org/ (https://gustwind.js.org/) – Gustwind is a static site generator built around JSON with Deno. It's both fast and flexible.
- Reactabular - https://reactabular.js.org/ (https://reactabular.js.org/) – Reactabular is a framework for building the React table you need.
- colorjoe - http://bebraw.github.io/colorjoe/ (http://bebraw.github.io/colorjoe/) – colorjoe was born out of frustration with existing color pickers. All I could find relied on external images. I decided to take another approach and implement

the whole thing in JavaScript and CSS. Based on popularity this wasn't a bad choice.

- Elovalo - https://github.com/elovalo/elovalo (https://github.com/elovalo/elovalo) – Elovalo is a led cube project (AVR). I helped to design and implement its effect system and developed a simulation system based on Blender (http://hackaday.com/2012/09/03/simulating-led-cubes-in-blender/ (http://hackaday.com/2012/09/03/simulating-led-cubes-in-blender/)). In addition I developed a JavaScript based IDE with interactive editing for the project, https://github.com/elovalo/webide (https://github.com/elovalo/webide) .
- React Finland infrastructure - https://github.com/ReactFinland (https://github.com/ReactFinland) – During my time with React Finland and conferences, I've developed a wide variety of technology for our purposes including our GraphQL API, websites, and tooling to generate conference graphics and presentations.

In addition, I was a core developer of webpack for many years and helped to establish the project as a mainstream option for bundling. I've developed infrastructure to support my business. The work includes GraphQL APIs, React frontends, websites, and supporting tooling.

Publications

- Vepsäläinen, Juho. "Human, Time and Landscape-Blender as a content production tool." Blender Conference. Vol. 3. 2008.
- "SurviveJS - Webpack and React". Self-published through Leanpub. 2015.
- "SurviveJS - Webpack". Self-published through Leanpub. 2016.
- "SurviveJS - React". Self-published through Leanpub. 2016.

The books are available through https://survivejs.com/ (https://survivejs.com/) and also in eBook formats. The webpack book is also available on paper through Amazon.

Languages

- English – **Excellent**, *High grades (both abitur and university)* and proof in form of success as a technical author
- Finnish – **Excellent**, *Native*
- German – **Basic**, *B1* most likely, I use and learn German actively

- Swedish – **Elementary**, I've forgotten most but likely I could pick it up fast if needed

Computer Skills

- Programming Languages – JavaScript, TypeScript, Python, C
- JavaScript frameworks/libraries – jQuery, React
- Version Control – git
- Technologies – Deno, Node.js, Blender, vim, Visual Studio Code, webpack

In addition to computer skills, I know the value of soft ones. In essence, most software problems can be traced down to a softer issue somewhere and I believe as developers we should do far more than only to develop.

Interests

- Art – I enjoy drawing and painting
- Chess – I don't play as much as I used to but it's still interesting
- Foraging – I am a big fan of picking berries and mushrooms
- Sports – I hike and cycle regularly