GIACOMO PONZI

GAME DESIGNER

Portfolio: giacomo-ponzi.com
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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Gameplay & 3C Analysis
Game Economy & Systems
Balancing
SQL-Based User Behavior Analysis
Lore Consistency & World-Building
Iterative Design & Playtesting
Educational Game Design
Cross-Functional Collaboration
Design Documentation & Feature Specs

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming & Scripting: C#, C++, SQL (queries, data analysis)
Engines & Tools: Unreal Engine 4, Unity, Trello, Miro, GitHub, Figma, Confluence, Microsoft Office

LANGUAGES

English
Italian
French

PERSONAL SKILLS

Problem Solving
Team Player
Energetic
Enthusiasm
Integrity
Creative thinker
Excellent Communicator

PERSONAL SUMMARY

Game Designer with 3+ years of experience in gameplay systems, 3C design, world-building, and cross-functional collaboration. Skilled in balancing game systems, writing detailed design documentation, and analyzing player behavior through data. Strong foundation in scripting with C# and C++, and iterative development workflows. Known for blending analytical depth with creative thinking to build immersive game worlds and dynamic player experiences.

WORK EXPERIENCE

KNOWLEDGEHOOK
GAME DESIGNER | MAY 2024 – PRESENT
Educational game company transforming math learning for over 5 million students globally.

- **Authored and developed core gameplay and economy systems** for an educational IP, aligning player motivation with engagement and learning goals.
- **Led a major redesign of the in-game economy**, significantly **boosting student engagement** by improving reward pacing, progression clarity, and incentive structure.
- **Implemented a reward-driven survey system that increased student response rates** from ~500 to over 30,000 for Ministry of Education feedback.
- **Maintained** and expanded **design documentation**, clearly outlining system goals, gameplay flow, and content dependencies for developers and stakeholders.
- **Liaised with engineers and artists** to coordinate **asset requirements** and ensure seamless integration of gameplay features.
- **Used SQL to** pull player data, identifying trends that informed **balancing decisions and iterative updates**.
- **Conducted playtesting** and **prototyped** gameplay adjustments, refining features based on **user behavior**, feedback loops, and platform analytics.

TORONTO FILM SCHOOL
INSTRUCTOR, GAME DESIGN (PART-TIME) | OCTOBER 2024 – PRESENT

- Teach **Game Design**, focusing on core design principles such as **player motivation**, **mechanics development**, **narrative structure**, and **level design theory**.
- Teach **Game Framework**, guiding students through **full** capstone **production cycles** while covering **project scoping**, **task management**, **production tools**, and **collaborative workflows**.
- Act as mentor and project lead for student teams, offering **guidance on game design decisions**, production pipelines, and scope management.
- **Oversee** student task progress, including **programming deliverables**, and **review code quality** for proper structure and naming conventions
- **Support student** development **through design feedback**, **problem-solving mentorship**, and facilitating resolution of team dynamics and interpersonal challenges.

AMAZON GAMES
GAME DESIGN ANALYST (GAMEPLAY AND 3C) |2022 - 2024
PROJECTS: NEW WORLD, THRONE & LIBERTY, UPCOMING TOMB RAIDER GAME, KING OF MEAT.

- **Created** gameplay breakdowns and **3C evaluations** to support gameplay and combat design across multiple **AAA titles**.
- **Liaised** with global **design** and **UX teams** to communicate gameplay insights during **early development and key stage gate reviews.**
- **Authored** internal **feedback reports** and **comparative analysis documents** that helped influence direction, pacing, and mechanic adjustments.
- **Implemented** design research by analyzing competitors, identifying best practices, and aligning features with genre expectations.
- **Maintained documentation** on gameplay clarity, player flow, and usability **to support systems design** and **user testing**.

GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE
GAME DESIGNER - 2022
PROJECT: CELLS AT WAR.

- Spearheaded a **multidisciplinary team** in developing an educational video game at McMaster University, which simulates the progression of Pompe disease, enhancing learning through **interactive gameplay**.
- **Directed the game design process**, ensuring accurate depiction of Pompe disease stages through detailed diagrams and documentation, facilitating clear **guidance** for the **development team**.
- **Led the playtesting phase**, designing surveys and **utilizing Unity Engine** for **prototype development**, followed by analyzing feedback through comprehensive reports generated with Microsoft Office tools.
- Oversaw the project's timeline and task management using **organizational tools like Trello and Miro**, ensuring timely completion of milestones and adherence to project **deadlines**.

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

Digital Design - Game Design Program (Post-graduate) -2021 – 2022| *George Brown College - Ontario, Canada*
"Best Game Designer" Award

Diploma in Video Game Design & Development - 2019 – 2020 | *Toronto Film School - Ontario, Canada*

Bachelor of Nursing - 2008 – 2011 | *University of Padua - Veneto, Italy*