

# Steve Vatkov

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## Summary

Experienced creative designer with 7 years in delivering innovative game design solutions, emphasizing mechanics, scripting, and user experience. Proficient in game design principles, innovative gameplay systems, and 3Cs player control experience.

## Work Experience

Jun 2021 - **Blackbird Interactive** / Game Designer / Vancouver, BC.

Current

- Implemented innovative gameplay systems for acclaimed titles: *Hardspace: Shipbreaker* and *Homeworld 3*, ensuring enjoyable experiences for all player skill levels.
- Designed and iterated on core gameplay and multiplayer systems, including Core Features, Faction Design, Unit Design, Ability Design, Level Design, Social, and Progression Design.
- Balanced core systems using data-driven insights to achieve a fair and satisfying player experience.
- Improved player experience by elevating console design feature sets across 3Cs (Camera, Character, Controls) using metrics, data, and by taking end-to-end ownership while collaborating with internal and external stakeholders.
- As a Level Designer for *Hardspace: Shipbreaker*, designed several ships using a procedurally generated blend of level mechanics to provide a scaling challenge for players throughout the campaign; reinforcing core pillars, atmosphere, and player engagement.

Jun 2020 - **Qublix** / Level Designer / Toronto, ON.

Jun 2021

- Created hundreds of levels across several free-to-play mobile game titles, using in-house tools, testing, and tuning.
- Analyzed user feedback and data metrics to tune and balance levels according to KPIs, increasing player engagement by 25% and revenue by 35%, then adjusting monetization strategies accordingly.
- Collaborated with interdisciplinary teams (designers, art, code, production) to develop new mobile titles and refine design practices based on previous genre analysis.
- Developed design documentation to help define new features in game titles, while performing quality assurance using test cases to identify, document, and resolve bugs and issues.

Feb 2019 - **Frolic Labs** / Unity Developer / Toronto, ON.

March 2020

- Visual designer responsible for the implementation of art assets and level design for *Dune Sea* game title on PC and Nintendo Switch.

- Designed levels and environments that support and improve upon core mechanics, helping achieve a satisfying and unique gameplay loop centered around movement.
- Managed all stages of level design, collaborating with programmers and designers, from initial prototype to finalizing the layout and appearance of each level.
- Conducted extensive playtesting and gathered feedback from internal and external playtesters to iterate on levels, features, and resolve issues for final release.
- Created new assets and utilized shaders, particle systems, and post processing to create dynamic and vibrant environments for each level.

Aug 2016 - Feb 2019 **Wicked Interactive Ltd.** / Community Manager / Toronto, ON.

- Managing the growth of three MMOs on PC, achieving a 100% increase of players through implementation of new content, features, and paid in-game items.
- Designed and developed new items and costumes using Photoshop and 3DS Max, resulting in a 30% increase in sales and 70% increase in monthly active users.
- Produced promotional videos and images using Adobe Creative Suite for current and upcoming game releases, garnering over 200,000 views.
- Increased player engagement by a monthly average of 20% by leading coordination and communication of monthly sale promotions, contests, and events in-game and across Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, and forums.
- Collaborated with Product Teams to address user-reported bugs using JIRA and Google Docs, resolving issues through patches and updates.

## Education

2011 - 2015 **Ryerson University, Toronto**

B.F.A in New Media

Member of the Game Makers Union

Relevant Courses: Experiential Media, New Media Project Development, Communication within Hybrid Environments

## Skills

Skills Game Design, Scripting, Multimedia Design, VFX, Shaders

Tools Unreal Engine, Unity 3D, Adobe Creative Suite, Visual Studio, Blender, 3DS Max, Maya

Languages Blueprint, C#, Javascript, Processing, HTML, CSS