Title: Brief Introduction to React

Answer:

WHAT IS REACT

React is a JavaScript library that aims to simplify the development of visual interfaces.

Developed at Facebook and released to the world in 2013, it drives some of the most widely used apps, powering Facebook and Instagram among many other applications.

Its primary goal is to make it easy to reason about an interface and its state at any point in time, by dividing the UI into a collection of components.

React is used to build single-page web applications.

WHY IS REACT SO POPULAR?

React has taken the frontend web development world by storm. Why?

LESS COMPLEX THAN THE OTHER ALTERNATIVES

At the time when React was announced, Ember.js and Angular 1.x were the predominant choices as a framework. Both these imposed too many conventions on the code that porting an existing app was not convenient at all. React made a choice to be very easy to integrate into an existing project, because that's how they had to do it at Facebook in order to introduce it to the existing codebase. Also, those 2 frameworks brought too much to the table, while React only chose to implement the View layer instead of the full MVC stack.

PERFECT TIMING

At the time, Angular 2.x was announced by Google, along with the backward incompatibility and major changes it was going to bring. Moving from Angular 1 to 2 was like moving to a different framework, so this, along with execution speed improvements that React promised, made it something developers were eager to try.

BACKED BY FACEBOOK

Being backed by Facebook obviously is going to benefit a project if it turns to be successful, but it's not a guarantee, as you can see from many failed open source projects by both Facebook and Google as an example.

IS REACT REALLY THAT SIMPLE?

Even though I said that React is simpler than alternative frameworks, diving into React is still complicated, but mostly because of the corollary technologies that can be integrated with React, like Redux, Relay or GraphQL.

React in itself has a very small API.

There isn't too much into React than these concepts:

- Components
- JSX
- State

- Props

Tags: react