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Jack Franklin



“A WebSocket connection to our Node servers starts listening to backend updates”
 Christophe Vingerhoets

Planza

(1-2) Planza (<https://planza.com>) is a new web application for planning events, whether that means trips, a night out – or pretty much anything else. The lead JavaScript developer at Planza, Christophe Vingerhoets, tells us the technology behind this complex application, which uses Backbone on the frontend and a Node server on the backend and connects using WebSockets. By using Sockets, Planza is able to do a lot of things in real time:

“Planza is a single-page HTML5 web application. On load, all JavaScript and templates are sent to the client, which will establish a WebSocket connection to our Node servers that will start listening to backend updates,” says Vingerhoets.

“Whenever a database update occurs,” he adds, “Redis (<http://redis.io>) will publish the updated model (JSON) to all clients so the frontend models of all subscribers of that particular Redis channel are synced. A Backbone View will then automatically respond to this data update, so a Handlebars (<http://handlebarsjs.com>) template can be parsed and the

UI will respond accordingly ... and all this in real time to enhance user experience!”

INTERIOR-ID

(3) INTERIOR-ID (www.interior-id.com) was built by London-based agency Igloo (www.goigloo.com). Rather than use a lot of third-party libraries, Igloo created most of the framework used on the site itself. Partner and lead programmer James Gretton explains: “INTERIOR-ID was the first site we released on our own homegrown JavaScript framework. It uses jQuery extensively, but very few other third-party scripts, plug-ins or libraries. Instead, everything is developed in-house: everything’s OOP, as close to class inheritance as JS allows.

“Modules are kept simple, doing what they need to do and nothing else. This keeps the code efficient and means we never have to compromise on the look and feel,” Gretton goes on.

By creating the framework in-house, Igloo will be able to reuse it in forthcoming projects. “Because we’ve invested the time in our JS framework, our

future sites are becoming more and more efficient to build, and function better and better,” says Gretton.

CrimeTimeline

(4) The CrimeTimeline (<http://crimetimeline.io>) is a weekend hack project from developers at agency Cyber-Duck (www.cyber-duck.co.uk). The project uses public APIs to pull in data about crime in Britain and enables the user to review their local area.

“We wanted a responsive site showing a heatmap of crime density and type for the month chosen on a slider. The heatmap, street map and location search were built using the Google Maps API v3,” say Cyber-Duck devs Alex Miller and Gareth Drew.

“We used jQuery and the jQRangeSlider plug-in to generate the date slider at the bottom of the page and to manage the Ajax calls. The site updates the map through JavaScript when it detects any user interaction. When users click on an area it shows the number and types of crime a mile from that point. The crime bubbles were made using CSS and animated using jQuery.”

