

David Nishball

Technical Designer and Gameplay Engineer

Long Beach, CA | 203-449-7929 | [LinkedIn](#) | DavidENishball@gmail.com - February 2024

OBJECTIVE

- Produce amazing games with amazing people.
- Dedicated to creating features and team practices for encouraging experimental and maintainable game design.
- Empower everyone on the team to craft with more skill and confidence, no matter the discipline

SKILLS & SPECIALTIES

- *Game Engines:* Unreal Engine 5, Unity Engine
- *Design:* Technical Design, Ability and Class Design, System Design, Quest Design
- *Engineering:* 3D Mathematics, Object Oriented Design, Design Patterns, AI, Agile teams, Scrum, Perforce, Swarm
- *Languages / Technologies:* C/C++, C#, 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/EM1SINwBUJo>

- Built original framework for a suite of player and monster abilities, “**Synchronized Actions**” to allow unique interactions between any two entities using C++ and Blueprints in Unreal Engine 5.
- Designed **creature and player combat behaviors** to emphasize skill and consistency.
- Collaborated with animators to create boss enemy movesets and challenges.
- Engineered and supported **melee combat core systems**, including custom debugging and documentation.
- Mentored team members from all departments on effective use of Unreal Engine and created training videos.

Survios, Senior Technical Designer

February 2022 – March 2023 (Layoff)

Unannounced Game – “*Aliens*” series (Unreal 5; PC – Immersive FPS)

Creed: Rise to Glory - Champion Edition – (Unreal 5; VR – Action Game) <https://youtu.be/l973ebAj2i0>

- Led gameplay design on a team of all disciplines for **key player weapons and abilities**, using C++ and Blueprint
- Prototyped environmental simulation systems for a more immersive gameplay experience using Unreal's Gameplay Ability System.
- Performed encounter paper designs and game mechanic pitches.
- Took ownership of **campaign and narrative systems** and overhauled them to develop content four times faster.
- Created novel VR interactions and design tools to enhance player immersion.
- Supported level design, QA, and artists with custom debug command framework.

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 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.
- Created high-level character class, kit, and progression designs.
- Created ecology designs for MMO social spaces.
- Integrated external narrative software 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, Technical Designer / Gameplay Engineer

January 2019 – May 2021

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

- Engineered Hero and Monster abilities and gameplay features in Unreal Engine 4 and C++ for tactical RPG with unique combat system.
- Collaborated with design lead to **create designs for abilities and characters** from conception to implementation.
- Overhauled existing gameplay and visual systems for expanded and sustainable functionality.
- Created “**Reinforcement Gate**” system: a portable, artist-friendly system to choose the most interesting way groups of enemies can enter the combat space.
- Engineered event and vignette system for the Abbey, an **explorable narrative space** with emergent story and emphasis on character development.

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 large numbers of game assets to be fixed, edited or 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, using C++ and JSON, with Unreal Engine.
- Collaborated closely with art team, backend services team, production team, localization team, commerce team, and others to ensure project goals were achieved
- Renovated ability and weapon systems, improving knowledge of the system for the whole studio
- Collaborated with team to design new gameplay systems for player engagement and retention

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
- Gained feature ownership of 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
- Rapidly prototyped and polished "World Story" game content according to a strict release schedule.
- Created story dialog and vignettes to communicate plot points and characterization for the world of *Wildstar*
- Created 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.

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

2013

- B.S., Computer Science & Game Development