

Mike Kasprzak

“Distraction Engineer”; Low level system and tool-chain architect; Backend and frontend developer; Video game developer; Event organizer; Community manager; Business owner; Reluctant influencer

EXPERIENCE

Interactive Snacks Limited, London ON

My software development & event organization company (1 person w/ contractors)

President, Lead Developer, Event Coordinator

JULY 2020 - PRESENT

In the wake of COVID-19, I put together a business plan and spun up a new company initially focused on game development. In contrast to my previous company, we applied for funding via accelerators and government programs. Unfortunately we were not accepted, so by years end I pivoted the company to supporting the Ludum Dare online game jam event that I co-founded and run.

Since 2021, Interactive Snacks has worked with companies like Intel, Akamai, GitHub, GameMaker, and others to sponsor a variety of custom content and features to enhance the Ludum Dare online game jam experience and community.

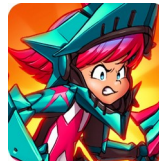
Tiny Titan Studios, London ON

Game development studio with roughly 20 people

Senior Programmer, Network Programmer

APRIL 2018 - DECEMBER 2019

I joined to rework a game into an online multiplayer mobile game. I lead the effort to re-engineer it to run entirely server side on low cost VPS Linux servers. The game server was rewritten in C++, and it streamed updates over UDP to hundreds of game clients. I also deployed and managing the 40+ servers around the world that supported the game.



In addition, I co-developed and deployed the backend API servers. These supported the game by storing all persistent player information, purchases, matchmaking, and providing us with real-time game metrics and sales data. Written in PHP and deployed to a cluster of redundant frontend (PHP+NGINX), database (MariaDB), and datastore (Redis) servers. **Arena Stars** launched on Android, iOS, and Steam in April 2019, but sadly shutdown in October 2019.

After, I lead the engineering effort on two other multiplayer titles: a 4-player mobile racing game, and a top-down co-op action game. The racing game was shelved, and I left the company after successfully getting the action game running cross platform on PC, Nintendo Switch, and PlayStation 4.

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CONTRACT WORK

2016

Digistump LLC,
Portland OR - Added
initial support for the Oak
development board/IOT Module
(ESP 8266) to the Arduino IDE.



2013

Shaw Cable, Calgary
AB - 4 months on site
in Alberta working with a team in
India. Developed an Android and
iOS TV guide to the spec of the
client using proprietary HTML5
stack. Contract work done on
behalf of **Itaas Inc.**



Itaas Inc, Deluth GA - Provided
HTML5 Training a the London ON
office, to prepare them for work
with next generation TV set-top
boxes.

2011

Hemisphere Games,
Montreal QC - Ported
Osmos game to Intel's
AppUp platform.



2010

Big Blue Bubble,
London ON - Ported
Thumpies game to
Samsung's Bada
platform.



Ludum Dare, Online

Online event hub and community of more than 100,000 game creators
Co-Founder, Developer, Caretaker

APRIL 2002 - PRESENT

Founded in April of 2002, Ludum Dare is the largest online game jam event in the world. The event attracts many thousands of developers and challenges them to make a game from scratch in a weekend. Find us at <https://ldjam.com>



I'm part of the team that founded the event. Originally a hobby project we ran together, today I am the sole person responsible for the event. I handle scheduling, running the event, managing the servers, custom software development, and promotion of it and its social media accounts.

SUMMER 2015 - PRESENT

After growing far beyond expectation, and with our 15th anniversary on the horizon, I put my my small business on hold to focus on building a brand new event website for Ludum Dare. The new website is capable of scaling to support thousands of concurrent users, and runs on low cost VPS servers.

Buzzwords: Developed a custom multi-user social network entirely from scratch with a PHP and a MariaDB backend, transpiled ES6 JavaScript code for the frontend (using Preact), a sophisticated compiler toolchain stapled together with GNU Make, and a local virtual machine testing environment powered by Vagrant and Virtualbox. Open Source.

Sykhronics Entertainment, London ON

My Independent game development company (usually 1 person, but briefly 3)
Owner, Lead Developer

2006 - 2015, CLOSED IN 2017

My small award winning independent game studio. I often worked alone and with contractors, though for over a year it had 1 other employee. **Sykhronics'** (sigh-cron-icks) goal was to create original games for a variety of platforms, but I occasionally did contract work for other companies. Sykhronics was put on hiatus in 2015, but was eventually closed in 2017. I continue to sell software under my own name.

Sykhronics Entertainment was a licensed **Sony PSP, Nintendo 3DS, Nintendo Wii U, Steam, Apple**, and **Android** developer. Sykhronics also developed and published software for Amazon Kindle, Symbian, Nokia Maemo, Palm webOS, Intel AppUp, Intel MeeGo/Moblin, GameTree.TV, Microsoft Windows Mobile, Microsoft Windows Phone, Blackberry, Tizen, Samsung Bada, Linux, and Microsoft Windows.

Notable Released Projects:

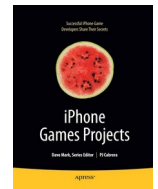
Smiles HD (or sometimes "**Smiles**") - smileshd.com

Released for multiple platforms, most of which don't exist anymore (see list above). Winner of multiple awards. Finalist in the **Independent Games Festival Mobile** in 2009.



2009

Apress, Berkley CA -
Wrote a chapter for the book "**iPhone Games Projects**".



AWARDS

GameTree.TV's Developer Competition (2011)

Winner: Developer Choice
Award for **Smiles HD**



Intel's Atom Developer Challenge (2010)

Winner: Most Elegant
Design Award for **Smiles HD**



Bung's 3rd Game Coding Competition (2000)



Neo Geo Pocket **3rd Place** for
SykoWar

Bung's 2nd Game Coding Competition (1999)



Game Boy **Runner Up** for **Poke Da Mon** and **Combat Soccer**

NOMINATIONS

Independent Games Festival Mobile (2009)

Finalist: Best Mobile
Game for **Smiles**



Slamdance Guerilla Gamemaker Competition (2006)

Finalist: Casual Game for **PuffBOMB**



Big Blue Bubble, London ON

Game development studio under 50 people

Technical Director, Senior Programmer

2004 - 2005

I was Technical Director, advising and assisting the project leads, interviewing candidates, among other things. I also personally lead and developed several projects at the studio.

Notable roles on released projects:

Atomic Betty (Game Boy Advance) - Lead, Engine Programmer

Dragon Tower (J2ME Mobile) - Lead Programmer

Mage Knight (Nintendo DS) - (Prototype) AI Programmer

Connect 4 (Mophun) - Complete rewrite port (J2ME to C)

Barry Bonds Home Run History (Mophun) - Complete rewrite port (J2ME to C)



Digital Illusions Canada, London ON

Game development studio under 100 people

Senior Programmer

2001 - 2004

Formed after Sandbox Studios was purchased by Digital Illusions. I lead one of teams at the studio doing Handheld games. As the resident expert in our handheld division, I supported all our Handheld teams with technical knowledge of the platforms, and established our shared workflow.

Notable roles on released projects:

Barbie Gotta Have Games (PlayStation) - Tech Lead, Programmer

Polly Pocket (Game Boy Advance) - Tech Lead, Programmer

Secret Agent Barbie (Game Boy Advance) - Lead, Engine Programmer

Diva Starz: Mall Madness (Game Boy Color) - Tech Lead, Programmer

Jump Start: Dino Adventure (Game Boy Color) - Lead Programmer



Sandbox Studios, London ON

Game development studio under 50 people

Senior Programmer

1999 - 2001

At 19 I was hired as a "Game Boy Programmer", but I was quickly promoted to a Senior Programmer thanks to my homebrew Game Boy development experience. I established our Handheld division, including the shared workflow and tool-chains used by our teams for our projects.

Notable roles on released projects:

The Emperor's New Groove (Game Boy Color) - Engine Programmer

Hoyle Card Games (Game Boy Color) - Lead Programmer



Other — Computer Technician, Manager's Assistant

1997 - 1998

A variety of roles at computer retailer **Computers Canada** (not to be confused with Canada Computers) and **Microcad Computer Corporation** in London ON. Roles included Visual Basic programming, sales, and **LOTS** of computer building.