Matthew Spence

FULL STACK ENGINEER
With a passion and interest for product and UX

 Github:
/msaspence

 Website:
msaspence.com

 LinkedIn:
/msaspence

 Email:
msaspence@gmail.com

CTO & COO
Friends or Friends January 2021 - Current

Responsibilities
Establishing operations and providing all necessary technical solutions. Sourcing and/or implementing software to facilitate marking, sales, operations, and customer support, quickly and efficiently, with minimal cost.

Additionally everything and anything required getting a bootstrapped start up ecommerce store off the ground. This truly was a many hats role, and at times included stepping well out my comfort zone into areas such as marketing and sales.

Achievements
Created packaging, fulfilment and support processes that have delivered industry leading dispatch times and customer satisfaction (**trustpilot.com**, **reviews.io**). Built an ecommerce fulfilment team with specialist skills around the care and dispatch of live plants from scratch. Procured and out fitted a warehouse space optimised for the business's operations. Created and nutured leadership roles within the team, gradually transferring responsiblity to make teams self managing.

Implemented bespoke software to meet the legal requirements for the distribution of plants. Designed and built to satify statutory standards with the absolute minimum impact on warehouse operations.

Skills & Technologies
JavaScript, PostgresSQL, React, Redux, Ruby, Rails, Heroku, GIT, Product Design, Ship Station, Shopify, Slack

LEAD ENGINEER, REPORTS
Groove Feb 2017 - May 2021

Responsibilities
Plan and execute architecture, and end-to-end implementation of the company's customer facing analytics and reports product. Ensuring quality of work for contributing engineers assigned to the analytics team. Liaise and coordinate with other teams, specifically system administrators, and Head of Engineering. Define and outline product requirements and vision with Head of Product.

Work under other teams as required in the fast paced and dynamic environment of a start up. Including but not limited to: integrations, search, mobile, and API. Build code and systems to enable rapid product iteration balancing the tradeoffs of functionality, quality & technical debt.

Groove is a fully remote team distributed across several timezones. This role required a high level of autonomy solving complex problems alone when other team members were simply offline. Equally it required planning and colaboration with a number of teams and individuals spread across said timezones.

Achievements
Using a mixture of an off the shelf event streaming platform (keen.io), augmented with a bespoke in house system built on Elastic Search, we were able to deliver a powerful reporting product quickly and efficiently. This hybrid approach meant our solution wasn't confined by the limitations of the 3rd party product but was still able to leverage many of its benefits.

Utilized a number of existing systems already in place to create a highly resiliant data collection endpoint that boasted 99.99% uptime.

Skills & Technologies
JavaScript, Docusaurus, MySQL, ElasticSearch, Kafka, React, Redux, Ruby, Rails, AWS, GIT, TDD, jQuery, Emotion, User Experience, Product Design, Code Review, Trello, Slack

Experience

JavaScript, HTML, and CSS	**17 years**
Scrum and Agile methodologies	**10 years**
Ruby and Rails	**9 years**
Start ups (both as founder and employee)	**6 years**
React and Redux	**6 years**

Highest level of education
Multimedia Design & Technology BSc

Example Code
Some of my work:

PlantPassporter
A Ruby on Rails & React app for the required documenation for distributing live plants within the UK.
 Access available upon request

Trakio Ruby Client
A Ruby Gem for Trakio's API.
 github.com/msaspence/trakio-ruby

Trakio JavaScript Client
A JavaScript client for Trakio's API.
 github.com/msaspence/trak.io.js

ActivatedUI Gem
A Ruby Gem for managing the state of HTML based interfaces.
 github.com/msaspence/activated_ui

This Website
Aside from the content and some snazzy responsive design, there are some jekyll plugins to allow for HAML, Less and live reload.
 github.com/msaspence/msaspence.com

SENIOR SOFTWARE ENGINEER

Holiday Extras Dec 2015 - Feb 2017

Responsibilities

Produce bug free, future proofed code, setting the standard by which others developers work. Translate the needs of the business into solutions. Working to and on the company values, the team standards and best practices.

Identify, react quickly and take ownership of any serious problems with quality. Improve the performance and development of the team. Sharing and supporting individuals by helping create team processes, following them and enforcing their use by others. Identify technical potential in others and work with them to improve.

Skills & Technologies

JavaScript, React, Backbone, Redux, Ruby, Rails, AWS, GIT, TDD/BDD, CoffeeScript, jQuery, Less/CSS, Scrum, Pods, User Experience, Product Design, Code Review, Jira, Slack, Pair Programming

CTO & TECHNICAL COFOUNDER

Trakio Apr 2013 - Dec 2015

Responsibilities & Achievements

Helping companies increase activation and reduce churn by understanding their users better. Executed a number of pivots searching for a repeatable and scalable business model. Each time creating hypotheses and testing them.

As the CTO I was responsible for planning, building, managing, and documenting several production services and client libraries from scratch. I implemented the provisioning of our hardware infrastructure on AWS using Chef, along with service monitoring and redundancy, having had no previous experience of SysAdmin. I recruited and managed all our technical employees and contractors, managing their on boarding, training, and providing direction and mentorship for their personal development. Utilizing online tools to collaborate remotely, often across timezones.

Skills & Technologies

Ruby, Rails, Sinatra, Sneakers, OAuth, MongoDB, WebSockets, RabbitMQ, Redundancy, HAProxy, Nginx, Monit, Capistrano, Chef, AWS, GIT, TDD/BDD, JavaScript, CoffeeScript, D3, Load Testing, Highcharts, jQuery, Less/CSS, Photoshop, Application Design, User Experience, Product Design, Infrastructure Design, Technical Support, Code Review, Trello, Slack, Pair Programming

Other Previous Roles

CTO & TECHNICAL COFOUNDER

Virally Jun 2012 - Apr 2013

SENIOR CONSULTANT & LEAD DEVELOPER

Fruitbowl Media Mar 2012 - Aug 2012

WEB DEVELOPER

University of Kent - Web Development Team Nov 2007 - Mar 2012

Education

UNIVERSITY OF KENT

Multimedia Design & Technology BSc Sept 2004 - July 2007

ROYAL HOSPITAL SCHOOL

GCSEs & A Levels (UK High School) Sept 1997 - July 2004

A Levels: Business, Physics, Maths, Politics   **GCSEs:** English Liturature, English Language, Maths, Double Science, Geography, History, Maths, French

Relative Strengths

JavaScript, React, Redux, Less, SASS, CSS

Ruby, Rails, Sinatra, Node.js

Product Design, Project Management, UX

MongoDB, PostgreSQL, MySQL

AWS, DevOps, Kafka, ElasticSearch

Photoshop, Design, Sketch

Other Interests

I understand the importance of a balanced lifestyle, and have many interests beyond software development, here are a few:

Being a Dad

I say being a Dad but really I mean vicariously reliving my childhood, going to scouts and playing lego.

Building Models

At my core I like to build things, building software is incredibly rewarding but sometimes it's nice to work on something physical.

Keeping Fit

I used to be fit and then I had a baby. I'm back in the gym now and chasing my old PBs.

Snow sports

I'm a proficient skier and a distinctly average boarder. Once the pandemic is properly over I can't wait to get back on the slope.