Contact

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www.linkedin.com/in/robertfocke
(LinkedIn)

Top Skills

Leadership

Go (Programming Language)

Back-End Web Development

Languages

German (Professional Working)

Afrikaans (Native or Bilingual)

English (Native or Bilingual)

Certifications

NETHOPE Virtual Global Summit
2020 Delegate

Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den
Hochschulzugang

Robert Focke

Interim Head of Backend Engineering @ Muzz (YC S17)
Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Summary

Backend Engineering Leader with a Passion for Building Scalable
Systems

I'm a highly motivated backend engineering leader at Muzz, where I
spearheaded the development and launch of Jamaa, the company's
new social network platform. Leading a team of talented engineers, I
delivered the backend infrastructure to support 10 million users with
minimal downtime. Currently, I manage the ongoing development of
the platform, ensuring its scalability and reliability.

I've also recently stepped into an interim role as the Head of
Backend Engineering role at Muzz to fill a medical vacancy while
my former lead recovers. In this capacity I oversee all the backend
chapters as well as the DevOps capacity at Muzz and work closely
with the CTO and CEO.

Prior to Muzz, I played a pivotal role as the first Backend Engineer at
Mesg.ai, a VC-backed startup in the salestech space. There, I built
a comprehensive backend platform for their prospect research and
outreach automation product, leveraging Golang and various AWS
services.

My experience spans across all aspects of backend development,
from infrastructure design and implementation to writing clean and
efficient code. I'm passionate about building robust and scalable
systems that can handle high volumes of traffic.

Experience

Muzz
3 years 8 months

Interim Head of Backend Engineering
January 2026 - Present (1 month)

Stepping in as interim head of the backend and DevOps teams at Muzz to fill a medical vacancy.

Line and technical management to 5 backend chapters and a team of DevOps engineers.

Working closely with the CTO and CEO to ensure cost, latency, risk and people aspects of the team are appropriately managed.

Lead Backend Engineer
May 2024 - January 2026 (1 year 9 months)
Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Leading the backend chapter working on Jamaa (Muzz Social), aiming to make it the best social network for Muslims the world over.

Line management and technical management of a team of 2-3 backend engineers. Architecting, planning and assisting in the delivery and operation of new features for Muzz social.

Relevant technologies: Neo4j, DynamoDB, OpenSearch, Go, Terraform

Senior Backend Engineer
January 2024 - May 2024 (5 months)
Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Developing and scaling a new social network

Relevant technologies: Neptune, DynamoDB, OpenSearch, Go, Terraform

Senior Backend Engineer
January 2023 - January 2024 (1 year 1 month)
Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Building the backend of the new Muzz Social feature, a fully fledged social network that promises to take Muzz to the next level!
- Lead a team of backend engineers developing the social network from the ground up
- Successfully launched the social network to 10M Muzz members worldwide, with 0 downtime on launch day

Relevant technologies: Neptune, DynamoDB, OpenSearch, Go, Terraform

Senior Backend Engineer
June 2022 - December 2022 (7 months)
Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Working alongside other colleagues rearchitecting a legacy PHP monolith into Go microservices
- Introduced new best practices for working with Go, onboarding more junior colleagues
- Mapping out legacy features, planning and implementing their replacements

Delivered a rewrite of an internal analytics system from PHP to Go, processing hundreds of millions of analytic events per day. The rewritten service saw greater than 10x improvements in latency and a major reduction in cost.

Relevant technologies: Terraform, Go, AWS

Mesg.ai
Backend Platform Engineer
December 2021 - June 2022 (7 months)
Berlin, Berlin, Germany

First backend hire at a VC-based salestech startup (Antler).

Backend development working on a sales outreach platform which automates the prospect research process.

Development and operation of services written in Golang, Python and Node.js.

Stint came to an end as business sadly had to close.

Relevant technologies: Go, AWS, Terraform, Python, Node.js

Norwegian Refugee Council
2 years 10 months

Backend Developer
October 2021 - December 2021 (3 months)
Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Software development/data engineering working on a private-donor management system, including setting up data pipelines, analytics and managing a data warehouse.

Relevant technologies: Python, Snowflake, SQL, Salesforce API, Google Analytics API, Facebook API, Azure Machine Learning, Jupyter Notebooks, Twilio

Full Stack Developer
January 2020 - October 2021 (1 year 10 months)
Berlin, Germany

Software development working on an open-source beneficiary and service management tool.

Relevant technologies: Go, Javascript, RxJS, MongoDB

Junior Software Developer
April 2019 - December 2019 (9 months)
Berlin Area, Germany

Software development working on Salesforce Incident Management and Programme Cycle Managment tools, and various ETL integrations

Relevant technologies: Salesforce Admin, Visualforce, Python, Airflow, Lightning Web Components, BASH, Azure Data Factory

Freelance Software Developer
March 2019 - April 2019 (2 months)
City of Tshwane, Gauteng, South Africa

Freelancing work on an ETL project connecting Unit4 Business World and Salesforce.

Relevant technologies: NiFi, Unit4 Business World, Salesforce API, BASH

Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte
1 year 1 month

Data Engineer
February 2020 - October 2020 (9 months)
Berlin Area, Germany

Productionising web scraping and data ingestion pipelines and delivering a visualisation tool for the international human rights politics department.

Relevant technologies: Kubernetes, Scrapy, BeautifulSoup4, Tweepy, Docker, Metabase, SQL, DigitalOcean

Volunteer Data Engineer
October 2019 - January 2020 (4 months)

Berlin Area, Germany

Volunteer data work with the international human rights politics department at the institute.

Proof of concept web scraping work collecting textual data from news articles.

Relevant technologies: Kubernetes, Scrapy, BeautifulSoup4, Tweepy, Docker, Metabase, SQL, DigitalOcean

SAP
1 year 9 months

Knowledge Manager
January 2018 - September 2018 (9 months)
Berlin Area, Germany

Knowledge management & product testing internship position with the SAP innovation centre network.

Refactored CLI tool documentation generation to enable independent translations of help text, names and descriptions by other knowledge managers.

Relevant technologies: SwaggerUI, YAML, Python, Cobra, Golang

Machine Learning Software Engineer
January 2017 - December 2017 (1 year)
Berlin Area, Germany

Internship in the SAP Innovation Centre Network, working on a machine learning platform. Software engineering tasks in an agile environment.

Built proof of concept web services using python and cloud foundry, exposing functionality provided by SAP partners Google and Abbyy

Relevant technologies: CloudFoundry, Kubernetes, Python, C++, Docker, Jenkins, Bazel

HomeToGo
System Administrator
February 2016 - July 2016 (6 months)
Berlin Area, Germany

System Administration and IT Support working student position.

Relevant tech and responsibilities: Juniper Switches, Raspberry Pi, Google Analytics, BASH, IT Support, Inventory Management

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Education

University of London
Bachelor of Science - BSc (Hons), Computer Science · (March 2021 - March 2025)

Technische Universität Berlin
Bachelor of Science - BSc, Computer Engineering · (November 2015 - January 2018)

Pretoria Boys High School
National Senior Certificate, IEB AP Mathematics, High School/Secondary Diplomas and Certificates · (2010 - 2014)