Ah Young Joo

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Senior Technical Game / Systems Designer

Summary

Senior Technical Game Designer with 6+ years of game design experience across Unity and Unreal. Shipped 4 commercial games across PC, mobile, and VR/MR, with a focus on analytics and playtest-driven iteration.

Skills

- **Design**: Rapid Prototyping, Systems Design (Progression, Economy, Mechanics, Retention), NPC AI.
- **Technical**: C#, C++, Lua, Blueprints, Visual Scripting, Shader Graph.
- **Software**: Unity, Unreal, Excel, Git, Perforce, Jira, Figma, Miro, Maya, Adobe Suite, Notion.

Experience

Windup Minds | Senior Technical Game / Systems Designer — Jul. 2023 – Present

Stay: Your Forever Pet | *PC, Exploration Adventure*

* Designed, prototyped, and shipped RPG and roguelite-inspired exploration loop incorporating stat and crafting systems, rapidly testing and gathering feedback from external playtesters in 2-3 day iteration cycles and increasing total play time by 800% in 4 months.
* Balanced economy across 60+ crafting recipes, 14 resource types, 20+ risk-reward decision events, and 3 core stats using spreadsheets and playtest data. Tuned spawn rates across 30+ levels for optimal progression pace.
* Identified retention issues in playtests, then independently designed and built an objectives system end-to-end in C# to drive tutorialization and long-term player goals.

Stay: Forever Home | *VR/MR, Pet Simulation*

* Diagnosed churn points in the FTUE funnel using analytics, then refined the onboarding flow over multiple cycles to raise completion from 23% to 68%.
* Formulated, balanced, and documented progression and economy systems (20+ resources, 280+ crafting recipes, 3 leveling systems) and built C# spreadsheet import tools to speed iteration.
* Authored 95% of AI in C# (60+ behaviors, 2 creature types) for dynamic, surprising interactions.
* Planned and shipped 1 year of seasonal content updates (accessories, toys, decor) by setting up feature flags, coordinating with artists monthly, and delivering QoL features/bug fixes.
* Mentored, reviewed design docs, and provided feedback to 4 design and engineering interns.

Niantic | Technical Artist — Jun. 2022 – Jul. 2023

Peridot | *Async-Multiplayer, Mobile, AR*

* Proposed, prototyped, and shipped fullness and attention meter systems for core pet-care gameplay loop into a live game with 1M+ installs, collaborating with designers and engineers.
* Built and tuned creature behaviors (petting, fetch, feeding, evolution) and creature systems like multi-priority head IK and turning locomotion to create responsive reactions to player input.

Dreamland Confectionery | Director, Lead Game Designer — Jun. 2020 – May 2022

Dreamland Confectionery | *PC, Exploration Adventure*

* Designed, scripted in C# and Lua, and balanced a crafting loop gating 6 traversal abilities behind craftable items to pace access to rarer resources, upgrades to crafting, and story progression.
* Led team of 20+ game developers across disciplines. Reviewed design docs and level block-outs.

Education

University of Southern California — **Los Angeles, CA**
School of Cinematic Arts | B.A. Interactive Entertainment — ***Aug. 2018 - May 2022***