

Steve Laing

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<https://github.com/steventux>

Profile

A highly experienced and enthusiastic developer with broad commercial background including public and health sectors, and digital agencies.

Recent projects include work with Ruby on Rails, React, NodeJS and GoLang.

Always keen to learn new technologies, a keen open source software advocate and contributor to Rails and other Ruby libraries.

Consistent, quality-driven delivery of high profile projects working with award winning clients.

Open source advocate, always keen to work on projects which deliver real social value.

Over 20 years development experience in public service digital transformation, content management and e-commerce systems, delivering industry standard web applications and APIs.

In-depth knowledge of contemporary web technologies like Ruby on Rails, React, NodeJS, GoLang, AWS, Terraform, Kubernetes and Docker.

Extensive experience building web and API services with Ruby and NodeJS.

A self-starter and quick learner, with enthusiasm for the entire development life-cycle. I enjoy contributing to a team's success, I'm capable of scoping technical work, mentoring junior colleagues.

I enjoy pair programming and Agile software delivery techniques. I'm also happy to scope, organise and deliver projects on a solo basis.

Key Skills

- Ruby (Rails and Sinatra) – 15+ years professional experience, currently working on Ruby projects, [I've made contributions to Rails](#).
- Javascript – 15+ years, including recent work with ES6, Node, Express, React.
- Go-Lang – 5 years working knowledge, (most used recently at GDS).
- AWS (ECS, EC2, Lambda, Terraform) – 3 years experience with AWS, currently working with Terraform and Kubernetes.
- APIs - 10 years professional experience, currently working with API driven microservices and monoliths.

- Linux – (Shell scripting, Container management, VMs, system services) – 20 years. Linux projects contributor and Linux desktop user.

Other Technical skills

Sound working knowledge of various database and storage technologies like PostgreSQL, MySQL and MongoDB, experience with query performance enhancements.

Sound understanding and some experience of Java, Python, Perl and Scala (most recently used with Gatling load testing at DfE).

Professional Experience

January 2020 – Present. Full stack software developer – Department for Education

Currently working on the Teacher Regulation Agency program on Access Your Teaching Qualifications service.

Previously worked on [Apply for Teacher Training](#) service.

[See some of my code here.](#)

July 2019 – January 2020. Contract Ruby and Javascript Developer – BOXT Ltd.

Ruby on Rails backend and API and ReactJS frontend for [BOXT](#) back office and e-commerce website.

Features delivered include 'BOXT Offer' functionality which allowed customers to compare and save a boiler installation package for later purchase.

Sept 2015 – July 2019. Contract Ruby and Javascript Developer – Government Digital Service.

Extensive work on the GOV.UK website and GovWifi programmes.

Previous projects include delivery of an EU Exit Business Guidance “Finder” application.

I've worked across many projects at GDS touching on most of the GOV.UK stack. Highlights include:

- Migration of GOV.UK apps to AWS.
- Implementing sizeable frontend performance enhancements through an updated font delivery mechanism.
- Performance tuning the content dependency resolution SQL used to determine related content flowing through a central publishing API.
- Developing and delivering the EU Exit business guidance finder.

- Load testing GOV.UK publishing tools with Gatling and Scala.

January 2015 - Sept 2015. Contract Ruby and Javascript Developer - Airlie Ltd. (Kings College Hospital Trust).

Lead Javascript and Ruby developer for Airlie Ltd & Kings College Hospital Trust.

Responsible for planning and overseeing the launch of 'Wardware 2.0' on KCH infrastructure including server and deployment pipeline installation.

Delivered Snomed API running on EC2 instance as proof of concept for medical terminology search engine based on ExpressJS and MongoDB.

Mentored recently graduated junior developers, ensured code quality and oversaw architectural decisions for 'Renalware 2.0' product, including user authentication and authorisation modules, Snomed API integration, interactive search capabilities.

August 2012 – January 2015 – Contract Ruby Developer - Government Digital Service.

Part of the core GDS team, focused on taking GOV.UK through public beta to full service transition and launch.

I have worked on a variety of projects over an extended 3 year contract including Foreign Commonwealth Office digital transformations of passport and overseas registry services, vehicle tax service integration, core content management development, design of location services and HMRC calculators and delivered enhancements to other GOV.UK applications.

Technical lead for one of the central teams within GDS, responsible for homepage and Q&A applications. I enjoyed working with such a highly skilled and professional programme within the civil service.

May 2012 – August 2012. Contract Javascript Developer - LBI.

Backbone MVC development for Microsoft's 'Brandon Generator' IE9 promo. This exciting project combined a script by Edgar Wright, narration from Julian Barratt and was designed to showcase the capabilities of the newest Internet Explorer browser.

<https://blogs.microsoft.com/ai/brandon-generator-all-the-web-is-a-stage/>

December 2011 – May 2012. Contract Javascript & Ruby Developer - HeadLondon Agency.

Design and build of real-time research tool UI for Head London. A mix of BackboneJS, RequireJS, Jasmine BDD, HTML5, CSS3 backed by Padrino, NodeJS and MiniTest.

Responsible for design and delivery of a corporate AMQP based web chat system for one of Head's clients. Using many exciting new technologies including RabbitMQ, NodeJS/SocketIO, Padrino, MiniTest and Jasmine went into building this real-time web based chat client.

August 2011 – December 2011. Contract Javascript Developer - Hogarth Worldwide.

Part of a team developing an in house advertising production project management toolkit built with BackboneJS, Mustache, JQuery, MongoDB, Python/Django. This agile project is fully test driven using Qunit, Test Swarm and Selenium.

September 2009 – August 2011. Contract Javascript & Ruby Developer – HeadLondon Ltd.

Head London are an award winning digital agency with numerous high profile clients such as The Conservative Party, Oxford University Press, British Gas and Electrolux.

Senior Javascript and Ruby developer for Hubbub - a Rails e-commerce application and winner of a 2010 BIMA award.

Senior Javascript and Ruby developer on the Oxford University Press Classroom Presentation Suite project – a Rails CMS which authors digital whiteboard teaching resources built in XUL/Javascript with ActiveJS.

Other projects include: Skifta - award nominated Ruby/Padrino web interface to a DLNA API.

BG Group, Link Share – a collaboration application written in Padrino, utilising XMPP4r and Ruby/LDAP.

September 2008 – (intermittently) Present –Contract Lead Developer - Canvas8 Ltd.

Canvas8 provides a trend analysis and content aggregation service for advertising and branding professionals.

Project lead, responsible for application architecture.

Installed and customised Alfresco Labs 3.0 CMS coupled with AppFuse based Spring MVC webapp.

Exciting work on this greenfield project, covered all aspects of the Alfresco CMS system from document management and core XSD data modelling to metadata extraction and Freemarker and XSLT view rendering.

Responsible for integration of outsourced web applications (e.g. JEE/XSLT 'Scrapbook' application), design and quality control for offshore (China & Columbia) development.

Entire project delivered on time, incorporating industry leading design patterns, J2EE technologies and modern development methodologies (Agile + TDD) and Java coding standards. I continue to provide development and maintenance services to Canvas8 on an intermittent basis.

March 2009 – July 2009. Contract Ruby on Rails Developer – Dynamic50.

Dynamic50 are a boutique web design and development company specialising in Ruby on Rails framework based websites.

An excellent opportunity to gain more commercial experience with Ruby on Rails, maintenance and enhancements for existing websites such as <http://www.own-it.org> and <http://www.thegreymatters.com>.

Responsibilities include managing agile development cycles, building on existing design to provide new

functionality, maintenance of CMS and reporting systems, general bug-fixing.

September 2007 – July 2008. Contract Senior Developer - WGSN.

<http://www.wgsn.com>

Working with the industry leading trend analysis and news service for the fashion and style industries. SpringMVC, Struts and Perl application design and development for this client on MediaSurface and Morello content management systems.

Delivered projects include Salesforce CRM integration and custom Google Maps 'Storefinder' application.

Responsibilities included guiding application design decisions, general project design/development/delivery, mentoring junior developers and code reviews.

May 2006 – August 2007. Lead Developer – Flytxt Ltd.

Design and development of leading mobile marketing application using Struts, Hibernate/EJB3 and Dojo Framework. Agile/Scrum development methodologies.

Responsibilities included UML application design, prototyping and development, code review of offshore deliverables and performance profiling.

Flytxt Limited provided the opportunity to guide and peer review a team of offshore developers (India). Positive results using Scrum/Agile project management strategy.

The Flytxt product range was technology-rich, so knowledge of anything from JMS to the latest AJAX offerings such as Dojo and Prototype were hugely beneficial.

Feb 2003 - May 2006. Java Developer - Emap PLC.

Engineering CMS driven websites for top Emap magazine brands including Zoo Weekly, MCN and Nursing Times. Designing J2EE web applications using Struts and iBatis, Websphere and Oracle 9i.

Custom development of Jive forums for many brands using Webwork framework. Design and deployment of 'classifieds' advertising system for MCN.

Award-winning project, pivotal in translating print revenues to digital revenues for Emap. Completion of Java/XML/XSLT content import application. Porting of legacy Java framework sites to Struts applications.

Nov 2001 - Feb 2003. Developer - PremiumTV.

Designing and deploying web applications for 78 Premiership and First Division football teams using J2EE, Oracle and TCL. Development of Java bulk mailing system using Lyris.

Porting existing TCL based subscriptions system to custom Java framework. Full project lifecycle from UML design to development and review phases.

Mission critical project for Premium TV, challenging and rewarding. JMS based Cache management application to provide push-caching for PTV's subscription channel using SwiftMQ, Oracle 8i, XML/XSLT.

Jan 2000 - Nov 2001 Developer. Distribution. Sportal International Ltd.

Developer for syndication deals with MSN, Sky, Yahoo, Siemens and Tiscali. Providing sports content component feeds or bespoke web applications using Vignette, ASP and Perl. Distributed content deal with Betdaq.

Development of syndicated statistics package using Vignette 5.62 and Sybase integrating with client's existing site. 20

Jan 1998 - Jan 2000 Freelance Developer Freelance website developer.

Clients included Location Inflation, Scooba, Northampton Fire Services and NetJets.

Education History

J2EE Design Patterns, 89% - Learning Tree, Euston.

2:1 B.A. Humanities Degree - Middlesex University, N.London (1995).

BTEC Art & Design - Northbrook College, Worthing, W.Sussex (1989).

4 A levels, 8 O levels - Steyning Grammar School, Shooting Field, Steyning, W.Sussex.

Hobbies and interests

I enjoy mountain biking and BMX. I spend other spare time doing mechanics on bikes and vehicles.

[I recently converted my own campervan.](#)

I've taught myself tattooing.