

Shaun O'Connell

Lead Front-end Developer and Interaction Designer

With decades of relevant web development, design, and research experience, Shaun is a valuable contributor to any web or web application development project, guided by principles of reliability, accessibility, performance, and quality.

While most of Shaun's focus is in *front-of-the-front-end* development, he is also a capable interaction designer, speaker, tutor, and advocate for The Web.

Work experience

2024

Lead Front-end Developer at tactile.co.za

January, 2007 to present day

Consulting and contracting as a front-end developer, building design systems, static sites, and web applications. This has given me the opportunity to work in several industries, and across the marketing, product, design, and development disciplines. Being a front-end developer means I've worked on many different tech stacks, such as: Node.js, Ruby on Rails, Django, and ASP.net MVC

During this time, I've also been developing my own UI pattern library; to make documentation and development of UI patterns easier and more maintainable. Here are some examples:

- [Vanilla's Pattern Library](#)
- [Te Whatu Ora, UI pattern library POC](#)
- [Lil' Regie's front-end workshop](#)

2023

Technical Lead, Design Systems (Contract) at [Te Whatu Ora, Health NZ](#)

July, 2023 to November, 2023

Te Whatu Ora's Data & Digital team wanted a second opinion on their fledgling Design System. They called me in to consult on this Design System.

This gave me an excellent chance to demonstrate how working with Web Platform technology (such as Web Components), could end up saving the organisation thousands of dollars in consultation fees, and making the web applications more reliable for NZ residents.

2022

Senior Front-end Developer at [Ackama](#)

October, 2021 to June, 2022

Upon returning to New Zealand, I wanted to continue working in a socially-conscious way, so I joined Ackama. I worked on various CMS themes for non-profits, and government organisations.

I particularly enjoyed working on the [ZX Security](#) and [Yarra Valley Water](#) website projects.

2020

Front-end Development Teacher (Volunteer, Contract) at [Onja](#)

December, 2019 to October, 2020

This opportunity was a chance to exercise my tutoring skills and do something meaningful: enrich the lives of 20 students. So, in early 2020, I fly to Madagascar, and worked on delivering a custom curriculum in Git, Bash, web development, and later specialising in front-end development.

The students, having never touched a computer before, (and having only learned entry-level English the year prior) flourished. It felt truly meaningful to be a contributor in their progress.

Feel free to [read more about this adventure on my blog](#).

2019

Design Systems Developer at [Flick Electric co.](#)

April, 2018 to December, 2019

After contract web performance optimisations for Flick were completed, I had an opportunity to join the Product team. Here, we created Flick's Design System, maintaining consistency and reliability in the web-based UI.

This Design System was implemented in seven distinct Rails front-ends, and on the company blog, helping to consolidate their use of UI, creating a more consistent user experience.

2017

Senior Front-end Developer & Interaction Designer at [Abletech](#) and [AddressFinder](#)

October, 2014 to October, 2017

With Abletech's help, I relocated to New Zealand, where I worked on both the internal product (AddressFinder) and as a consultant for Abletech's clients.

Most of the work was in Ruby on Rails front-ends, and building complimentary pattern libraries using Middleman. These pattern libraries gave the rest of the team a head-start on any front-end development tasks.

One of the highlights of my time at Abletech was working on Trade Me's design system: [Tangram](#); writing HTML, CSS, and JS at scale.

2014

Front-end Developer & Interaction Designer at various South African organisations

January, 1999 to August, 2014

In 1998, After a 4-month course in COBOL, I worked at [Dimension Data](#).

It wasn't until I joined the web development division that I felt like I had found my niche.

Three years later, I joined [Consology](#), where I was responsible for developing and theming a white-labelled self-service web application for [Oracle](#).

This was the start of my career as a front-end developer.

I then worked in South Africa for several other organisations over 8 years, including: [22seven](#), [Kalahari.com](#), [Yola](#), and [CareerJunction](#).

At Yola, I worked with both the product and the engineering teams, doing low-fi design, and then implementing it during development. I started learning valuable skills such as User Research, Interaction Design, and Usability Testing during this time.

1998

Junior Web Developer

My career started in 1998 with [Sams Teach Yourself HTML4](#). I started making websites shortly thereafter.

Skills

- HTML, XML, YAML, Markdown
- CSS, Sass
- JavaScript, Node.js, PWAs, Service Workers, DOM
- Mentoring, training, paired-programming
- Web Standards, Accessibility, Web Components
- Design Systems, Pattern Library, and Component Library Development
- Web Performance Optimisations
- User Research, Usability Testing, Surveying, RITE
- Interaction Design, Wireframing, and Storyboarding

Interests

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| Volunteering | I work in my spare time as a volunteer. Offering mentorship to junior web developers, as well as aiding conservation efforts. |
| Gaming | I love the intricacies, rules, and systems in modern board-games, computer games, and role-playing games such as Dungeons & Dragons. |
| Lego Technics | Amateur robotics and mechanical engineering with these amazing toys. |
| Photography | An amateur at best, but I love landscape, bird, macro, and long-exposure/space photography. |

Get in touch

- Visit my site: tactile.co.za
- Email me: shaun@tactile.co.za
- LinkedIn: [ndorfin](#)
- SEEK: [ndorfin](#)
- GitHub: [ndorfin](#)

The latest version of this CV is available online at ndorfin.github.io/cv