Russell Blickhan

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Experience

Descript   Aug 2025 – Present

Senior Software Engineer

- In Descript's LLM-powered video editor agent, implemented the Creative Brief planning mode and led three-engineer initiative to add save-and-share template prompts flow, working across React frontend and TypeScript backend
- Led Descript's in-app homepage redesign, which led to a 5% stat-sig increase in daily active users
- Ran pricing experimentation across React-based webapp and Next-based marketing site, working in close cross-functional collaboration with product, marketing, finance, and support, resulting in a decision to completely revamp Descript's pricing structure
- Served as go-to engineer for questions about Descript's integration with Braze, our main in-app marketing tool

Asana   Jul 2019 – Jun 2025

Senior Software Engineer   *Jan 2023 – Jun 2025*

- Owned Smart Status, one of Asana's first LLM-powered features, working across frontend, backend, and prompt engineering; led two other engineers and a product manager to prototype cutting-edge RAG techniques
- Led a team of three to add Chrome-style tabbed interface to Asana's Electron/React-based Desktop app
- Embedded on a partner team to unblock a major initiative to bring Gantt views to the webapp; recognized by team's manager as a model and mentor for other engineers due to high velocity

Software Engineer   *Jul 2019 – Jan 2023*

- Worked across frontend (React), backend (TypeScript/Scala), and mobile (iOS/Android) to build features like:
  - "Recently online" indicators in profile pictures
  - Unread task indicators in My Tasks
  - Reorganized My Tasks view with new "group by due dates" feature
  - Starred notifications in inbox
- Mentored two interns, both of whom accepted return offers, and an apprentice
- Introduced monthly tech talks to an organization of 30 engineers
- Managed mobile on-call and release processes

AWS Snowmobile | *Software Engineer Intern*   May – Aug 2018

- Implemented metrics aggregation pipeline via AWS Kinesis, with automated deployment

AWS Thinkbox | *Software Engineer Intern*   May – Aug 2017

- Implemented various computer graphics algorithms in C++ for experimental point cloud mesher

T2 Systems | *Embedded Software Engineer Intern*   Sep 2016 – May 2017

- Implemented UI and business logic in C++ for parking meter payment software rewrite

Education

University of British Columbia   2014 – 2019

Bachelor of Science, Computer Science & Mathematics