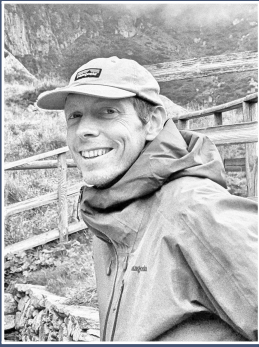# François KAWALA

PROFILE

I'm a seasoned **lead machine learning engineer** with experience in startup, medium-sized business and big corporation. I enable teams to deliver reliable products to production. I'm leading on high stakes projects reporting to C-suite stakeholders. I foster individual growth in a rational yet empathic environment.

CONTACT DETAILS

@ francois@kwla.xyz
☏ +41 78 736 01 46
⌨ github.com/Fkawala
⌨ linkedin.com/in/Kawala
✉ Rue Elisabeth Baulacre 11, 1202 Genève, Suisse

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Year of birth: **1987**
Citizenship: **France**
Work permit: **C-permit**
Family: **Married without children**
Languages: **French** (native), **English** (C2)

SKILLS

- **Languages:** Python, Scala, Go.
- **ML/AI:** Pytorch, scikit-learn, MLlib.
- **Data Exploration:** Pandas, Numpy, Matplotlib.
- **DevOps:** Kubernetes, fluxCD, GitOps, Prometheus, Grafana.
- **Messaging:** Rabbit MQ, ZeroMQ.
- **DB:** Elastic, Redis, SQL.
- **SWE:** FastAPI, Flask, Pydantic, Requests, Protobuf.

EXPERIENCE

LEAD ML ENGINEER at *Infomaniak (Geneva)*   **2021.03–2023.06**
◇ I led a team of machine learning engineers. Together we worked on various high-stakes problems: a support chatbot, a document classificator to sort petabits of k-drive customer including: bills, resumes, contract. As a team leader, I've reported and negociated with C-level executives. I've pushed for good practices in both code, MLOps, and data management (company wide data mesh strategy). I've recruited, managed and lead three ML engineers.

SENIOR ML ENGINEER at *Expedia Group (Geneva)*   **2018.01–2021.03**
◇ I defined, implemented (using Scala & Spark), evaluated, and delivered machine learning models that help hotel managers to optimize their revenue. My work on demand forecasting and price optimization helped thousands hotel managers to sell their rooms at the right price while maximizing occupancy. I advocated for better tools, high standards for coding, and reduced technical debt.

MACHINE LEARNING ENGINEER at *Karos (Paris)*   **2014.09–2018.01**
◇ Karos is a mobile application that streamlines carpooling commutes. I turned business requirements into machine-learning problems to be solved. I mentored my junior colleagues on machine learning related tasks. I defined and industrialized the machine learning platform that enabled our platform to achieve driver-passenger matching while minimizing usage critical-mass.

PH.D. CANDIDATE at Université Grenoble Alpes   **2011.09–2014.09**
◇ My PhD thesis is a study on activity prediction on Twitter and other social networks. I defined several activity prediction tasks. I did a benchmark of state-of-the-art approaches on those tasks. I collected and shared data-sets that have been since used for publications in A-ranked conferences.

EDUCATION

PHD – COMPUTER SCIENCE *Collège Doctoral Grenoble Alpes.* **2011–2013**
◇ Thesis title: *Prédiction de l'activité dans les réseaux sociaux.*
◇ Social and Information Networks, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning

MASTER – COMPUTER SCIENCE *Université Grenoble Alpes.* **2009–2011**
◇ Master thesis title: Information Diffusion in Social Networks
◇ Computational Complexity, Social and Information Networks, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- François Kawala, Éric Gaussier, Ahlame Douzal Chouakria, and Eustache Diemert. A study of different keyword activity prediction problems in social media. *Int. J. Soc. Netw. Min.*, 2(3):224–255, 2016
- François Kawala. *Prédiction de l'activité dans les réseaux sociaux*. PhD thesis, Université Grenoble Alpes (ComUE), 2015
- François Kawala, Éric Gaussier, Ahlame Douzal-Chouakria, and Eustache Diemert. Apprentissage d'ordonnancement et influence de l'ambiguïté pour la prédiction d'activité sur les réseaux sociaux. In *Coria'2014*, pages 1–15, 2014
- Cédric Lagnier, Eric Gaussier, and François Kawala. User-centered probabilistic models for content diffusion in the blogosphere. *Online Social Networks and Media*, 5:61–75, 2018

HOBBIES

Sport climbing, Mountain biking, Bike touring, Open source software, Co-operative organizations (coop), Cooking

François Kawala
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francois@kwla.xyz
+41 78 736 01 46

March 1st, Genève Switzerland

To Whom It May Concern:

Please find below my LinkedIn recommendations, those are verbatim from my LinkedIn profile and can be found in the recommendation section on https://www.linkedin.com/in/kawala.

Sincerly yours,
François Kawala

Jan Krasnodebski — Senior Director, Data Science & Machine Learning @ **Expedia** Group

> *"Over the course of three years François demonstrated great engineering and research skills, which contributed to multiple team successes. François was a champion of best in class software development practices and kept improving data sources and ETL management. François understood the business needs and implemented actionable solutions. Beyond his technical skills, François was an asset for team building with his positive and friendly attitude. François was a careful listener and dealt well with high pressure situations."*

Marc Oehler — CEO @ Infomaniak Network SA

> *"I'm delighted to recommend François for his work at Infomaniak. François is not only very serious in his professional approach, but also listens to needs and requests. He is highly skilled in developing projects around AI, and is constantly keeping abreast of the latest advances in this fast-moving field. His commitment to Infomaniak and his passion for innovation make him a valuable asset to any team."*

John Dines — Director Data Science @ Expedia Group

> *"I was fortunate to have Francois as a member of the machine learning project that I was leading at Expedia. During his time at Expedia Francois exhibited qualities that would be welcome in any high-performing team. He is highly capable at ML algorithm and software development as well as being effective at stakeholder management and showing a strong sense of ownership over his work."*

Julien Viard — VP of Engineering @ Infomaniak Network SA
> *"François masters the questions and challenges pertaining to the field of artificial intelligence and machine learning. François demonstrated great skills to design and*

implement a comprehensive data policy to support AI based features. He furthermore is a talented software engineer who masters the Python ecosystem. François led on the creation and development of Python based stack. With a consistent and positive attitude, it is truly enjoyable to exchange and work with him on complex problems!"

Tristan Croiset — CTO @ Karos Mobility

"It was a real pleasure to work with François for several years. He proved impressive and versatile skills in machine learning and computer science. As the first data scientist of the team, he had the responsability to lead the design and the developpment our core engines. He demonstrated high commitment with fast deliveries on top of a very qualitative architecture. François was a good lead as he showed the capacity to empower his colleagues while keeping strict expectation in their work, and he was strongly respected. Finally, his interest for the product and the usage was very appreciated. He had a precise understanding of the business and he always ensured that the r&d projects were in line with this goals."

Gilles Vandelle — Chief Scientist @ Kelkoo

"François reported into me when he was doing his phd at Best of Media. He demonstrated a high degree of dedication to make his project a success. He learned a lot on big data development by collecting data from Twitter and processing it on our Hadoop cluster. He proposed some interesting and innovative solutions and keep on searching and improving the algorithm without loosing faith. Obviously François was junior at that time but was already demonstrating the quality to be a great Data Scientist and developper."

Eustache Diemert — Senior Staff Research Lead @ Criteo AI Lab

"François pursued his Phd in Purch/BestOfMedia Science team and has been involved both in academic research and business related projects. I saw him master a complete data scientist stack including web services, large scale processing tools (Hadoop) and machine learning toolkits (scikit-learn). He has showed an ability to contribute to both advanced problem modeling and industrial quality implementation."

infomaniak

Work Certificate

To whom it may concern.

This is to certify that Mr. François Kawala, born on 16/03/1987, was employed by Infomaniak Network SA from 01/02/2021 to 30/06/2023 as **Team Lead – Machine Learning Engineer**, most recently reporting to the CEO, Marc Oehler.

In this capacity, he was responsible for the following:

- Lead a team of two junior machine learning engineers.
- Design, supervise, and contribute to implementing distributed petabyte capable stacks.
- Apply solid software engineering skills including object-oriented programming, test driven development and distributed computing paradigms.
- Apply solid MLOPS and DEVOPS skills including defining code standards, maintaining CI/CD processes, kubernetes cluster usage and chore management.
- Advocate for a company-wide data culture and innovative usages of data, including machine learning based features.
- Partner with multiple teams for end-to-end hardware requirements, data collection, and product integration for groundbreaking features.

We are impressed with Mr. François Kawala's overall performance. He has been a very professional, diligent worker and team-player with strong communication skills, leadership and initiative. Mr. François Kawala went above and beyond his duties, putting the company's best interest first. Mr. François Kawala has always been highly appreciated by his colleagues. Mr. François Kawala has been very attentive to prevent any kind of discrimination, he contributed to the Company's culture and contributed to make our work environment inclusive.

We can only highly recommend Mr. François Kawala.

We confirm that he always performed all the duties he was entrusted with our full and entire satisfaction.

Mr. François Kawala left the Company free of any obligations, other than of keeping confidential any information which he handled during his employment with Infomaniak Network SA.

We have no hesitation in recommending him to any employer or client, and we would like to express our thanks for the work he performed within our Company. We wish him best success in his future professional career.

Geneva, the 31/05/2023

Marc Oehler
CEO