Ben Karnow

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Experience

World Designer   2021 – 2024
Fire Hose Games

- Sole World Designer for Techtonica (a factory automation game with core pillars of accessible automation, narrative engagement, and terrain modification).
- Concepted, designed, and created all gameplay areas for Initial release and multiple subsequent content updates.
- Created profiles and composition parameters for in-house procedural distribution system
- Created detail mesh variants, collisions, and modifications to diversify procedural distributions.
- Drove upgrades of level design tools and user experience.
- Major stakeholder for all gameplay environment decisions and planning.

Senior Content Designer   2019 – 2021
Endless OS Foundation

- Delivered educational modules for *Hack* project (core programming concepts for children ages 10-14; avg. 10 activities / module, avg. 30 minutes / activity) on monthly/bimonthly basis.
- Created learning strategies; integrated strategies into interactive content; compiled overall narrative.
- Initiated project for porting *Hack* to other platforms, OSes, and distros. Led content porting; assisted in design, implementation, and prototyping.
- Implemented 'Endless Key' project (digital learning solution for disconnected users); created content. Coordinated with external content providers.
- Created and tested demo content for Linux (Endless, Raspberry Pi), Windows, and web app; presented content at CES/PEPCOM 2019.
- Wrote story bible (primary narrative, meta-narrative, and overall universe); integrated other games. Pitched bible; led pitch through feedback cycle; wrote 6-month narrative arc.
- Onboarded and managed 6 contractors; trained and transitioned social media manager into junior design role.
- Migrated team to Agile-friendly methodology; collaborated with GM.
- Copy-edited all social media content and email newsletters; ensured tonal consistency.
- Performed design evaluations on games created by external contractors.
- Designed and executed prototyping system; integrated in-engine asset previews.
- Designed and prototyped new systems for narrative depth-on-demand and flexible content/app interactions.

QA Tester   2018
Toys for Bob

- Served on XBox One / One X testing team for *Spyro Reignited* trilogy. Investigated undocumented behaviors in original game; established parameters for reproducibility. Ensured original/remaster parity.
- Designed and implemented automated power-on and build deployment script; enabled unattended 1-click deployment to all consoles in studio. Saved +10 hours / day over entire team.
- Codified internal QA techniques and procedures; enabled faster onboarding by external partner

studios.
- Integrated multiple new tools into QA workflow; trained coworkers in QA best practices.

World Designer   2015 – 2017
Hangar 13

- Served as stakeholder for all vehicle navigation issues throughout *Mafia 3*.
- Prototyped and implemented enemy encounter prefabs. Collaborated on economic reward structure design and reward placement.
- Iterated on overall layout and geometry for ~1/5 of game world; iterated on all ambient pedestrian spawn data + World interactions. Created all water vehicle navigation data and populations.
- Placed six types of Collectible throughout game world; served as final stakeholder for Collectibles.
- Provided competitive analysis for game editor. Established core feature set and implementation details.
- Evaluated tools for future GIS→Engine pipeline (focus on rapid iteration and PGC).
- Designed 'Faster, Baby' navigation/racing DLC. Created all vehicle and pedestrian navigation data; prototyped and drove development of 'stunt jump' system; created freeform checkpoint multitrack racing system; enabled player use of in-world objects to disable pursuers; designed and integrated 10 combat spaces.
- Developed template for 'Stones Unturned' bounty-hunting DLC; enabled semirandom multi-location missions with large crowds; assisted in implementing non-lethal takedowns, in-game cutscenes, and storing bodies in vehicles. Collaborated on navigation markup and troubleshooting for 'jungle island' setting.
- Devised upgradeable, multi-part base for 'Sign of the Times' DLC. Created capstone social noncombat reward mission; devised vehicle navigation data alterations.

Senior Internal QA and Submissions   2013 – 2015
Hangar 13

- Established feasibility of My2K hybrid content/telemetry platform; worked with 2K Core Tech engineers.
- Tested *Evolve* (Turtle Rock Studios) for XBox Store integration and entitlement backend communication.
- Served as sole tools tester for *Mafia 3*; delivered tool iterations to developers.
- Provided full daily test cycles of tools and game content (incl. daily merges from 4 source branches).
- Assisted in interviewing job applicants; made hiring recommendations. Onboarded new hires. Created and codified procedures. Promoted developer/QA collaboration.

Junior Level Designer   2013
2K Marin

- Created multi-wave combat map for 'Moon Circus' dream landscape DLC (*The Bureau: XCOM Declassified* – unreleased); focused on simultaneous threat management. Collaborated with level architects and artists.
- Scripted encounters and waves within map for Vertical Slice Milestone. Prototyped and implemented global AI spawning objects and logic.

Senior Internal QA and Submissions   2010 – 2013
2K Marin

- Tested game editor for code releases (avg. 3 / day).
- Provided platform-specific performance analysis (code- and asset-level). Served as sole QA representative in Console Performance Group.

- Represented QA on PC-specific team (resolution and performance enhancement, general beautification); focused on PhysX/DirectX 11 implementation.
- Tested and verified all major code integrations for Geomerics Enlighten lighting middleware and core Unreal upgrades.
- Supported scheduled build deliveries to external QA (3/week; EU / NA all languages; PC, PS3, 360).
- Created tutorials and documentation for local build processes, console deployment methods, source control setup, department-wide test plans and knowledge bases.

Skills

- Game engines: Skilled with Unreal Engine and Unity; familiar with idTech.
- Versioning: Skilled with Git, Perforce, Plastic SCM.
- Scripting: Skilled with Python, JavaScript, PowerShell, HTML/CSS, AutoHotKey, Lua, various internal scripting languages.
- Graphics tools: Familiar with 3DS Max, Maya, Blender.
- Development methodologies: Waterfall, Scrum, Agile.
- Project trackers: Skilled with Jira, Seapine.
- Skilled with French (spoken, written).

Education

B.A. in Liberal Arts   May 2010
Hampshire College   Amherst, MA

Personal skills

- Leadership. Coaching, training, mentoring. Positive reinforcement, constructive criticism. Delegating. Decision-making. Meeting management. Remote collaboration.
- Problem-solving. Root cause analysis. Process improvement. Pattern recognition. Lateral thinking.
- Analytical, logical, insightful.
- Quick learner. Adaptable, trainable.
- Communication skills. Presentation. Clarity. Public speaking. Active listening.
- Strong work ethic. Responsible, disciplined. Self-starter. Results-oriented.
- Organizational skills. Documentation. Knowledge management.
- Conflict resolution. Patient, tolerant, diplomatic.
- Cultural intelligence. Diversity awareness. Disability awareness. Accessibility.
- Work well under pressure. Crisis management.