Sebastien Samson - Game Design CV

Toronto, Canada • sebsamson.com • ca.linkedin.com/in/sebsamson •
contact@sebsamson.com

Summary

Design leader with more than 17 years shaping combat, systems, economies and player experiences across VR/MR, mobile F2P, MMO and web platforms. I define clear design pillars, prototype quickly and iterate through playtests and telemetry to ship features players love, while aligning cross-disciplinary teams on a coherent creative vision. My experience spans combat and moment-to-moment design, progression and monetization loops, UX flows and onboarding, and live design for retention and engagement.

Core skills

- **Combat & moment-to-moment design** - creating satisfying interactions and readability standards for VR/MR fighting games.
- **Systems & economy design** - progression, rewards, sources/sinks and monetization balancing.
- **UX flows & feature specifications** - authoring specs, wireframes and teach-by-doing onboarding.
- **Live design** - events, retention loops and data-informed iteration through telemetry and playtests.
- **Prototyping & rapid iteration** - turning design pillars into playable slices and tuning based on feedback.
- **Design direction & team alignment** - defining vision, pillars and rituals to keep multidisciplinary teams focused.
- **Mentoring & leadership** - coaching designers and establishing career ladders.
- **Platforms** - VR/MR, mobile F2P, MMO, UGC platforms (Roblox, UEFN).

Selected design highlights

- **Final Fury (VR)** - Directed combat and content design for a VR fighting game inspired by arcade classics. Defined move-set rules, readability and onboarding; iterated hands-on through regular playtests.
- **Horizon Worlds titles, Synth Riders & R&D** - Provided design support and dotted-line management across multiple VR/MR projects, ensuring consistent creative direction and production alignment.
- **Project CARS GO (mobile)** - Owned systems, economy and UX for EA/Slightly Mad's one-touch racing game; balanced progression and monetization and translated KPI readouts into design changes.
- **LEGO Life (mobile)** - Led creative management and design for a safe social platform for kids. Prioritized backlog to hit retention targets, tuned reward and social loops within safety constraints and authored UX flows.

- **Farmerama (F2P MMO)** - Co-owned product vision and led a small design team to stabilize declining KPIs via targeted systems and feature improvements.
- **Earlier roles** - Shipped titles on Wii, DS and iPhone at Frima Studio and Ubisoft Québec; contributed to system design, UX and prototype-to-ship pipelines.

Professional experience

Kluge Interactive - Game Design Director (Remote, Oct 2023 - present)
- Direct combat and content design for **Final Fury (VR)**, establishing pillars, move-sets and onboarding flows and running continuous playtests.
- Provide hands-on design support across a multi-product VR/MR portfolio, including Horizon Worlds titles and R&D projects; support Roblox/UEFN product framing and external partner coordination.
- Mentor designers and align cross-discipline teams on creative vision and production milestones.

Freelance Game Design & Gamification Consultant (Part-time, 2023 - present)
- Deliver design consulting to VR and mobile studios: define progression and reward loops, onboarding flows and live event systems.
- Facilitate workshops on design pillars, feature framing, tuning and gamification; produce design documentation and prototyping guidance.
- Advise non-game products on applying game-feel and engagement mechanics.

Fiction Pact - Founder / Game Lead & Designer (Part-time, Jan 2026 - present, in development)
- Designing an expandable open-world role-playing platform centred on user-generated content; define vision, pillars and interaction rules for a first-person engine.
- Create core loops, progression hooks and FTUE/onboarding flows for both players and creators; explore genAI-assisted tooling and a photogrammetry pipeline for content creation.
- Produce foundational design artefacts (loop maps, UX flows, feature briefs) to align a four-person team.

Ludia / Jam City - Senior Studio Director, Design (Remote, Jan 2022 - May 2023)
- Managed all design individual contributors, leads and creative directors across the studio; built standards for specifications, UX flows and review rituals, improving throughput and clarity.
- Partnered with product and analytics to define KPI trees, experiment charters and next-quarter priorities.
- Provided hands-on design and optimization support for live F2P titles such as **Jurassic World Alive**, **Jurassic World: The Game**, **Love Link**, **Dragons: Rise of Berk**, **TMNT Legends**, **Feud Live!** and **DC Heroes & Villains**.
- Recruited, onboarded and mentored senior hires; streamlined ceremonies and improved decision speed.

EA / Slightly Mad Studios - Game Director (Remote, 2018 - 2021)
- Owned systems design, economy balancing and UX for **Project CARS GO (mobile F2P)**.
- Translated KPI readouts into design adjustments and instituted A/B testing with analytics partners.
- Led the design team, coordinated cross-discipline delivery and managed publisher communications and post-launch operations.

LEGO - Senior Gamification Design Manager (Remote, 2017 - 2018)
- Led creative management for **LEGO Life**; defined backlog prioritization tied to retention goals.
- Tuned progression, reward and social loops based on telemetry and safe-by-design constraints.
- Coordinated multiple development pods and maintained alignment across brand and platform guidelines.
- Authored specifications and UX flows to accelerate implementation and reduce rework.

Bigpoint - Senior Lead Game Designer (2013 - 2015)
- Co-owned product vision for **Farmerama (F2P MMO)** and led a small design team focused on systems, events and live-ops features.
- Arrested KPI declines by shipping targeted improvements to core loops and balancing sources and sinks.
- Built experiment playbooks, dashboards and roll-out plans and standardized documentation and review templates.
- Partnered with community and support teams to transform player feedback into actionable backlog items.

Playraven - Senior F2P Designer (2015 - 2016)
- Established the creative vision for **Spymaster** with the game director and a small veteran team.
- Designed core systems and UX; developed monetization and retention strategies based on data analysis and user behaviour profiling.
- Balanced progression and difficulty and monitored the in-game economy and monetization offers.

Earlier roles - Frima Studio (2011 - 2013), Ubisoft Québec (2008 - 2011)
- Drove systems and UX design across Wii, DS, iPhone and web titles; coordinated with production and engineering.
- Shipped titles including **Skylanders: Spyro's Universe**, **Combat of Giants: Dinosaur Strike**, **Petz Fantasy** and others.
- Supported prototype-to-ship pipelines with documentation, balancing and feature design.

Web Designer (2002 - 2006)
- Designed and developed interactive Flash websites and games.

Education & training

- **Université de Montréal (UdeM)** - D.E.S.S. (Master's-equivalent) in Game Design, 2008.
- **Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM)** - B.A. in Communications (Interactive Multimedia), 2007.
- **Google Project Management** - Coursera certificate.
- **Foundations of Teaching for Learning** (1 & 2), Commonwealth Education Trust.

Languages

French (native), English (professional), German (intermediate).

Tools & platforms

- **Production & documentation:** Jira, Confluence, Google Workspace, spreadsheets, flowcharts.
- **Game engines:** Unity, Unreal.
- **Version control:** Perforce, Git.
- **Scripting:** C#, JavaScript, VBA.
- **Collaboration:** live boards, wikis and remote whiteboards.