



# Thom Allen

Front-end web developer based in London

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## Summary

I'm a front-end web developer passionate about building **effective, user-friendly web experiences**. I've spent the majority of recent years working on the front-end of JS-based web apps, especially **React**, but also have full stack experience (particularly **Node + MongoDB** backends using **GraphQL**). I'm always interested in learning new tech however!

## History

### Zzish, Lead Front-end Developer

*Apr 2018 – Feb 2023*

**Stack:** **React, Next, Apollo, GraphQL, JavaScript ES6 + TypeScript, Node + Express, MongoDB, Webpack, Pusher, Kubernetes, AWS**

Led the front-end team at **Zzish**, an education technology startup who focus on improving education outcomes for teachers and students, primarily via their award-winning teaching platform and assessment tool, **Quizalize**.

- Maintained and implemented new features into existing web apps (**Quizalize** for student results & differentiated learning and the **Quiz Player** formative assessment tool) -
- Migrated the stack to more modern/preferred tech (Relay -> Apollo, Flow -> TS, etc).
- Optimised performance where possible, e.g. improving Webpack's bundle splitting, lazy/async loading components, images and GraphQL queries. Some quick wins in early 2023:
  - Optimisation of marketplace GraphQL queries resulted in 35% reduced page load time over previous two months
  - Responsive rebuild of activity dashboard resulted in 12% reduction in bounce rate over prev month
- Led migration of SEO-critical **subdomains** to self-contained Next apps using SSR taking Lighthouse scores from 50-60 to 90+. Resulted in: (YOY)
  - 89% reduction in bounce rate
  - 9% increase in page views per session
  - 25% increase in avg session duration
  - 38% decrease in average page load time

- Led a rebuild of site navigation in mid-2021 with simplified UX, resulting in significant increase in user activity (specifically around class creation - roughly doubled over previous year despite DAU being similar)
- Onboarded and mentored juniors; responsible for code review of FE pull requests, wrote documentation and collaborated on forming team best practices
- Took part in project planning, defining specs, scope, etc, working closely with lead backend & PMs
- Created greenfield web apps like Zzish Insights, making design decisions on front-end architecture.
- Strong focus on user experience and responsive design (mobile-first when possible) working alongside designers, UX
- Worked on back-end & devops tickets as required to ease team workload

## **Antidote**, freelance Front-end Developer

*Jan 2018*

**HTML5, CSS, JavaScript, Greensock.js**

Created animated banner ads for client **Royal Ascot**

## **ASOS**, contract Front-end Developer

*May 2017*

**HTML5, SASS, Gulp, Pug**

Contracted at **ASOS'** head office in Camden, building microsites for their brand partnerships with clients **PayPal** and **Hostelworld**. Used Gulp scripts to build from Pug templates to a number of static sites targeting various locales and devices.

## **Dunnhumby**, contract Front-end Developer & QA

*Jan 2017*

**HTML5, XML, CSS, Knockout.js, React**

Spent 4 weeks in-house at **Dunnhumby** HQ in Hammersmith, providing QA for **Tesco Groceries'** XML-based banner ads along with workflow consultancy. Prototyped approvals-oriented web app with Knockout.js and responsive ad components with React.

## **StirPR**, contract Front-end Developer

*Dec 2016*

**HTML5, SASS, Foundation**

Developed responsive HTML emails for client **Felix** from provided designs.

## **Antidote**, freelance Front-end Developer

*May 2016*

**HTML5, SASS, JavaScript + jQuery, Greensock.js**

Worked in-house at **Antidote's** Fitzrovia offices as part of a two developer team, creating banner ads for client **Travel Republic's** summer campaign for a wide variety of destinations and formats. Created a simple jQuery-based ad viewer to help the agency team quickly review changes & assist with deadlines.

## **Antidote**, freelance Front-end Developer

*Jan 2016*

**HTML5, SASS, JavaScript + jQuery, YouTube API**

More work at **Antidote**, for client **Libratone**, creating a custom player module for YouTube 360° videos to be used on a landing page, working to a strict deadline. Refactored first-draft JS into a revealing module pattern and added BEM and 7-1 code conventions. Created documentation for handover.

## **Phosphor Art**, part-time developer

*2014 – 2015*

**WordPress, ExpressionEngine, PayPal API, HTML5, SASS, JavaScript, jQuery**

Built responsive promos and landing pages alongside maintaining their existing site. Created HTML email campaigns & email builder, newsletter signup forms etc. Created a responsive online store page prototype using ExpressionEngine.

## **Stuff & Sense**, part-time developer & consultant

*2013 – 2014*

**ExpressionEngine, WordPress, CSS, JavaScript, jQuery, ProcessWire**

Designed & built the Stuff & Sense company site with a responsive front-end and an ExpressionEngine-based back-end. Provided consultancy services to various clients.

## **Other work**

### **Freelance web developer**

*2009 – 2018 primarily*

**HTML5, CSS + SASS, JavaScript + jQuery, WordPress, React, ExpressionEngine, Grav, Gulp, Webpack**

Designed, built and managed sites, landing pages and apps for various small business clients.

### **Open source developer**

*2016 – 2018 primarily*

**JavaScript, React, Redux, MobX, Flux, Electron, Styled Components, Hexo, Gatsby, Jekyll, Vue, Chrome web API, Jest, Enzyme, Mocha, Cosmos, Storybook, Webpack, Travis**

- Created open-source apps, collabed with other contributors on own and others' repos.
- Created **react-simple-range**, an open-source React input slider component released as an NPM package, with 170,000+ downloads. Used semantic-release & Travis CI for automated releases & package publishing when updates are committed to master.

## **Education & etc**

Self-taught developer.

10 GCSEs A\* – C, The Ravensbourne School.

References available on request