Grant Blakeman

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Summary

My career has been focused on the web—designing and building custom interfaces and user experiences for everything from small startups to established products and large companies. I have experience in product design, backend and frontend engineering, and particularly enjoy roles that intersect these disciplines.

Professional Experience

Staff Design Engineer
LinkedIn, Full-time
Nov 2021 – Present

- First full-time Design Engineer at LinkedIn – helped define the engineering practices and culture within the Design organization
- Expanded our portfolio beyond Figma plugins and into other interesting areas: automated quality checks, GenAI explorations, productivity tools, and tooling to assist Design Systems
- Trained and mentored other Design Engineers

Design Engineer (Contract)
LinkedIn, Contract
May 2019 – Nov 2021

- Started working with the Figma Plugin API at its inception and built out a suite of tools to help LinkedIn Design transition from Sketch to Figma, protect customer privacy, and assist in design-to-eng handoff
- Established the quality bar and best practices for Design Engineering at LinkedIn

Engineer, Designer, and Owner
Interdiscipline, Self-employed
Oct 2006 – Nov 2021

- Ran a small, independent design and development studio as a solo practice, scaling with contractors/partners and leading projects as needed
- Notable work:
    - Frontend engineering for multiple SaaS and social network apps
    - Backend architecture and engineering for SaaS, custom CMS, and e-commerce for everything from agencies to startups to Fortune 500 companies
    - Served in Technical Co-Founder and/or Contract-CTO roles for several clients in the SaaS and e-commerce spaces including two different meal planning startups, a high-end commuter bicycle company, and an art toy company from the founder of Kidrobot

Frontend Engineering
Ello, Contract
Sep 2017 – Mar 2018

Maintained a React app as the solo frontend engineer during this time period, fixing bugs and building out new features part-time, alongside my other Interdiscipline client projects

Co-Founder (Leadership, Product, and Engineering)
Forge Group / Switchboard, Self-employed
Nov 2016 – Oct 2017

A political-action oriented software development organization – self-funded and volunteer-based

- Took on a leadership role in the organization – designed product and wrote code, but that was secondary to getting the right people on-board and enabling them to do their best work
- Practice in finding product-market fit on the right timeline – hard lessons learned

Product Design and Frontend Engineering
Highrise (37signals/Basecamp subsidiary), Contract
Aug 2015 – Aug 2016

Provided product design and frontend development for an aging Rails app and new, static marketing (also snuck in a logo modernization/refresh)

Co-Founder (Product, Design, and Frontend Engineering)
Hilite, Self-employed
Jul 2012 – Oct 2014

A social network for sharing interesting text snippets from around the web—part Pinterest-for-words, part link-blog

- Drove product strategy and features, collaborating on the product design
- Built out the app's frontend

Co-Founder (Product, Design, and Engineering)
Backstage, Self-employed
Jan 2007 – Oct 2011

An e-commerce/SaaS startup focused on connecting musicians with their fans

- Designed and built a single-sign-on system/launcher to deal with auth across multiple services
- Built out a digital e-commerce system: credit card processing (Authorize.net and Braintree, pre-Stripe), PCI compliance, transactional emails, allowing band admins to manage products, issue refunds, promo codes, etc.
- Architected the service against anti-patterns: fake emails, obfuscating downloadable files on AWS with unique, time-sensitive links, etc.

Technical Co-Founder, Contract (Brand and Product Design + Frontend and Backend Engineering)
Lilly's Table, Contract
Jun 2009 – Jul 2010

A subscription-based, meal planning service

- Designed the brand, worked on business strategy with my founder chef client, designed the product, and then built the frontend and backend of this SaaS app
- Architected and built a recurring billing system against the Authorize.net API (pre-Stripe)

Graphic Designer and Art Director
HaifleighBrandWorks, Full-time
Jul 2004 – Sep 2006
Denver, Colorado

I started my career in traditional graphic design, print design, brand identity, and brand storytelling. It continues to influence how I think about product design and development.

- Developed digital services as a first-time offering for the agency

Technical Skills

- Frontend and Backend Engineering
- JavaScript/TypeScript, Svelte, React, CSS, HTML
- Ruby, Ruby on Rails, and a bit of Python and Swift/SwiftUI
- Product design and strategy

Education

University of Colorado Boulder, Leeds School of Business
Bachelor's Degree, Marketing – *2001-2004*

Boston University, Questrom School of Business
Marketing/Marketing Management, General – *2000-2001*