

Chris Dorward

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Fullstack JavaScript Developer

Deep expertise in React and TypeScript, currently specialising in Next.js.

20+ years delivering scalable web applications for startups, enterprises, and remote-first teams across the UK, Europe, Australia & beyond.

Recent projects demonstrate ability to design and deliver ring-fenced AI systems, integrating local models and secure workflows into real-world applications.

Using AI as a genuine development accelerator — not a shortcut. With the right approach, AI delivers production-grade results faster and cleaner, cutting shipping time by 2–3× with fewer bugs.

Track record of building high-performance UIs. Equally effective leading projects or collaborating in agile teams. Thrives on clear briefs, clean code, and cultures that value delivery. Outside of work? write, surf, dive, ski.

Skills

- *Specialisms:* TypeScript, Vanilla JavaScript (ES6+), React, Node.js, Next.js (App Router)
- *Frameworks & Libraries:* React, Vue, React Native, Next.js, Redux, Zustand, Express, jQuery, Laminas, Bootstrap
- *PHP Experience:* Longstanding experience with PHP, primarily through WordPress, Drupal, and Magento development, following MVC principles and using Composer for dependency management
- *Style:* Vanilla CSS, Material UI, Tailwind CSS, Styled Components, Figma
- *Database:* NoSQL, Firestore, Supabase, MongoDB, DynamoDB, MySQL, PostgreSQL, SQL
- *Cloud & Infrastructure:* AWS (Lambda, API Gateway, DynamoDB, S3, CloudFormation), Serverless Architectures, CloudWatch, Terraform, Docker, ECS
- *APIs:* REST, GraphQL, TRPC, OpenAI
- *Testing & QA:* Jest, React Testing Library, Cucumber (BDD), Gherkin, Code Reviews, Automated Testing
- *DevOps & Workflow:* CI/CD (GitHub Actions, Netlify Deploy), MERN Stack, Linux (MAMP stack), GitFlow, Agile/SCRUM, Git, GitHub, GitLab, Bitbucket, Vercel, Firebase (Auth, Firestore, Storage), Netlify, Turborepo, Webpack, Jira, Confluence

- *CMS*: Headless CMS (Strapi, Contentful), WordPress, Drupal
- *Other*: Progressive Web Apps (PWA), Static Site Generation (SSG), Server-Side Rendering (SSR), Raspberry Pi & Python, Data Visualisation (Chart.js, Recharts, D3.js), Secure Programming (OWASP), Observability Tooling

Experience

Freelance Software Developer — AI & Web Projects

Remote — May 2025 to Present

Working independently on several speculative AI and web projects, exploring practical applications of emerging models and tools

Built and deployed a fully ring-fenced local LLM environment using Ollama with the phi3 model, integrating it into a Next.js workflow and extending automation with Python scripts for data processing and tooling.

Prototyping and documenting experimental apps (including Abgeschottet KI) that combine LLM integration, secure deployment patterns, and scalable frontend architecture.

Designed and delivered real-world Next.js apps and Open Source tooling that offer developers professional-grade workflows.

Frontend Developer — VU.CITY

Contract

London / Hybrid — Apr 2023 to May 2025

- Leading the development of internal tools and the Admin Portal using Next.js (App Router), Firebase Auth, and Firestore
- Architecting a modular frontend platform to power multiple apps with a shared design system based on MUI
- Building event-driven interfaces that integrate with external systems, including AWS and internal APIs
- Championing best practices across accessibility, performance, and developer experience
- Supporting wider digital twin product strategy with tooling, documentation, and UI infrastructure

Full Stack JavaScript Developer — Atrackt!

Malta — Jun 2021 to Apr 2023

- Worked closely with the CTO as part of a lean, cross-functional team
- Delivered high-performance static and PWA sites using Gatsby (Node + React)

- Integrated Headless CMS platforms like Contentful and Strapi
- Used Material UI Design System across all frontends for consistent UX
- Also served as Scrum Master when needed, facilitating agile delivery

Product Lead — Wanngi

Brisbane, Australia — Jun 2020 to Nov 2020

- Led the redevelopment of a legacy Angular PWA into a new React-based platform with , Supabase
- Architected and implemented core framework features using custom open-source tooling
- Oversaw a small engineering team and coordinated cross-functional delivery

Senior Frontend Developer — Codeworx

Brisbane, Australia — Sep 2019 to Feb 2020

- Migrated a legacy poker app from CoffeeScript/jQuery to a modern React-based PWA and React Native App
- Refactored critical UI flows to improve maintainability and performance
- Delivered incremental improvements while maintaining stability for existing users

Senior Frontend Developer — Rexlabs

Brisbane, Australia — Mar 2019 to Aug 2019

- Supported transition from legacy PHP/Knockout stack to a React/Redux frontend
- Contributed to modularizing the UI and improving developer experience
- Mentored junior developers during migration sprints

React Developer — Boral

Contract

Sydney, Australia — Aug 2018 to Feb 2019 (Contract)

- Built foundational test architecture using Cucumber, Gherkin, and BDD principles
- Developed and tested multiple React PWAs with AWS Amplify and GraphQL
- Enabled CI/CD workflows to support rapid feature deployment

Senior Frontend Developer — Canon Australia

Contract

Sydney, Australia — Mar 2018 to Aug 2018 (Contract)

- Led frontend development of a full-featured Progressive Web App from scratch
- Architected state management with Redux and persistent store
- Integrated multiple SaaS APIs and delivered UX enhancements across devices

Frontend Engineer — Aligent Consulting

Adelaide, Australia — Apr 2017 to Mar 2018

- Developed and maintained frontend themes for high-traffic Magento e-commerce sites
- Created custom JavaScript (ES6) modules to enhance user experience, including complex checkout flows
- Built commercial-grade Progressive Web Apps (PWAs) in React for mobile-first performance
- Worked closely with design and backend teams to deliver polished, conversion-optimized user interfaces

Fullstack Developer — usTwo

Contract

Sydney, Australia — Jan 2017 to Feb 2017 (Contract)

- Lead developer for the Cancer Council NSW's Healthy Lunchbox app
- Built a React frontend connected to a WordPress CMS via the new REST API
- Developed custom PHP endpoints and WordPress plugins
- Used modern tooling including ES6, Webpack, and GitFlow

Front End Software Engineer — Alcidion

Adelaide, Australia — Aug 2016 to Nov 2016 (Contract)

- Built frontend interfaces for a real-time hospital bed management system using React and Redux
- Worked in a tight-knit, fast-paced SCRUM team delivering critical medical software
- Focused on performance, usability, and reliability in a healthcare context

Contract JavaScript Developer — Huawei

Shenzhen, China — Feb 2016 to May 2016

- Built an isomorphic JavaScript project management app using React and Node.js
- Worked within a small, agile development team
- Contributed to localisation efforts for Chinese-language users
- Gained hands-on experience in a Chinese corporate environment

Contract JavaScript Developer — The Changing Workplace

London — Sep 2015 to Jan 2016

- Contributed to a large-scale SaaS platform for facilities management
- Developed frontend JavaScript applications handling complex, high-volume

- datasets

- Consumed RESTful APIs and collaborated across backend and QA teams

- Enterprise clients included Microsoft and General Electric

Self-Employed Web Developer — Listingslab

Remote / Global — Jul 2007 to Jul 2015

- Ran a solo consultancy delivering full-stack web development
- Specialized in WordPress Multisite, custom plugins, and responsive theme design
- Built mobile-first UIs using HTML5, CSS3, and jQuery
- Worked with distributed teams using GitHub and agile workflows

Senior Developer — Velo//

London — Oct 2010 to Dec 2011

- Developed WordPress Multisite solutions with custom modules and themes
- Delivered frontend and backend features using Flash and PHP/MySQL
- Contributed to multi-client campaign execution

Lead Product Developer — FMG

London — Nov 2005 to Dec 2006

- Designed and launched *Ceros*, a Flash-based digital publishing platform
- Developed the product prototype and backend integrations
- Platform sold commercially since 2006

Senior Systems Developer — IG Index

London — Oct 2003 to Nov 2005

- Lead Flash developer in the in-house creative team
- Migrated frontend systems to a third-generation Flash platform
- Produced digital campaigns, partner sites, and marketing assets

Early Career

(1999–2004)

Held a series of Flash and web development roles during the peak of the Flash era, contributing to frontend systems across finance, gaming, media, and publishing.

Highlights include:

- *Cantor Fitzgerald (2002–2003)*: Systems Developer on trading UIs
- *Eurobet (2002)*: Senior Flash Developer for online gaming

- *Pearson Broadband (2002–2003)*: Flash Developer for education delivery
- *Kyunet, Sydney (2001–2002)*: Senior Web Developer during dotcom boom
- *KPE London (2000–2001)*: Flash Developer for rich media campaigns
- *4MAT / Aspinalls (1999)*: Early work in casino and recruitment web apps

Education

BSc Psychology

Newcastle University, UK – 1999

A Levels: Maths, Physics, Chemistry

Woodbridge School, Suffolk – 1994

GCSEs: 10 Subjects

Including English, Maths, and Science

Spoken Languages

- *English*: Native
- *German*: Fluent – bilingual upbringing, partial schooling in Germany
- *French*: Conversational

Work Eligibility

UK & German passports, full work eligibility in UK and EU