Deployment on Netlify

Getting our apps out there and publicly accessible rather than just locally. There are whole careers that focus just on the deployment part of the developer cycle. We will be looking at several providers.

1. Have a look through the Netlify documentation:
- https://docs.netlify.com/
- Find any Netlify resources/videos

Practice taking turns to explain the answers to these questions:
- What is Netlify?
    - An all-in-one platform for automating and hosting modern web projects
- What problems does Netlify solve?
    - Continuous Deployment:
        - Takes care of the build process for you by connecting directly to GitHub
        - Configure builds every time you push to git
        - A lot of abstraction for this process
    - No need for background server
    - Visitor access - site wide password protection - authenticate users with Netlify Identity
    - Analytics - monitors your site
    - Form handling
    - Global content delivery network
    - Custom domain and automatic HTTPS
    - Split testing – deploy 2 different website versions and monitor which is working better
- When would you use it?
    - Mostly for Front End (it can do back-end but specialises in front end)
    - Mainly for static webpages that can be pre-built before being served (e.g. create-react-app)
- When would you not use it?
    - Back-end
    - If you're using a page builder (like Wordpress)
    - Large-scale projects (10k+ pages)
    - Projects with high interactivity (e.g. online photo editor, social networks etc) – possible to use but not where they specialise
- What are some alternatives/competitors to Netlify? (Just to know what else is out there.):
    - Surge
    - GitHub Pages
    - GitLab Pages
    - Heroku
    - Amazon S3
    - Google Cloud

Environment Variables

Don't store sensitive values in the .env, but can store non-sensitive things there. Remember these should be ignored in .gitignore, but make sure you know how to configure environment variables with your host service. Ideally you don't want to store environment variables on the frontend, they should live in the backend. Netlify suggest storing non-sensitive info in a function so they can be accessed at run-time rather than build-time.

Arshi's End of Day Wrap Up

With create-react-app there is a "build" step. This builds your site in to an HTML, CSS etc. When you're developing, what you see is the browser isn't the HTML etc. This is abstracted away, so running npm run build will give you visibility of this so you can see what is happening under the hood!