

Erald Haklaj

Full-Stack Engineer, leading from the front end

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SUMMARY

Full-Stack Engineer with 8+ years of experience, most of it leading from the front end. I build web products end to end, from the first product conversation through to something shipped and polished, and I usually reach for the simpler solution before the bigger one. My work has run in production for brands like L'Oréal, the NFL, and some of Europe's best-known fashion labels. When something breaks, I take ownership of it, and I see the last 10% through.

CORE SKILLS

Front end: React, Next.js, EmberJS, Vite, Redux, Three.js, PReact, JavaScript/TypeScript, SCSS, Bootstrap, HTML

Back end: Node.js, Ruby on Rails, Java (Spring), PHP, REST APIs, JWT auth, payment integrations

Data: PostgreSQL, MySQL, PL/SQL, relational schema design

Ways of working: owning features end to end, product and UX judgment, large refactors, performance profiling, A/B testing and feature flags, agile teams and release rotations, code review and mentoring

EXPERIENCE

Toffee AI · Full-Stack Developer (freelance)

Sep 2025 to Present

A consumer character-AI chat platform (React, Next.js, React Query). Remote.

- Built the character-creation feature end to end from just mock designs, owning the UX, the edge cases, and the architecture. It included a searchable tag field (debounced and cached, with infinite scroll over a paginated API), a four-step AI image-generation flow, progress that survives a page refresh, a report and moderation flow, public/unlisted/private characters, and a gradual A/B rollout with Flagsmith. About two months of work.
- Brought the page load down from around three seconds to about one and a half. Part of that was an image pipeline that pre-generates full and medium sizes so the app sends smaller images first; part was cutting a heavy component from roughly 300 renders on load to about 10.
- Worked across the stack, including back-end pull requests for character and chat sharing and for chat image and video generation, plus a public, slimmed-down endpoint that helped both SEO and first load.
- Made release calls (ship or hold) on my own when they were needed.

SAIZ GmbH · Front-End Team Lead (freelance to full-time)

Sep 2024 to Oct 2025

An AI size-recommendation widget for fashion, live on s.Oliver, Marc O'Polo, and Jack Wolfskin. Berlin (remote).

- Led a three-person front-end team, covering technical direction, code review, and the groundwork the rest built on.
- Rebuilt the widget so every brand could run its own version: its own fonts, colors, component choices, number of steps, and placement, all from a single brand config and dropped in with one HTML selector (React, Vite, Redux).
- Asked for ideas on a better body-shape input, I taught myself Three.js and Blender and shipped interactive 3D body avatars, having worked out that pre-rendered images could never hit a usable frame rate. Later tracked down and fixed a memory leak that was pushing the browser past 2 GB.
- Rebuilt the analytics platform in Next.js with dynamic tables and returns charts, worked out a smoother transition animation with the CEO, and grew the engine into two more products (Size Nudge and Size Chart) plus an AI body-measurement simulator.

Ritech Solutions · Software Engineer, on Jebbit / BlueConic

May 2021 to Nov 2024

A first-party data platform (surveys, quizzes, lead forms) used by L'Oréal, AutoZone, and the NFL, peaking at around a million sessions an hour. Tirana, Albania.

- Worked full-stack across three codebases (the platform, the renderer, and the embeddable widget) in EmberJS, Ruby on Rails, Node.js, PostgreSQL, and vanilla JS.
- Owned features from the first product conversation all the way to release, and took my turn on the twice-weekly deploys and on-call.
- Helped lead a four-month refactor of the styling system, moving from one database row per style override to a single merged schema, kept fully backwards-compatible and running next to the old one the whole time.
- Made questionnaires-by-email work, which the team had written off as impossible, by sending an email-safe first screen that links straight into the hosted version.

Tetra Solutions · Full-Stack Developer
Tirana, Albania.

Jan 2020 to May 2021

- Built the whole front end of a national e-invoicing and fiscalization product (React and SCSS, on a Java/Spring and PostgreSQL back end), created for Albania's 2020 invoicing law. It covered the dashboard, invoice creation, and a lot of calculation-heavy screens, and I shaped the discount schema behind it.
- On ebileta.al, an event and stadium ticketing site, added JWT auth, payments through a local bank and PayPal with currency conversion, an algorithm that picks the best block of seats for a group, and a ticket-sale module with event series.

Earlier freelance · Full-Stack Developer, Upwork
Remote.

Jun 2017 to 2020

- SaaS products, e-commerce sites, and landing pages for clients around the world, and front-end lead on the early team projects (React, jQuery, CSS). This is where the Top Rated Plus and 100% Job Success record began, across 22 jobs and more than 1,500 hours. Registered as a sole trader in Albania for straightforward international invoicing.

EDUCATION

BSc, Computer Science. University of Tirana, Faculty of Natural Sciences. Oct 2016 to Jul 2019.

LANGUAGES

Albanian (native). English (C1 reading, writing, and listening; B2 speaking).