

Steven Yau

Games Maker Geek and Games Investor

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A games developer with 18+ yrs' experience of building end to end products from prototyping to delivery. Includes AAA console, AR/VR/XR, Web and F2P mobile games for companies including EA, King and Snapchat.

Loves to learn, solve problems and challenges, be it technical, managerial or design related to create user impact.

Worked with multiple cross discipline teams and stakeholders to build project roadmaps.

- 7+ years **C++** experience across multiple platforms including console and mobile.
- 2+ years **Unity3D** with **C#** experience for mobile.
- 6+ years **JavaScript** and **TypeScript** experience creating **WebGL** games and webapps.
- Project Management with **ScrumMaster** certification and Team Lead experience.
- End user and product focused.
- Volunteer mentor for young people.

Employment

May'23 - Now



Gather Town - Senior Rendering Engineer with Phaser WebGL Games Engine

- **Technical lead** of 3 engineers for the Virtual Office experience. Responsibilities included planning, maintaining our standard of technical and product experience and ensuring leadership is aware of progress or changes to planned work.
- Stopped rendering being a contribution to user retention loss. Achieved through data investigations, aggressively reducing our rendering frequency, resolution scaling and better scheduling of CPU/GPU intensive tasks.
- Fixed rendering related bugs backlog with legacy code to reduce customer reported issues from dozens per week to near 0. Created a test plan to reduce further issues in new features.
- Prototyping and iterating on new Virtual Office v2 features with user feedback. Focused on user movement, navigation controls and moments of delight and joy.

Apr'20 - May'23



Snap - Senior Partner Relations Manager for PlayCanvas WebGL Games Engine

- Managed all technical support with a 100 NPS score for a user base that doubled between 2020-22, including 30+ Snapchat games partners. This included onboarding, recommended practises, performance profiling with improvements and project deep dives.
- Collaborated with external global technology partners to provide support and help produce integrations with **PlayCanvas** including [Microsoft](#), [8th Wall](#), [Google Ads](#) and [Colyseus](#).
- Added [features and fixed bugs](#) reported by users which included, [playable ad export tools](#), simpler scene changing API, UI scrolling in XR and physics collision offset.
- Managed and created one to many communication streams including [newsletters](#) (10K+ opens), [video content](#), [blog articles](#), [documentation](#), [tutorials](#) and managed releases for the Engine and Editor.
- Recruited and managed a community moderation team of 5 for Discord and forums (contractors and volunteers)

Oct'19 - Feb'20



Bravo Company - Project Manager for F2P midcore mobile

- Started as a Client Engineer and promoted to a Project Manager for a distributed team for a live game in early access.
- Managed and aligned creative and business stakeholders towards a north star vision with actionable objectives to build a feature roadmap.
- Built and maintained a project dashboard to the snapshot of work in progress, timeline estimations and links to feature specs and Slack channels.
- Started regular hackweeks to help bubble ideas up from the team to leadership.
- Role was unfortunately made redundant due to a failed investment round.

Sep '19 - Dec '19



ACM University - Session Tutor for BA Games Development

- Adapted, created and delivered course material for the Programming and Design specialisms using the accredited Falmouth University's course materials as a base.
- Provided programming and Unity3D support for students and other tutors.

May '18 - Oct'19



Beat Fitness Games - Lead Mobile Unity3D Games Developer

- Developed multiple games and prototypes for gym cardio fitness where the action is controlled by the user's heart rate with **Unity3D**.
- Refactored initial prototype to separate the core Heart Rate Engine functionality (bluetooth device detection, effort measurement, user information) into a separate module for fast prototyping and integration in existing games.
- Integrated **PlayFab** for leaderboards, analytics and player account management for profiles and IAP.

Jul '17 - Apr '18



Conspexit Games Studio (Startup) - Lead AR Gameplay Developer on Hidden

- Worked directly with the Lead Designer to give technical feedback on gameplay mechanic proposals and to understand design motivations.
- Created and managed a prototyping team within the contracted team using **Unity3D** to rapidly iterate on design ideas.
- Proposed and created multiple proofs of concept for Conspexit Computer Vision technology to external parties and investors, including augmenting AR objects in place of real world ones.

Feb '17 - Jul '17



Short Contracts - Software Developer

- **InMobi** - Designed and implemented a playable ad for mobile using **PlayCanvas**.
- **LearnBrite** - Investigated **three.js**' model asset loading workflow.
- **Workflow** - Implemented sequencing features for a bespoke project as a **PlayCanvas** specialist, focused on the animation and scene loading systems.
- **Happy Finish** - Developed a bespoke client mobile app to playback curated videos in VR using Google cardboard.

Sep '16 - Feb '17



PlayCanvas - WebGL Engine Support Engineer

- Designed and created WebGL powered content and games for clients such as [Virtual Voodoo](#) for Miniclip using **Javascript**.
- Added over 30 new project samples to the [tutorials section](#).
- Developed [WebVR Lab](#), a scalable VR experience showcased by [Google Chrome Blog](#). Accessible on Google Cardboard, Gear VR, Daydream and room scale VR.
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May '16 - Sep '16 **Sabbatical and experimenting with Platforms**



- Left King to prepare and spend time with the new baby and family.
- Live streaming game development of a 'Twitch Plays' game via Twitch using **Unity3D**. Past broadcasts are on [YouTube](#) and highlights on [Twitch](#).

Oct '13 - May '16 **King - Senior Games Developer**



- Sole developer of **Super Stack 'Em** for [RoyalGames.com](#) and an unreleased mobile title game from prototype through production using **Actionscript** and **Lua** with [Defold](#).
- Implemented gameplay features and bug fixes on **Farm Heroes Saga** using **Actionscript** for the browser client and **C++** for mobile.
- Conceptualised, prototyped and took **Farm Heroes Super Saga** through to release, focusing on gameplay and social interaction between players.
- Updated level creation tools with data validation to prevent impassable levels.

Jan '13 - Oct '13 **Happy Finish - Senior Software Developer (VR, AR) in Interactive Department**



- Developed interactive prototypes within short timeframes and fully fledged apps for external clients using **C#** within **Unity**.
- Mentored Junior Developers in best practices of working within a team and large scale software design.
- Experimented the application of new technology such as **Leap Motion** including a full body VR experience through the use of **Oculus Rift** and **Kinect**.

Sep '11 - Jan '13 **Playfish - Senior Games Developer on The Sims Social**



- Implemented new weekly content and features for the live game client in **Actionscript** and using **Agile** methodologies.
- Managed an overseas client team on the processes and core modules of the project in preparation for handover between two internal studios.
- Promoted into a **Team Lead** position and consequently managed several developer disciplines to release live content to strict deadlines.

Aug '10 - Aug '11 **WMS - Senior Software Developer on Commanding Officer and Periscope Pays**



- Sole developer of two themes from prototype to release using **C++** and **Lua**.
- Developed several tools in **C#** to improve tracking and integration of translated assets reducing investigation time from an hour to minutes.
- Installed and maintained the company's first **CI** server using **Jenkins** to reduce Developer dependency on deploying builds for review.

Sep '06 - Jul '10 **EA - Support Developer on Create - PS3, PS2, Wii, Xbox 360 and PC**



- Updated and maintained tools to sync data between the Art Outsourcers and internal **Perforce** servers using **C#**.

Gameplay Developer on Unannounced - Wii

- Prototyped multiplayer features into an existing minigame using **C++** including developing Wiimote only gestures and controls.

UI Developer on Need for Speed: Shift - PSP

- Implemented car customisation and Race King career progression screen flow and logic using **Actionscript** and **C++**.

Gameplay Developer on Harry Potter Series - PS3, PS2, Wii, Xbox 360, PC

- Prototyped and implemented the Potions minigame (one of the game's three core mechanics) using C++ with the primary focus on user experience and gesture/Wii motion controls.

Please see the [online portfolio](#) for more details

Other

Jun '22 - Now



Limit Break 2022

- Mentored a graduate who is aiming to be a programmer within the next year. Helping with identifying knowledge gaps to improve on and identifying possible paths towards their first role.

Oct '21



JS13K Game Jam judge for WebXR

- Reviewed and provided feedback for 7 entries in the WebXR category.

June '20 - Sep '21



Into Games Mentor for Young People

- Mentored two mentees, sharing life and career experience. This included talking about finance, possible different paths to earning, short term and long term goal planning.

Sep '15 - Apr '16



Young Enterprise Business Advisor Volunteer

- Provided support and advice for a group of Year 12 students at a local school taking a business idea through to completion. This included guiding them through risk analysis, approaching third parties and managing cashflow.

Jan '15



King Game Jam Event Organiser

- Worked as part of a small team to organise a 2 day Game Jam open to external developers with very positive feedback from attendees.
- Successfully filled all 80 places within 72 hours of the site going live through targeted marketing in developer communities.
- Secured Unity and Urskog Longboard as event sponsors and they have indicated their interest in future sponsorship.

Education

Sep '15

Scrum Alliance - Certified ScrumMaster

- Member: 000451897

Sep '05 - Aug '06

University of Hull - MSc Games Programming

Sep '01 - May '04

University of Lincoln - BSc Games Computing (Software Development)