

KURT ECKHARDT

PRODUCER & LEAD GAME DESIGNER
kurteckhardtdesign.wix.com/portfolio



(+971)56 726 5985



kurteckhardt@gmail.com



Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

PERSONAL SUMMARY

I am a game designer with an incredible passion for creating fun and innovative games. I am currently working at Ubisoft Abu Dhabi as the Studio Producer and Design & UI/UX Lead, working across the studio's multiple projects.

I graduated with a First Class MA with Honours in Games Design at Sheffield Hallam University, and was also awarded 'Best in Show for Games Design'. I then went on to be selected as one of only 18 successful applicants for the UK Games Fund's Transfuser competition, and was awarded a grant to develop a game project over a 10-week period. The prototype of which was showcased at EGX 2016.

EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS

Master of Arts in Game Design - First Class with Honours Sheffield Hallam University 2012 - 2016

4 A Levels

Graphic Design
Fine Art
Computer Science
General Studies

9 GCSE's

Art | Science Dual Award
Maths | Classical Civilisation
History | English Language
Spanish | English Literature

Birkdale Senior School 2004 - 2008

GAME TITLES

Clash of Beasts, Growtopia, Unannounced Projects

Ubisoft - Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (July 21 - Present)

Role: Studio Producer, Studio Design & UI/UX Lead, Product Owner

Job Description:

- Driving the planning, development, and production of all ongoing and future projects for the studio.
- Leading and supporting the design & UI/UX team to ensure structure for the project development along with providing support for the team's wellbeing, personal growth and career development.
- Overseeing the design of all the game features and improvements, ensuring that the creative development of the studio's projects are consistently in-line with the project vision and studio strategy.
- Designing new event mechanics and reward content.
- Planning out the project roadmaps for the upcoming years, maintaining a healthy pipeline of new content and feature improvements.
- Working closely with the community management team to establish an entrusting personal relationship with the game communities.
- Constant analysis and evaluation of the games KPI's and those of their competitors as a means to ensure and maintain a strong foothold in the market.
- Coordinating and collaborating closely with each and every department, both internally and frequently with external teams in order to guarantee the highest degree of quality for constructing our brands.
- Working as a representative for the studio's ongoing culture development, ensuring the alignment of all team members to our established core values.
- Participating in the recruitment process to strengthen the design & development teams across the whole studio.
- Directing & maintaining the studio's production pipeline processes, as well as facilitating and maintaining agile development methods & Scrum master processes and responsibilities such as; sprint planning, tech planning, ticket planning & grooming, sprint reviews, daily standups, scrum board administration, sprint retrospectives, and more.

Achievements:

- Creating and defining the new vision and direction for the studio's projects, and with it, crafting and maintaining the annual roadmap plans, including the content and timeline for each content update release including planning tasks for all departments involved in the development.
- Personally set up multiple new best practice processes for both design and overall product development.
- Migrated all design documentation from individual .pptx to much more accessible and structured confluence pages. Establishing new standardizations for design and development documentation.
- Reworked and improved entire monetization focuses and methodologies for projects.
- Designed new frameworks for seasonal events and reward systems within the games.
- Personally initiated and directed the migration of the team's journey to an agile sprint development method, and fulfilled the role of acting Scrum Master.

Learning Outcomes:

- Developed professional experience within production & development, specifically in a Producer role.
- Experience supporting a new game project through its soft launch and crucial early life phase.
- Gained further in a leadership role, providing care and support for a multicultural team of designers, whilst simultaneously ensuring that the team consistently delivering on owned tasks, punctually, and to the highest standard.
- Honing my expertise of F2P, monetization, progression, UI, and fundamental game design.
- Further developed experience with project planning, task organization and product management.
- More opportunities to collaborate with team members from a multitude of different backgrounds.
- Continuous proficiency with excel balancing, exports, and json config implementation.
- Developed experience in a Scrum Master role, facilitating agile sprint development.

AWARDS



SOFTWARE SKILLS

Unreal Engine 5
Unity
Adobe Photoshop
Excel/VBA
Confluence
JIRA
Perforce
GitHub
JavaScript
3DS Max
Adobe Flash
Substance Designer
Marmoset Toolbag
Quixel Suite
Zbrush
Adobe Premier
Cubase

REFEREES

Stefan Walter
stefan.walter@innogames.com
Director of Live Games
InnoGames GmbH
Friesenstraße 13
Hamburg 20097
Germany

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Forge of Empires

InnoGames GmbH - Hamburg, Germany (Sept 17 - June 21)

Role: Game Designer

Job Description:

- Responsible for designing new features and systems, and improving upon existing ones within the game
- Designing and implementing new end-game and extra feature content
- Creating new and innovative seasonal events for the game with a focus on designing compelling new rewards
- Balancing every aspect of the game, caring for and improving upon a 9-year old established game economy
- Constantly monitoring and analyzing vital market KPI's to maintain this long-running F2P strategy game's position in the top of the Appstore charts
- Social media presenter and writer for the game's public relations content
- Working closely and collaboratively with the game developers, art team, and product management, marketing, and more in order to ensure consistent production of quality content for the players

Achievements:

- Responsible for the design, balancing, rewards, and maintaining general performance of all events in the game since 2018
- Designed the community-favourite "Antiques Dealer" in-game auction system
- Concept for the game's additional content "Cultural Settlement" feature
- Developed special themed sale days (Black Friday, May Madness etc...) in collaboration with CRM dept
- Regularly sharing knowledge and best practices to other game teams within the company in the form of workshops
- Developing new KPI's, now used regularly within the game's event and reward design to ensure a consistent and moderated overlook of the game's economy

Learning Outcomes:

- Developed skills as a Game Designer working on a leading mobile/browser social F2P game
- Experience generally in F2P design, monetization strategy design, and economic systems design
- Developed knowledge of F2P market, competitor analysis and industry trends
- Advanced proficiency with Excel formulas and spreadsheets
- Experience working with AGILE development, and to tight regular version release deadlines
- Further experience delivering concept pitches, team meetings, and game presentations

Of Gods and Monsters

Illicum Games Studio - Sheffield, UK (May 16 - June 17)

Role: Game Director, Game Designer, Gameplay Programmer

Job Description:

- Leading, managing, and mentoring a small team through a rigorous 10-week project
- Designing a realistically achievable product deliverable within a strict 10 week deadline
- Coordinating and leading committee-based iterative design choices
- Programming the entire prototype solo
- Attending nationwide networking events and conferences on behalf of the studio
- Arranging deals with and establishing relationships with third-party contractors/freelancers
- Managing and maintaining the studio's PR and social media presence
- Conducting pitches and presentations to boards of the UK government

Achievements:

- Awarded a government grant through UK Games Talent's 'Tranzfuser' competition
- Game demo prototype showcased at EGX 2016

Learning Outcomes:

- Further experience with team management, ensuring milestone targets were consistently met
- Developed knowledge and experience using Unreal Engine 4 and it's integrated tools
- Experience maintaining lasting relationships and correspondence with third-party clients
- Experience networking and sales/advertising at showcase events

Rink Riot

Steel Minions (University Game Studio) - Sheffield, UK (Jan 16 - June 16)

Role: Game Designer, 3D Artist

Job Description:

- Iterating upon design of gameplay mechanics and overall art style
- Designing and creating textured 3D assets & particle VFX for a multiplayer sports/party game
- Crafting game design documents and global product proposals
- Constructing and delivering pitches to Sony representatives for PSN release

Achievements:

- Sumo Digital Award for Best Game Design - 2nd Prize. Game Republic Awards 2016
- Dubit Award for Game Technology - 3rd Prize. Game Republic Awards 2016
- Rockstar Leeds Award for Best Team - 3rd Prize. Game Republic Awards 2016
- Revolution Software Award for Game Art & Animation - 3rd Prize. Game Republic Awards 2016

Learning Outcomes:

- Experience working within an indie development team, carrying out a game design role
- Managing individual and group tasks to ensure target milestones were met
- Further experience with 3D modelling and texturing software

AWARDS



Rockstar Leeds Award for Best Team
3rd Prize - Rink Riot



Revolution Software Award for
Game Art & Animation
3rd Prize - Rink Riot



Dubit Award for Game Technology
3rd Prize - Rink Riot



SOFTWARE SKILLS

Unreal Engine 5
Unity
Adobe Photoshop
Excel/VBA
Confluence
JIRA
Perforce
GitHub
JavaScript
3DS Max
Adobe Flash
Substance Designer
Marmoset Toolbag
Quixel Suite
Zbrush
Adobe Premier
Cubase

REFEREES

Stefan Walter
stefan.walter@innogames.com
Director of Live Games
InnoGames GmbH
Friesenstraße 13
Hamburg 20097
Germany