

François van der Merwe

Senior Full-Stack Engineer

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Professional Summary

Full-stack engineer and performance optimisation specialist with 8+ years delivering measurable business impact. Architected and maintained systems powering \$3B+ in Hollywood film productions ($\approx 17\%$ of major US studio output) while single-handedly supporting the platform through a \$600K acquisition.

Proven record of transformational results: 99.7% speed increase in mission-critical reporting (3 min \rightarrow 3 sec), 66% infrastructure cost reduction, and 98% drop in customer support workload — freeing resources for growth. Trusted technical expert, known for diagnosing bottlenecks, designing scalable solutions, and aligning technology with business priorities.

Recognised for bridging technical execution with strategic decision-making, enabling organisations to scale efficiently, reduce costs, and improve reliability. Adept at guiding projects from crisis to stability, turning systems into a true competitive advantage.

Core Competencies

- **Programming & Frameworks:** C#, TypeScript, Swift, Java, React, React Native, Next.js, NestJS
- **Software Architecture:** Full-stack development, Asynchronous data fetching, Offline-first architecture
- **Cloud & DevOps:** Azure, AWS, CI/CD, Git, Docker, Terraform, GitHub Actions, TeamCity
- **Performance Optimisation:** Algorithm tuning, Bottleneck identification, System scaling
- **Collaboration & Leadership:** Cross-functional teamwork, Agile methodologies, Product roadmap planning, Technical strategy

Work Experience

SENIOR SOFTWARE ENGINEER | CINAPSE (Remote – Los Angeles, USA)

Jun 2020 – Present

- Cut hosting costs by 66% (\$1,400–\$1,500 \rightarrow \$400–\$500/month) through core infrastructure redesign, enabling scale to **100x larger productions and teams** with minimal cost growth.
- **Migrated from Automerge to PowerSync**, trading raw performance for massive scalability and stability while maintaining offline-first capability for large-scale film productions.
- **Maintained 99.9%+ uptime** for systems supporting **\$3B+ in active Hollywood productions**, representing $\sim 17\%$ of major US studio output.
- **Reduced customer support workload by 98%** by eliminating recurring operational issues, freeing development time for strategic improvements.
- **Designed and implemented advanced scheduling workflows** including multi-drag-and-drop with virtualisation, improving responsiveness and interactivity at enterprise scale.
- **Serve as the primary technical contact** for all internal and external technical matters, including security audits, compliance, and enterprise client onboarding.
- **Assumed technical leadership** after CTO departure, working directly with C-suite to align technical strategy, performance optimisation, and long-term scalability goals.

MOBILE SOFTWARE ENGINEER | ifiniti.io (Hybrid – Pretoria, South Africa)

Mar 2019 – Jun 2020

- **Designed and built** an offline-first mobile app, enabling full workflow continuity and data synchronisation without internet access.
- **Delivered resilient, user-friendly features** by leading system design and implementation in a high-growth startup environment.
- **Drove product adaptability and innovation** by rapidly aligning technical solutions with shifting business requirements.

JUNIOR SOFTWARE DEVELOPER | Dreamtec (Hybrid – Pretoria, South Africa)

Nov 2016 – Feb 2019

- **Strengthened data security** by developing a keychain access module to enhance secure storage and authentication.
- **Improved mobile app startup time by 62%** (40s → 15s) through a UX redesign in Xamarin, boosting user engagement.
- **Expanded expertise from full-stack to mobile development**, contributing to both design and performance optimisation initiatives.

INTERN SOFTWARE DEVELOPER | SIEMENS (On-site – Brussels, Belgium)

Jul 2014 – Sep 2015

- Contributed to enterprise R&D projects, collaborating with international clients to develop new features and extensions that enhanced product functionality.

CONVERSATIONAL ENGLISH TUTOR | EC英会話 x NOVA (On-site – Hakodate, Japan)

Feb 2016 – Sep 2016

- Delivered tailored English lessons for diverse learners, adapting teaching style to multicultural environments and improving student communication confidence.

CIRCUS INSTRUCTOR | CLUB MED (On-site – Thailand & Malaysia)

Feb 2013 – Feb 2014

- Instructed aerial acrobatics and led interactive workshops, building leadership, communication, and client engagement skills.
- Served as Acting Circus Chief during absences, managing daily operations, overseeing safety, and handling equipment procurement.

Education

Bachelor of Computing – The Belgium Campus, South Africa (2008 – 2014)

- Affiliated with **KHLim (Limburg Catholic University College), Belgium**.
- **NQF 8 accreditation** by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).
- Covered a broad range of IT disciplines including software and web development, database management, and networking.
- Specialised in **applied software engineering** with practical experience in software/web development, database management, and networking.

High School Diploma – Pretoria Boys High School, South Africa (2002 – 2007)

- Focused on **Computer Science**, Woodwork, and Science.
- Awarded **Full Colours in Fencing**; participated in boxing and gymnastics.

References available upon request.