Jake Bills | Software Engineer

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Work Experience

Direct Software - Startup serving the vacation rental industry built on Ruby on Rails and React

Senior Software Engineer   *Mar. 2022 - Oct. 2024*

- Maintained Direct's public-facing and internal REST APIs, extending functionality in response to business needs. Integrated with external APIs, enhancing platform capabilities and user experience.
- Collaborated across Product and Engineering teams to support a key partnership in the travel industry by writing an integration layer with the partner's GraphQL API, adding asynchronous webhook handlers to support two-way data flow, using the Sidekiq Batch API for a seamless onboarding process, and updating Direct's data model to support required functionality. Managed stakeholder expectations through proactive communication about blockers and progress updates.
- Led the technical planning and mentorship for a project enabling clients to choose between multiple payment processors. Guided a junior engineer in designing and implementing API integrations, providing architectural patterns and best practices for secure, compliant transactions. Ensured adherence to payment best practices (idempotency, secure logging, proper scoping) and conducted reviews to maintain quality. Project launch improved client retention by providing a requested feature to current clients, and enabled the sales team to sign prospective clients who were waiting on this feature.
- Enhanced web application performance by profiling and optimizing high-latency transactions, improving slow SQL queries, and adding missing indexes—reducing memory usage by 50% and latency by 60%. Led a company-wide performance audit, implemented New Relic APM alerts to prevent regressions, and trained the team on profiling tools like stackprof and rack-mini-profiler. Optimized asset delivery by integrating a CDN, improving business-critical page load times.

Full Stack Software Engineer   *Feb. 2020 - Mar. 2022*

- Added high-impact features to Direct's product using Ruby on Rails and React, allowing users to automate their accounting, apply custom filters to their inventory, and protect themselves against chargebacks.
- Championed best practices, such as unit testing, amongst the development team, bringing test coverage up from less than 10 percent to over 50 percent.
- Added full text searching using Elasticsearch, reducing the latency of search features across the application from several seconds to tens of milliseconds

Education

University of Utah Professional Education / Dev Point Labs Bootcamp
Full-time web development certificate   *Received May 2019*

University of Utah
Bachelor of Music   *Received May 2015*

Skills

- ○ **Languages**: Ruby, Javascript, SQL
- ○ **Web Technologies**: HTML, CSS, HTTP
- ○ **Frameworks**: React, Ruby on Rails
- ○ **Datastores**: PostgreSQL, Elasticsearch, Redis
- ○ **DevOps & Tools**: Github, CircleCI, Jira
- ○ **Cloud Platforms**: Heroku, AWS
- ○ **Testing**: RSpec, Capybara
- ○ **Project Management**: Agile
- ○ **Misc:** Sidekiq