BEN HICKSON

SOFTWARE ENGINEER

✉ bzhickson@gmail.com
🌐 benhickson.com
📞 423-715-6852
📍 Brooklyn, NY
in benhickson
⌂ benhickson

Full-stack engineer experienced with React, Angular, and Rails, and fluent in JavaScript, PHP, and Ruby. Excellent at independent and collaborative work with distributed teams.

Background in the media industry, focused on technical mastery, project management, and client relations, with a track record of delivering work on-time, to-spec, and in-budget. Interested in leveraging technology in projects that can benefit society in profound ways.

Skills

FRAMEWORKS
Angular
React
Ruby on Rails
Flask
Express
Wordpress

LANGUAGES
JavaScript
PHP
TypeScript
Ruby
Python
SQL

SKILLS
Application Architecture and Design
Open-source (OSS)
Cloud Deployment
Project Planning and Management

MEDIA
File Compression and Delivery Optimization
Video Editing
2D Animation
Color Grading
Sound Mixing

Experience

Our Hometown Remote | Brooklyn, NY
Software Engineer August 2020 - Current
- Developed a system to orchestrate the error logs and performance analytics of a network of 200+ production websites into a centralized dashboard.
- Work with engineering team to handle client requests, collaborating via a ticket system.
- Currently: Developing a new theme framework to deploy across the network of sites.

Lonelyleap Film Brooklyn, NY
Technical Manager 2013 - 2020
- Managed the post-production department (resources and staff), supervised output, and optimized storage processes.
- Worked directly with clients and led production teams on many projects, with budgets ranging from $50k - $300k, for a wide variety of clients, including Google, Nokia, and Uber.
- Developed a web app to enable globally-distributed teams to upload video assets to a centralized server, implemented a video transcode queue, and built tagging and search functionality. Integrated it into our project workflow, and deployed it to our team.
- Developed a web app to manage credit card transactions, which enabled all cardholders to categorize expenses by project and expense type, organizing the data for project managers, and exporting files which can be imported into quickbooks automatically. Integrated an automated polling system for the bank's OFX API endpoints to get new transactions daily, and integrated with the Cloudinary API to allow users to upload receipt images.

Projects

Go Room
App Backend (Rails) | Poker Backend (NodeJS) | Frontend (Angular) | Portfolio Page | Live Site
Browser-based group video chat app (nothing to install!), with extensibility at its core. Perfect for social distancing!
- Implemented as an Angular (version 9) application, with components built for efficient memory management.
- Implemented main backend as a Rails API with a MySQL database, handling authentication with JWT.
- Built a complete multiplayer poker application, leveraging websockets (socket.io), on a NodeJS / Express backend.
- Multi-backend authentication is handled using federated JWTs.
- Implemented a paradigm of authenticated anonymous users, to increase conversions.

The Bad Idea Machine
Backend (Rails) | Frontend (React) | Portfolio Page | Live Site
Idea Generation Application for Advertising Creatives
- Trained a GPT-2-based neural network to generate ideas in the form of a short "pitch".
- React frontend, Rails backend, JWT Authentication
- Deployed with Netlify and Heroku

Traversalist
GitHub | Portfolio Page | Live Site
A website featuring articles across different themes, at the intersection of science, philosophy, and society.
- Implemented custom routing functionality, optimizing requests for speed.
- Developed a custom image generation and caching engine with the PHP Imagick module, to optimize images.
- Developed a consistent, easy-to-use API for interacting with the image engine and requesting resources.

Stock Archive
GitHub | Portfolio Page
Content management system for video teams, surfacing unused footage with team members around the world.
- Envisioned, created, and deployed the application in my company, building it into our processes.
- Implemented automation queues to transcode uploaded assets into multiple resolutions and thumbnails.
- Implemented a custom media server to access transcoded assets with a consistent API.
- Built custom tagging and search engine functionality.
- Ensured full security for uploaded assets, and all access is logged for regulatory compliance.
- Integrated Clarifai's AI-powered image recognition technology.

Education

Flatiron School 2020 - 2020
Full Stack Web Development Immersive, Ruby on Rails and React

Middle Tennessee State University 2007 - 2011
BBA, Finance