





RALF ZAKARIAN

SOFTWARE ENGINEER

 Munich, Germany  ralfzak.me  hello@ralfzak.me  linkedin.com/in/ralfzak

PROFILE

Software Engineer with 10+ years of experience building and scaling backend systems, leading engineering teams, and delivering AI-powered product features. Currently at Personio, driving technical architecture and end-to-end feature development in Kotlin and PHP, while integrating LLMs and AI capabilities into core product workflows. Background spans backend engineering, machine learning, full-stack development, and distributed systems.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Personio - Lead Engineer *(promoted 3× from Backend Engineer)* Feb 2020 – Present · Munich, Germany

- Lead backend engineering on a high-growth European HR SaaS platform, owning architecture decisions and driving features end-to-end from concept to production.
- Build and scale backend systems primarily in **Kotlin (Spring Boot)**, while maintaining and contributing to an existing **PHP (Laravel)** codebase.
- Drive AI feature development using **LLMs (Claude, GPT)** - translating product ideas into working AI-powered features through prompt engineering, RAG pipelines, and LLM integration patterns.
- Mentor junior and mid-level engineers; contribute to technical hiring and engineering standards.
- Collaborate cross-functionally in Scrum/Agile squads, partnering with product and design to shape technical direction.

BMW Group - Full-Stack Web Development Intern Jun 2019 – Dec 2019 · Munich, Germany

- Built reactive frontend applications with **Angular** and **Vue.js**; backend APIs with **ASP.NET**.
- Designed and maintained relational **PostgreSQL** databases.
- Architected web apps as **microservices**, integrating **RabbitMQ** for async inter-service messaging.
- Containerized applications with **Docker**, deployed on Docker Swarm, and orchestrated with **Kubernetes**.
- Developed Python pipelines for data processing, cleansing, and ML modelling of logistics datasets.

BMB Group - Machine Learning & Data Science Engineer Sep 2018 – Mar 2019 · Baabda, Lebanon

- Built image recognition models (SIFT/SURF) using **OpenCV**.
- Developed NP-problem optimisation tools with **Google OR-Tools**.
- Designed REST APIs using **ASP.NET** and maintained relational databases (MSSQL, MySQL, PostgreSQL).
- Implemented CI/CD pipelines using **Jenkins** and Git.

Scroll Up - ERP Developer Jul 2017 – Sep 2018 · Beirut, Lebanon

- Implemented and customised **Microsoft Dynamics NAV / 365 Business Central** for retail clients.
- Developed POS systems on **LS Retail**; modelled databases in MSSQL.
- Deployed VMs and databases on **Microsoft Azure**; built BI dashboards in **Power BI**.

Holdal Group - IT Support Intern Jun 2017 – Jul 2017 · Beirut, Lebanon

- Provided OS and POS software installation and support (Windows/Linux).

EDUCATION

Notre-Dame University, Louaize Oct 2015 – Oct 2019 · Lebanon

B.Sc. in Computer Science · *Dean's Honor List, Cumulative GPA 3.7*

Modern Community School – Jun 2015 · Beirut, Lebanon

Lebanese Baccalaureate - Sociology & Economics

TECHNICAL SKILLS

AI & LLMs	LLM integration (Claude, GPT), Prompt Engineering, RAG pipelines, AI-driven feature development
Languages	English (fluent), German (fluent), Arabic (native), French (basic)
Backend	PHP (Laravel), Kotlin (Spring Boot), Python, ASP.NET / C#, Node.js
Frontend	React.js, Next.js, Angular, Vue.js, TypeScript, HTML, CSS, JavaScript
DevOps & Cloud	Docker, Kubernetes, Kafka, Temporal, Elasticsearch, RabbitMQ, Azure, Jenkins, CI/CD