

Ben Faulkner

Lead Designer

Campaign / Gameplay / Systems / Player Experience

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Veteran game designer, campaign designer and scripter for open world and strategy games
Passion for strategy, RTS, FPS, rogues and holistic/systemic design with emergent gameplay
Proven leader, building trust and rapport across multiple disciplines and project teams
Logic driven, experience motivated problem solver and creative solutions mediator
Exemplary communicator both verbally and written, document editor extraordinaire
Energetic and empathetic mentor, team motivator and project hype person

Skills

- ◇ Pitching games, features and tools
- ◇ Speaking clearly and concisely
- ◇ Energizing and inspiring teams
- ◇ Mentoring to level up designers
- ◇ Driving discipline's to realize their vision
- ◇ Writing and editing mindful of audience
- ◆ Owning scripting standards/best practices
- ◆ Instanced and open-world level design
- ◆ Action/Strategy/Open world gameplay design
- ◆ Player-first Iterative game development
- ◆ Finding and fixing troubled or flawed designs
- ◆ Intentional fun discovery and implementation

Software Experience

Engines: UE5, Bedrock, Godot, Unity, Game Maker/GM Studio, Galaxy Map Editor, Source tools

Languages: Blueprint VSS, B#, C#, Lua, Javascript, Java, GDScript, GML, HTML, English, French

Media: Photoshop (photography/design), Premier/Vegas video editors, Audacity, Famitracker

Documentation: Google/Microsoft doc tools, Miro, Notion, Figma, Pinterest, OBS, Confluence

Other: GitHub, ADO, Perforce, Hansoft, Jira, Confluence, Trello, Mantis, Slack, Discord, etc.

Game Development

Minecraft: Legends - Blackbird Interactive (2018 - 2024)

Lead Gameplay Designer (2023-2024)

- ◆ Post launch development of DLC, patches and fixing underperforming / non-functional features
- ◆ Provided sympathetic support, motivating a team in decline to focus and feel proud of their work
- ◆ Solved public perception of bad AI by making the presentation and the mechanics more aligned
- ◆ Worked with each discipline to discover untapped potential based on available team skills
- ◆ Complete overhaul of RPS for enhanced battle comprehension, improved unit progression
- ◆ Tuned difficulties for a distinct campaign experience across player skill and experience levels

Lead campaign / mission designer (2021-2023)

- ◇ Oversaw campaign development from the first beat of act 1 to the epic boss finale
- ◇ Managed Piglin content and coordinated longform campaign with world team
- ◇ Integrated narrative and cinematic content seamlessly with campaign development and level design
- ◇ Developed popcorn encounters between levels to engage, entice and teach game mechanics
- ◇ Delivered in-person and online publisher pitches to encourage successful gameplay changes
- ◇ Worked with producers to set best practices, expectations, reviews and meet deliverables
- ◇ Managed, mentored, supported and celebrated the campaign team and contributors
- ◇ Consistently facilitated playtests across the whole team to gather feedback and build team rapport
- ◇ Delegated to develop unique, exciting, memorable and consistent encounters for an open world
- ◇ Tailored faction, entity and level development to mesh cohesively with narrative progression
- ◇ Collaborated across teams to reach timely deliverables and better publisher relations

Senior / Intermediate Game designer (2019-2021)

- ◆ Pitched, developed and owned all Piglin gameplay including all 1.0 levels and team-wide tests
- ◆ Worked in concert with all disciplines to create features from first draft to final implementation
- ◆ Used personal and community experience to integrate IP into each design when applicable
- ◆ Helped develop, improve and maintain tools with little or no preliminary documentation
- ◆ Collaborated with directors / department leads to develop longform campaign and meta game

Crossfire: Legion - Blackbird Interactive (2017-2018)

Mission scripter / level designer

- ◇ Updated, maintained and improved the documentation database regularly and as needed
- ◇ Collaborated with engineers to develop and disseminate scripting tools and level editor
- ◇ Co-wrote 17 level design documents in pre-production, working with narrative and gameplay
- ◇ Worked with all design disciplines to improve game balance, pacing and the overall experience
- ◇ Designed, greyblocked, scripted, iterated and finalized first complete mission for vertical slice
- ◇ Trained level designers to inherit tools, documentation, best practices and team mission

Academic Experience

The Art Institute of Vancouver (2014-2016)

Inaugural Senior Research Fellowship recipient
Received Game Art and Design diploma
Let's Make A Game Club founder

The University of Guelph-Humber (2005-2009)

Practiced landscape and in-studio digital / film photography, Media / Communications Theory
Digital editing, Public Relations and Journalism

Academic / Personal Projects

Chromalife (2015-2016) - Student Project

Lead Designer / Creative Director / Producer

PC Standalone - Game Maker Studio

Lead a 7 person team to develop a mobile side scroller about cultural diversity for seniors in collaboration with researchers from SFU

Bootstrap VR (2016) - Research Fellowship

Pitch / Lead Designer / Level Designer

PC Oculus VR FPS - UE4

Co-lead, prototyped, game / level designed and quality assured a Sci-fi narrative FPS with Game mechanics focused on VR experience and story

Dredge Effect (2016) - Student Project

Gameplay / System / Level Design

PC Starcraft 2 - Galaxy Map Editor

Created a standalone RTS experience with multiple viable strategies and level paths

Down Came the Void (2016) - Student Project

Gameplay / System / Level Design (Art / Audio)

Mobile Strategy - Game Maker Studio

Designed, scripted, balanced and fine-tuned a hybrid tower defense / RTS with reactive AI

Previous Work Experience

Warehouse Bottle Sorter/ Key Holder - Regional Recycling (2015-2016)

Culinary - The Keg, Moxies, The Fairmont, Wayne Gretzky's, Café Deux Soleils (2003 - 2015)

Personal Interests / Other

Photography / Digital Media | Music / Drums | Astronomy / Space Exploration | Sci-fi / Fantasy / Fiction | Reading / Writing | Mountain and Trail Hiking | Anime / Isekai | Noodles / Ramen | Ancient History / Anthropocene | Travel / Cultural Exploration | Maps / Cartography | Vegetarian Cooking / Gastronomy