

SEBASTIEN SAMSON

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FRACTIONAL GAME DIRECTOR

Fractional Game Director and design leader with 17+ years helping studios ship, scale, and recover momentum when priorities drift and delivery becomes unpredictable. I align leadership on a clear game promise, make tradeoffs explicit, and turn direction into an executable roadmap teams can deliver.

How I Help

- Clarify vision and decision rules: game promise, success criteria, tradeoffs
- Reset priorities: Now Next Later roadmap, explicit cut list, ownership alignment
- Turn direction into delivery: milestone slices, acceptance criteria, dependencies, risk mapping
- Improve live performance: measurable goals, experiment backlog for retention and engagement
- Strengthen leadership execution: coaching, cadence, decision logging, release readiness

Platform Experience

Console | PC | Web MMO | Mobile F2P | VR/XR | UGC (Roblox, UEFN)

Leadership Scope (Selected)

Studio and team leadership: Game Design Director (Kluge), Senior Studio Director (Ludia / Jam City), Game Director (Slightly Mad Studios / EA), Design leadership at LEGO and Bigpoint

Hands on design ownership: systems, progression, economy, UX, live tuning, KPI driven iteration

Strengths

- Vision and roadmaps
- Prioritization and cut discipline
- Systems and economies
- Live operations
- Cross discipline execution and stakeholder management
- Mentorship

Professional Experience

Sebastien Samson Consulting (Remote, Toronto)

Principal Consultant | Fractional Game Director | Jan 2026 to Present

- Brought in by funded studios and live teams to clarify product vision, reset priorities, and stabilize roadmaps during growth, production pressure, or retention decline.
- Facilitated decision workshops to define the game promise, success criteria, and explicit tradeoffs, producing a Now Next Later roadmap and cut list.
- Turned direction into shippable execution: ownership, milestone slices, specs, risks, and dependencies aligned with engineering and production constraints.
- Established a lightweight operating cadence including weekly priority reviews, decision logging, and release readiness checks.
- Partnered with product and analytics to define measurable success criteria and an experiment backlog for LiveOps, progression, and engagement improvements.
- Mentored design leads and senior contributors on communication, prioritization, and cross discipline alignment.

Fiction Pact Studio (Remote, Ontario)

Founder | Jan 2026 to Present

- Founded Fiction Pact Studio to pursue projects built around new capabilities that were previously impractical.
- Focus areas: VR and PC, Unreal Engine, UGC ecosystems, Gaussian Splatting workflows and experimentation.
- Set creative direction, prototype strategy, and production approach for early stage development.

Kluge Interactive (Remote)

Game Design Director | Oct 2023 to Dec 2025

- Directed design across multiple XR titles, balancing creative ambition with delivery constraints.
- Final Fury (VR): direction and hands on design for a competitive fighting game, iterating via playtests and backlog loops.
- Synth Riders (VR/MR): design and product advisory for an established live service title.
- Supported creator ecosystems and platform initiatives including Roblox and UEFN.

Ludia (Jam City) (Remote)

Senior Studio Director, Design | Jan 2022 to May 2023

- Led design teams, leads, and creative directors across a portfolio of mobile F2P titles.
- Built org standards for quality, hiring, mentoring, training, and career development.
- Provided product optimization support and hands-on leadership during key milestones.

Slightly Mad Studios (Electronic Arts) (Remote)

Game Director | 2018 to 2021

- Owned product roadmap and backlog for Project CARS GO (mobile), aligning direction with production and delivery.
- Led systems design including balance, economy, UX, and KPI driven iteration.
- Managed publisher and partner communications; coordinated design, engineering, art, QA, and analytics.

LEGO Group (Remote)

Senior Gamification Design Manager | 2017 to 2018

- Led product and engagement design for LEGO Life, a safe social platform for kids.
- Owned backlog definition and prioritization; guided improvements through analytics and player insights.

PlayRaven (Helsinki, Finland)

Senior F2P Designer | 2015 to 2016

- Co-defined creative vision with the Game Director for Spymaster (mid core strategy F2P).
- Designed systems and UX; contributed to monetization and retention strategy informed by data and player behavior.

Bigpoint (Hamburg, Germany)

Senior Lead Game Designer | 2013 to 2015

- Co-owned product vision for Farmerama (F2P MMO, live) with producer and project leads.
- Led and coached a small design team; shipped systems and feature improvements.

Frima Studio (Quebec City, Canada)

Senior Lead Game Designer | 2011 to 2013

- Led and contributed to prototypes across web, mobile, and console; shipped features for live projects.
- Credits include Skylanders: Spyro's Universe (web MMO, launched) and multiple prototype initiatives.

Ubisoft Quebec (Quebec City, Canada)

Game Designer | 2008 to 2011

- Shipped multiple DS, Wii, and iPhone titles and supported online and web initiatives.
- Contributed to systems design and feature development from prototyping through delivery.

Selected Impact (NDA Safe)

- Vision reset under delivery pressure: aligned stakeholders on decision rules, stabilized priorities, reduced churn, improved predictability.
- Backlog triage: converted competing initiatives into shippable slices with acceptance criteria and clearer dependencies.
- Retention delivery: identified a missing retention lever, scoped a buildable solution, and enabled rollout without destabilizing the roadmap.

Tools and Stack

Production: Jira, Confluence, Google Workspace, spreadsheets, PowerPoint

Engines: Unreal, Unity

SCM: Perforce, Git

Working knowledge: C#, JavaScript, VBA, Unreal Blueprints, Google App Scripts

Education and Training

Université de Montréal (UdeM) D.E.S.S. in Game Design (Master's equivalent)

Université du Québec à Montréal (UQÀM) B.A. Communications (Interactive Multimedia)

Google Project Management Specialization (Coursera)

Commonwealth Education Trust: Foundations of Teaching for Learning (1 to 3)

Languages

French (native) | English (professional) | German (intermediate) | Spanish (beginner)