

PicPro

PicPro

CAB432 Assignment 2

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## Introduction

### Purpose & description

The PicPro Image transformer allows users to alter images using various predefined options, such as changing the filetype format, resizing the image, or adding effects like blur and greyscale. It allows new and transformed images to be stored for users that wish to use the same image multiple times, along with saving presets for transformations so that users don’t need to repeatedly fill in the transformation values if they wish to use the same transformation over multiple images.

Graphical user interface, application

Description automatically generated

### Services used

#### Sharp Node.js module (v0.31.1)

The Sharp module accepts and reads an image file input to allow for various transformations to be done, such as filetype format, resizing the image, or adding effects like blur and greyscale etc.

Endpoint: N/A as it is not an API, but a Node.js module

Docs: <https://sharp.pixelplumbing.com/>

## Use cases

#### US 1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| As a | graphic designer |
| I want | to transform images like changing the format type or adding filters |
| So that | I can manipulate images to suit my design. |

#### US 2

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| As a | graphic designer |
| I want | save previously uploaded images |
| So that | I don’t need to reupload the same image and can access it from the service with ease. |

#### US 3

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| As a | graphic designer |
| I want | Save previous transformation presets/values |
| So that | I can apply the same transformation to multiple images without having to fill in the values every time |

## Technical breakdown

### Architecture

The flow of data, as can be seen in the context diagram below, begins when the user interacts with the webpage. Requests are sent to the backend server, (Contained in docker alongside the frontend) with image transformation requests containing image and preset data to the Sharp API, that responds with the transformed image, which the backend sends back to the frontend to be displayed to the user.

#### Context Diagram

Diagram

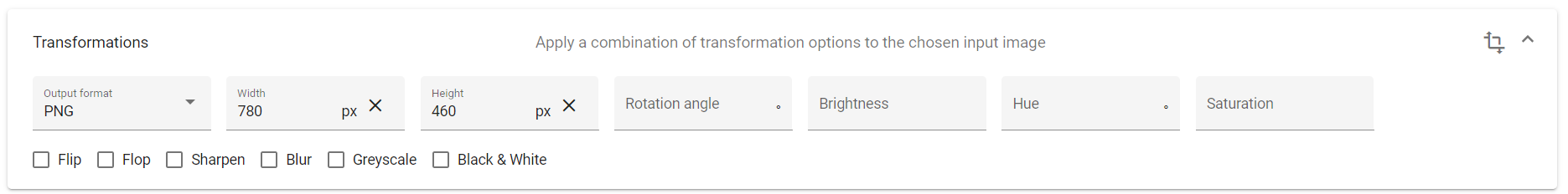
Description automatically generated

To further explain the flow of data, the architecture for this system can be split into three sections: Image, Transformations, and Presets

Graphical user interface, application

Description automatically generated

The **Image** section allows users to either upload an image or choose from a set of stored images. Uploading an image creates a POST request to store them in an S3 bucket as a Buffer object. When accessing stored images, the keys are retrieved from S3 with a GET request so users can select which one to fetch (which uses the user-defined file names as keys, like “original.png”). Only fetching the file names to show in the selection element instead of the whole image data is intentional to reduce network load if the user decides to upload a new file instead. Thus, the actual data – which can be quite large depending on the picture – is only loaded once the user makes the intentional decision to load an image by clicking the “Choose” button. Once an image is chosen, a POST request is made to fetch the actual image data from S3, which is converted to a base64-encoded data URI and sent as a JSON response along with the filename key and metadata from the Sharp module. This gets re-rendered and displayed by the frontend to display the output to the user.



{

name: 'blank',

transformation: {

outputType: 'JPEG',

flip: false,

flop: false,

sharpen: true,

blur: true,

greyscale: false,

blackwhite: false,

width: 5,

height: 5,

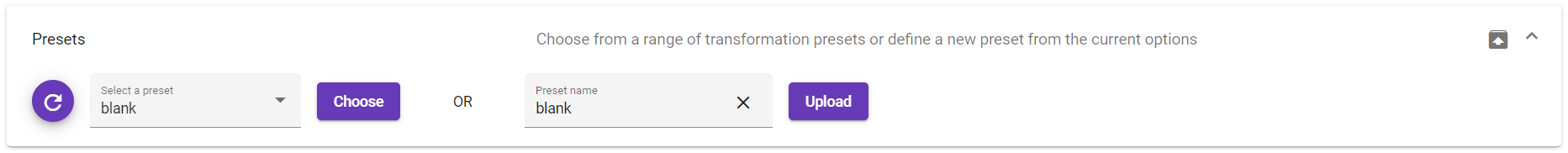
rotationAngle: 5,

brightness: 5

}

}

The **Transformation** section allows users to select how they want to alter the chosen image. The values adjusted here are stored in a JSON request that gets sent alongside the data of your chosen image. Referring to the code example to the left, the transformation JSON is separated into 2 parts: “name” which just stores a unique key for the transformation that can be used later, and “transformation” that stores the values. The checkboxes are stored as Boolean values to identify whether they are to be applied to the image, and the text values get stored as string and number values as they control transformations that can be adjusted or have multiple options. Numerical values are optional so if the user does not define values there, they are also not sent to the server.

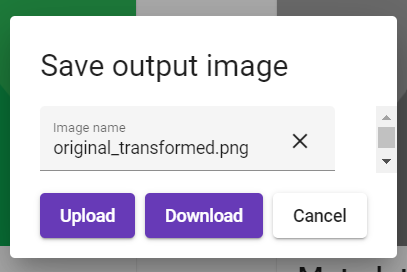


The **Presets** section allows users to store previously used transformations. Uploading a preset takes the values from the Transformation section, puts them into a JSON and stores them using a unique name supplied by the user. This is sent as a POST request to the backend that stores the preset JSON in an ElastiCache cluster using Redis. Any previously stored presets have their keys retrieved with a GET request, (similar to how filenames are displayed in the Image section) displaying the names of all the presets the user can choose from. The same reasoning can be applied here for the choice to only fetch names instead of the whole data as we wanted to focus on computational load while reducing network load. Once chosen, a POST fetch request is made to retrieve the desired preset, which gets sent to the frontend to replace the values in the Transformations section so that they can be used on an image.

Graphical user interface, application

Description automatically generated

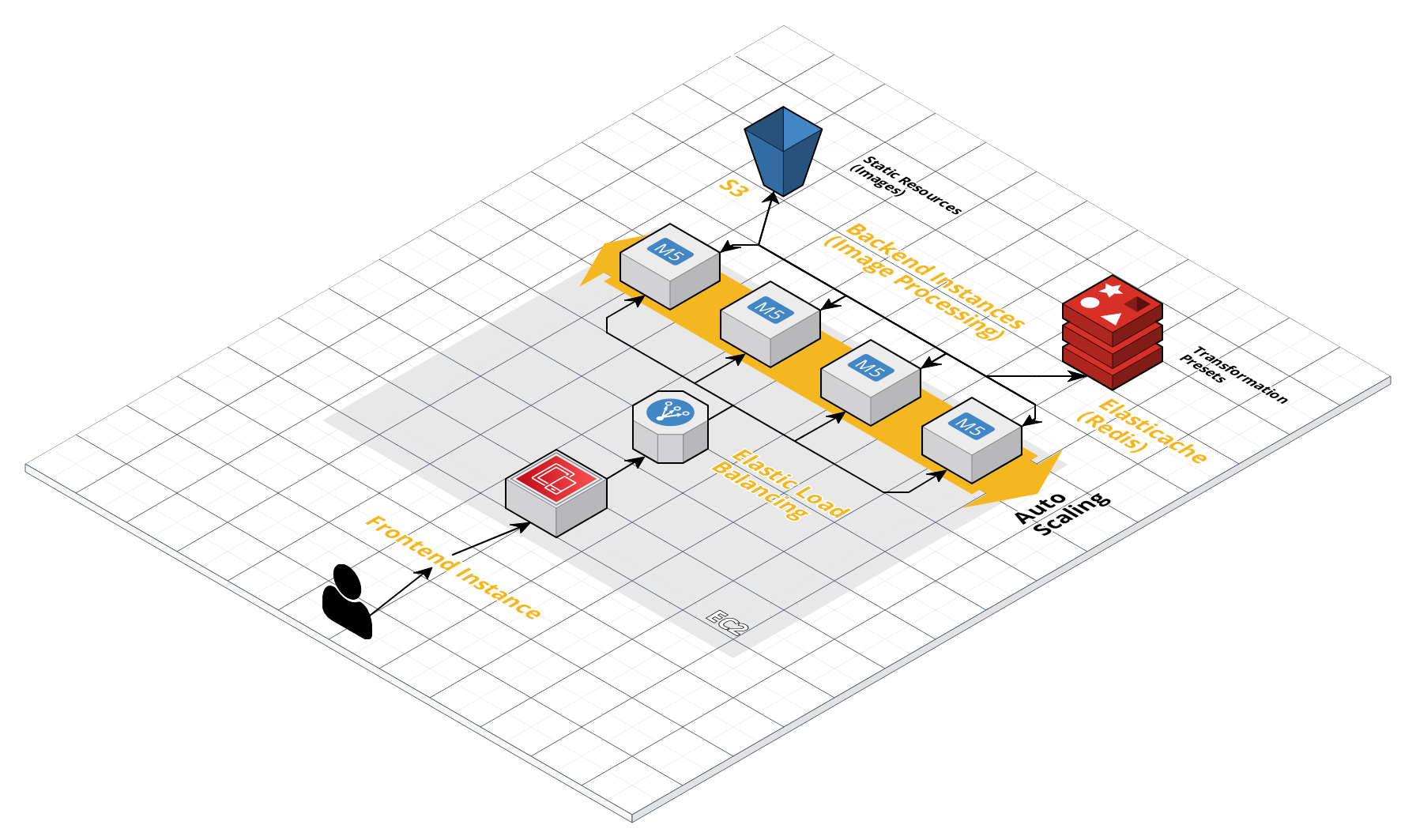
The images are displayed below these 3 sections, the original input shown on the left and the transformed output on the right. When a transformation is made, users have the option to save the new image, which brings up a popup dialog (shown below) that lets you choose a filename to either download to the local machine or upload to the S3 bucket. Users can also choose to use the output image again as the input image, if further transformations need to be applied to the new image, or reset to use a new image or transformation.



#### Client / server demarcation of responsibilities

When a user interacts with the webpage, the frontend sends the data to the backend, where an elastic load balancer distributes the traffic across the auto scaling instances. These backend instances are where the image transformations occur, along with sending and retrieving data from the frontend and the persistence services. The more users that are transforming images or storing/fetching images and presets, the more instances are used to handle the traffic. Each instance interacts with S3 and ElastiCache persistence services when necessary, retrieving image and preset data to be processed and sent back to the frontend to be re-rendered.

#### Architecture Diagram



#### Response filtering / data object correlation

The way that data is manipulated is done in two parts. The preset data stays in the same format as shown previously in the Transformations section, being stored in the request body JSON (req.body) to be used for transformation. The function that calls sharp to make the transformations uses several if-statements to check through the request and apply the necessary transformations only if values are supplied.

function transform(imgBuffer, transformation) {

// resize image

let transformationPipeline = sharp(imgBuffer).resize(transformation.width, transformation.height);

// greyscale

if (transformation.greyscale) {

transformationPipeline.greyscale();

}

// black and white

if (transformation.blackwhite) {

transformationPipeline.threshold(100);

}

// brightness

if (transformation.brightness) {

transformationPipeline.modulate({

brightness: transformation.brightness,

});

}

The image data is stored in the S3 bucket as a Buffer object. Buffer is used due to many file readers like the Sharp module often manipulating files as Buffer data, as they are suitable for fine-grained data manipulation, along with its ease of conversion to other data types like a base64 URI, used to re-render the images to the webpage so they can be displayed back to the user.

Buffer Array Example Base64 URL Example

data:image/png;base64,iVBORw0KGgoAAAANSUhEUgAAAwwAAAHMCAIAAAD3arixAAAACXBIWXMAAAsTAAALEwEAmpwYAAAgAElEQVR4nO3dz2sjaX748fxLPjSmDz66N6w…

<Buffer 89 50 4e 47 0d 0a 1a 0a 00 00 00 0d 49 48 44 52 00 00 03 0c 00 00 01 cc 08 02 00 00 00 f7 6a b8 b1 00 00 00 19 74 45 58 74 53 6f 66 74 77 61 72 65 00 ... 9986 more bytes>

### Scaling and Performance

*This is a crucial aspect of the report, and you should use this section to document the approach taken to scaling – the nature of the application load, how it was varied and how the scaling infrastructure responded. You should refer to the architectural diagram above or reproduce the relevant aspects here. You should include screenshots of CPU, network or queuing metrics as observed on the cloud services dashboard, together with screenshots of your settings and the scaling pool instance creation and destruction. We expect that your work here will demonstrate successful scale out and scale in as required in the assignment specification. The screen shots that you use here will also very likely be re-purposed as part of the slide deck for the demo.*

*An example scaling image is shown below, and we would normally expect to see this sort of image and some evidence of your group settings. Note the instance count on the left hand axis. As noted, many alternatives are possible.*



### Test plan

*Manual testing is fine and our expectations are in line with the example grid below. You can show the results through a screen shot and point us to these from the table. Your tests should include:*

* *Positive outcome cases*
* *Negative outcome cases (error scenarios)*
* *Edge cases*
* *Non-functional cases*

*Note that the grid below is unrelated to this assignment.*



*As they are common in industry you could define your Acceptance Criteria as GWT statements. This is not compulsory, but see:* [*https://www.agilealliance.org/glossary/gwt/*](https://www.agilealliance.org/glossary/gwt/)*. And here is an example:*



Difficulties / Exclusions / unresolved & persistent errors /

*In this section, you should explain anything that caused you problems and how you overcame those problems. Tell us if there was any issue that prevented you completing the assignment to specification. Tell us about any assumptions or compromises that you have made. Those who worked with an API like Spotify, which presented particular concerns, should discuss the compromises here, and this is also where you can tell us about problems with API keys and responses.*

*More generally, you might consider:*

* *Your major roadblocks and how you resolved them.*
* *Any functionality you didn’t or couldn’t finish*
* *Are there any differences between your brief and what you delivered? If so, explain why.*
* *Are there any outstanding bugs?*

## Extensions (Optional)

*In this section, you can tell us if you wish to how you might extend your app and make it better. This is an opportunity to tell us about good ideas that you had that you didn’t have time to tell us about.*

## User guide

*Tell us how to use your application. You may re-use some of the screenshots from the use case descriptions, but this is more about how to use the app. As long as we can find what we need to do to use your application, this need not be all that long.*

*But either way, screenshots are your friend.*

## References

*Use a standard approach to referencing – see the guidance at* [*https://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au/cite/*](https://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au/cite/)*.*

Stack Abuse. (2020). Using Buffers in Node.js. Digital Ocean.

<https://www.digitalocean.com/community/tutorials/using-buffers-in-node-js>

## Appendices

*Stuff you want to include, but is too long or too complex to include in the main report text. The full Docker file, some longer excerpt from API docs. Whatever helps.*

*[Our thanks to those students who allowed us to use their work in the examples presented above.]*