

David Nishball

Senior Technical Designer

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Over ten years of experience building content pipelines, gameplay systems, and polished content.
- Seamless collaboration with engineers, animators, sound designers, narrative designers, tech artists, and more.
- Deep technical knowledge including feature architecture, C++, tool creation, and automation.

SKILLS & SPECIALTIES

- *Game Engines:* Unreal Engine 5, Unity Engine
- *Design:* Technical Design, Ability and Class Design, System Design, Quest Design, AI Design
- *Engineering:* 3D Mathematics, Linear Algebra, Design Patterns, AI, Agile teams, Scrum, Perforce, Swarm
- *Languages / Technologies:* C/C++, C#, Unreal Blueprint, Unreal Gameplay Ability System, Python, JSON

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Cryptic Studios, **Gameplay Engineer** **April 2023 – November 2023 (Project Canceled)**

Unannounced Game (Unreal 5; PC – Multiplayer Action RPG) <https://youtu.be/EM1SINwBUlo>

- Created “Synchronized Action” system for combat grabs, opening chests, and other complex interactions, using **Unreal’s Gameplay Ability System and C++**.
- Collaborated with animators to create signature **Boss enemy movesets and challenges**.
- Mentored team members from all departments on effective use of Unreal Engine and created training videos.
- Assisted Narrative Director to **flesh out key characters**, their histories, and their motivations.

Survios, **Senior Technical Designer**

February 2022 – March 2023 (Layoff)

Alien: Rogue Incursion (Unreal 5; PC – Immersive FPS) <https://youtu.be/fnzh9Ll4i7A>

Creed: Rise to Glory - Champion Edition (Unreal 5; VR – Action Game) <https://youtu.be/I973ebAj2i0>

- **Led gameplay design** on a team of all disciplines for signature player weapons and abilities.
- Prototyped environmental simulation systems for a more immersive gameplay experience using Unreal's Gameplay Ability System.
- Overhauled campaign and narrative systems to develop content **four times faster**.
- Created novel VR interactions and design tools to enhance player immersion.
- Built custom debug command framework, allowing **elaborate set pieces** to be made by the team.

Big Time Studios, **Senior Technical Designer**

May 2021 – December 2021 (Contract)

Big Time (Unreal 4; PC – Action MMORPG) <https://youtu.be/bwgHMbZedk4>

- Created “Gameplay Effect Volume” framework. Designed and engineered **over 30 player combat abilities** for a party based Action RPG with teamwork and class synergy as a high priority, using C++ and Blueprint with Unreal's Gameplay Ability System. **Mentored other designers** in its use.
- Composed high-level character class, kit, and progression designs.
- Invented ecology designs for MMO social spaces.
- Integrated external narrative software “Articy” into our project, making engine-level adjustments to Unreal to accommodate **ideal workflow for the writing and quest team**.
- Performed quest and narrative design.

Firaxis Games, **Gameplay Engineer**

January 2019 – May 2021

Marvel: Midnight Suns (Unreal 4; PC, Console – Tactical RPG) <https://youtu.be/9gniHR2rQpw>

- Implemented **over 50 Hero and Monster abilities** and gameplay features in Unreal Engine 4 and C++.
- Collaborated with design lead to create designs for abilities and characters from conception to implementation, including **multiple Bosses**.
- Created “Reinforcement Framework” that **unified the game’s spawning system** and allowed for highly custom behaviors.

Six Foot, **Technical Designer / Gameplay Engineer**

October 2017 – October 2018 (Layoff)

Dreadnought (Unreal 4; PS4, PC – Multiplayer Shooter) https://youtu.be/jlQAP_4AUcl

- Designed and implemented "Innsmouth," procedural data system allowing for **hundreds of game assets to be edited and documented effortlessly**, using C++ and JSON with Unreal Engine.
- Designed and architected "Dagon," a balancing system that allows game balance changes on a live game without interrupting player experience..
- Collaborated closely with art team, backend services team, production team, localization team, commerce team, and others to ensure project goals were achieved, **including a storefront for micro-transactions**.
- Provided support and guidance for the larger design team, including FAQ documents, tools, and custom features, on **core combat systems**.

Glu Mobile, **Tools & Gameplay Engineer**

August 2015 – March 2017 (Layoff)

Racing Rivals (Unity; iOS, Android – MMO Racing Game)

- Performed tools and gameplay engineering for live-service multiplayer mobile game, using Unity Engine, C#, and MySQL
- Worked closely with Designers to create "Content Tool", **improving production rate of new cars and tournaments by 400%** via intuitive UI and automated error checking
- Owned content pipeline, providing rapid content deployment for player retention and revenue
- Created "Art Tool" for art team, allowing for **automated rendering, uploading, and documenting** of cars and accessories in the game environment

Carbine Studios, **Associate Content Designer**

May 2013 – October 2014 (Layoff)

Wildstar (PC – MMORPG) <https://youtu.be/qP7PVH1Twg8>

- Designed configurable systems for tuning the difficulty of content
- Prototyped and polished "World Story" **narrative game content** according to a strict release schedule.
- Created story dialog and vignettes to communicate plot points and characterization for the world of *Wildstar*
- Made in-game quests and events, including **large public group content**.

PERSONAL PROJECTS

Project Samba, Engineer and Designer

Unreal Engine 5, PC – **Action RPG**

- **Built melee-action combat** system using Unreal 5 and C++, with an emphasis on pipelines for new creatures.
- Designed major boss encounters and implemented complex abilities.
- Used **AI Behavior trees and EQS** for AI Design.
- World Design and Character Design.

Split Second Tactics, Engineer and Designer <https://youtu.be/K9MuPEPfu3g>

Unity Engine, PC – **Tactics Game**

- Designed an original tactics system based on "mental sprints" and planning moves ahead of time under pressure.
- Designed and programmed a custom tactics system in Unity engine C#.
- Designed multiple enemy types that act in combination.
- Wrote game design documents to set project goals.

EDUCATION

Hampshire College, Amherst, MA. B.S., Computer Science & Game Development