

Plum Ertz

Software Engineer • Baker of Noms • Casual Economist
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Professional Summary

- Engineering leader with a focus on user experience and accessibility
- Enjoys building team culture and process, usually enhanced with memes and metaphor
- Passionate about web standards, progressive enhanced interfaces, application performance, and system health monitoring
- Obsessive baker with an extensive repertoire of dessert recipes and a tendency to leave Tupperware full of chocolatey goodness for coworkers

Business & Technical Experience

Director, Software Engineering • September 2021 - Present

Senior Engineering Manager • September 2020 - September 2021

Ro • New York, NY

- Manage career and technical growth for a team of 20+ engineers and engineering managers
- Collaborate with engineering management team to improve processes for recruiting, onboarding, and incident response
- Lead accessibility remediation project, including internal subject matter expertise and code review, accessibility onboarding for all members of the tech team, and coordination with a third-party auditor

Staff Software Engineer • March 2019 - August 2020

Senior Software Engineer • May 2018 - March 2019

BuzzFeed • New York, NY

- Lead in replatforming site article pages (serving 25M+ page views/day) from Python to NextJS/React, contributing substantially to the codebase along with managing engineering decisions and stakeholder communications
- Coordinate with third-party auditors in identifying and mitigating accessibility issues on our site, including internal training on both technical tools and content guidelines for editorial teams
- Manage and mentor senior engineers, supporting in both technical and career growth
- Engineering partner for non-technical teams in assessing third-party integrations from both a feasibility and best practices standpoint
- Coordinate company-wide activities outside of regular roadmap work across multiple offices, including a week-long hackathon and a two-week-long “coding for charity” event
- Weekly supplier of “Monday Motivation” with baked goods for the News and Tech teams

Lead Front-End Software Engineer and Chief Baking Officer • January 2017 - May 2018

Datavore Labs • New York, NY

- Write user stories and spec documents for the core software product to guide the team in feature development from a design and user experience standpoint
- Implement new UI features and enhancements to existing interface components
- Manage internal build scripts and server deployments
- Lead daily stand-up meetings and weekly planning meetings, tracking progress of all tasks in JIRA
- Generate creative assets (including print materials and video) for product marketing
- Provide baked goods for the team on a weekly basis

Lead Developer • October 2015 - December 2016

Front End Engineer • January 2015 - October 2015

Genome • New York, NY

- Develop responsive websites, digital display interfaces, content management systems, and back end API support for native iOS and Android applications
- Advise all active projects in development from both a code and business rules perspective
- Assess technological feasibility and approaches for incoming projects
- Write business rules documents and technical specifications
- Establish standards and processes for development and code management
- Responsible for production build processes, including regular server maintenance and deployments
- Coordinate on-site installations of projects
- Manage development team (and bake them cookies)

UI Development Lead • April 2014 – January 2015

UI/Front End Developer • June 2012 – April 2014

TMP Worldwide • New York, NY

- UI lead in the development of a fully responsive internal content management web application to support TalentBrew, TMP's core recruitment marketing software platform
- Key driver behind moving to fully responsive development within the organization, coordinating a month-long intensive responsive design training program for over 70 designers and copywriters in 8 offices across 3 countries
- Assess feasibility of new feature implementations through prototyping, and aid in both development and documentation of product enhancements
- Regularly review site proposals for accessibility and web standards compliance, as well as ability to translate fluidly to the responsive web
- Actively promote web standards, mobile-first development, and use of new technology across all departments
- Assisted project managers in troubleshooting websites and modifying templates according to client requests

Technical/Software Proficiencies

Development

- Javascript (Vanilla, Node.js, ReactJS/Redux, NextJS, AngularJS, D3, jQuery, Webpack/build tools)
- HTML (semantic, accessible markup, including WCAG Compliance)
- Sass/CSS
- Python
- Development Operations/Code Management (Git, Linux-based server management, AWS, Docker)

Creative

- Adobe Creative Suite (with a focus on Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, and Premiere)
- Digital video production and still photography

Speaking Engagements

No More Heroes: User Experience Design for Incident Response • October 26, 2022

LeadDev San Francisco • Oakland, CA

In this talk, Plum discusses the "user experience design" of incident response processes that allow them to grow alongside a rapidly expanding team and technical landscape. Using a real-world example, we'll look at the workflows that enable a "neighborhood watch" of cross-functional team members to join forces to battle bugs - sometimes under cover of night - so that the heroes can retire (or at least get some more sleep).

Accessibility: Inclusivity is your MVP • July 21, 2021

Primary Ventures CoS Mastermind Workshop • Virtual

In the fast-paced world of an early-stage startup pushing towards its V1, it's easy for accessibility to fall to the wayside. In this workshop, Chloe and Plum discuss how it's also just as easy to bring accessibility into the mix early (especially

when Cos and technical leads collaborate!) - and how doing so can quickly grow a customer base and help your business stand out in the market.

Everything We Did Wrong To Do Accessibility Right at BuzzFeed • March 11, 2021

axe-con • Virtual

From day one, the remediation and certification process at BuzzFeed was a case study in building accessibility from solid moral grounds and shaky organizational ones. Our team is proud of our work, but we did quite a bit wrong to get it right. In this talk, we'll share what we've learned from our mistakes so that you can avoid the same ones on your own accessibility journey.

Your Stack Supports Accessibility (and you can, too!) • November 17, 2020

Debug 2020 Summit • Virtual

In the pancake stack of your application, accessibility isn't the syrup - it's baked into the cake. The session will explore some framework-agnostic best practices for your application that take advantage of the baseline functionality already built into web browsers to provide a better experience for users regardless of their device or ability.

a11y / ah-lee / aye-one-one-why / accessibility • August 7, 2019

QueensJS • New York, NY

In which an engineer attends a meetup about Javascript to talk about how you don't need Javascript to build an accessible experience.

The Revolution Will Not Be Transpiled • June 6, 2019

ReactNYC • New York, NY

You want to overthrow your current stack and use React across all of your team's apps. Are you making the right choice? Can you get the rest of your team on board? In this talk, we'll walk through a step-by-step guide to staging a JavaScript coup without inciting chaos.

Education

Muhlenberg College

September 2008 – May 2012

- Bachelor of Arts, Media & Communication (with High Honors), Economics (with Honors), summa cum laude
- Research focused on applications of aggregated online consumer reviews on box office revenues and the broader film/entertainment industry

Activities and Societies

- Phi Beta Kappa (inducted 2011)
- Ciarla Yearbook (Member, 2008 – 2012; Editor-in-Chief, Fall 2010 – Spring 2012)
- Kappa Kappa Psi National Honorary Band Fraternity (Honorary Brother, initiated May 2011)
- Marketing Intern, Sodexo Dining Services (January 2011 - May 2012)