

# BENJAMIN H. A. KARNOW     Technical / World Designer

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## Summary

I'm a multi-talented gaming industry professional with nine years of experience in making games. I'm a fast and voracious learner, skilled in integrating and solving both right and left-brain problems, always on the lookout for a new challenge.

## Professional Experience

### Senior Designer, Endless Mobile (2019 – Present) — Hack Content / Platform (OS/Web)

#### Current Responsibilities:

- Responsible for delivering monthly/bimonthly releases, focused on teaching core programming concepts to children ages 10-14
- Responsible for design and implementation of Hack's content, narrative, as well as learning strategies and content plan
- Content creator for 7 content releases with over 10 activities per release, with an average duration of 30 minutes per activity
- Stakeholder for a transition of the OS-bound Hack experience into an experience targeted towards users on all platforms
- Created, tested, and presented demo content on multiple platforms at CES/PEPCOM 2019
- Responsible for pitch and initial stages of the Endless Story Bible, currently in use across several branches of Endless
- Conducted multiple-times-weekly in-person playtests and bimonthly remote playtests of Hack content, focusing on rapid content iteration in response to user feedback
- Collaborated and succeeded with an almost entirely remote team, spread across Europe, Asia, and the USA
- Onboarded and managed multiple external contractors producing activities for Hack
- Transitioned another team member into a junior design role, significantly increasing content throughput per release
- Collaborated with General Manager to migrate the Hack team to agile-development-friendly practices
- Responsible for copyediting and tonal consistency across Hack communications and activities
- Performed design evaluations for remote studios on Hack-adjacent educational games

#### Responsibilities as Content Designer at Endless Hack:

- Sole content designer on a team dedicated to delivering monthly releases of narrative-driven content, focused on teaching core programming concepts to children ages 8+
- Concurrently scripted multiple content releases (~4+ hours of gameplay each), as well as bug-fixes for prior releases
- Collaborated with Design Director and Writer to map out, redesign, and overhaul all previously released content, focusing on extending existing content, effectively achieving learning objectives, and improving narrative execution
- Redesigned an entire teaching application to more effectively teach learning objectives, as well as provide flexibility for future objectives to be taught using the same content
- Designed and prototyped new systems for narrative depth-on-demand and flexible interactions between narrative content and teaching applications
- Designed and executed a prototyping system to aid in developing future content, 'in-engine' asset previews, and provide living documentation for design best practices

### QA Tester, Toys For Bob (2018) — Spyro Reignited Trilogy:

- Part of the dedicated Xbox One / Xbox One X testing team for platform-specific performance and compatibility issues
- Conducted multiple in-depth investigations into undocumented behavior in the original games to ensure parity
- Independently designed and implemented automated power-on and build deployment script for Xbox One, saving users multiple hours per week, and allowing unattended 1-click deployment to any console in the studio
- Codified existing QA department techniques and procedures, allowing the multiple other studios attached to the project to come up to speed faster and more effectively
- Introduced multiple new tools into the QA workflow, and expanded the studio-level knowledge base for console development and testing

### Junior World Designer, Hangar 13 (2015 – 2017) — Mafia 3 and Downloadable Content (DLC)

#### Responsibilities for Mafia 3:

- Competitive analysis for Mafia 3's editor – Helped decide the core feature set and its implementation details
- Stakeholder for all matters pertaining to vehicle navigation data across the entire game world
- Prototyped and implemented enemy encounter prefabs, which were distributed across the game world
- Collaborated on economic reward structure design and reward placement across the entire game world
- Iterated on overall layout and geometry for approximately 20% of the game world
- Iterated on all ambient pedestrian spawn data + World Interactions for approximately 20% of the game world
- Created all water vehicle navigation data and populations
- Placed all six varied types of Collectible objects in the game world – Vargas Posters, Fuses, Hotrod Magazines, Playboy Magazines, and Album Covers

- Final owner at shipping time of all collectibles in Mafia 3
- Tool evaluation for future projects, focused on creating cities that support rapid iteration and procedural content creation

*Responsibilities for DLC1 – “Faster, Baby” (Vehicle Navigation and Racing)*

- Created all Vehicle and Pedestrian navigation data for the DLC area
- Prototyped and drove development of the 'stunt jump' system, extending it into a persistent achievement- based quest
- Created a freeform checkpoint racing system with multiple tracks, focused on stylish jumping and drifting
- Collaborated on a system to allow players to disable pursuers on the fly using in-world objects, and placed all instances of the system in the DLC area

*Responsibilities for DLC2 – “Stones Unturned” (Bounty Hunting Missions)*

- Developed template mission to ease on-boarding of other designers, and iterated on this template to ship a unique multi-location, semi-randomly generated mission with large crowds
- Collaborated on implementation of new features – Nonlethal takedowns, in-game cutscenes, and storing bodies in vehicles
- Collaborated on navigation markup and troubleshooting for the DLC's main location, a jungle island with unique geometry and pathfinding issues.

*Responsibilities for DLC3 – “Sign of the Times” (Upgradeable player home base)*

- Responsible for Vehicle navigation data alterations / additions for DLC
- Collaborated on upgradeable, multi-part player base, and created the capstone ‘reward’ mission – A unique experience focused on social interaction and a sense of place

**Senior Internal Quality Assurance and Submissions, 2K Games (2013 – 2015) — Mafia 3, Evolve, My2K**

*Evolve (Turtle Rock Studios) and My2K (internal telemetry and entitlement backend):*

- Responsible for testing Xbox Store integration into Evolve, as well as communication between the Xbox Store integration into the My2K entitlement backend
- Worked with 2K Core Tech engineers to prove the feasibility of My2K as a hybrid content/telemetry platform, for eventual adoption into all 2K products.

*Mafia 3:*

- Dedicated tools tester, single point of contact for delivering tool iterations to developers
- Responsible for full daily test cycles of tools and game content, including daily merges from 4 different source branches
- Stakeholder for Hangar 13's QA department – hire/no hire decisions, on-boarding of new hires, creation and codification of procedures, and promotion of developer/QA relationships

**Acting Junior Level Designer, 2K Marin (2013) — Unreleased DLC for The Bureau: XCOM Declassified**

- Collaborated with level architect and artists to create a multi-wave, combat focused map with an emphasis on simultaneous threat management.
- Scripted encounters and waves within map for Vertical Slice Milestone – Cover, enemy spawns, combat logic, player hooks, and pre-combat mise-en-scene.
- Prototyped and implemented global AI spawning objects and logic for the project.

**Senior Internal Quality Assurance and Submissions, 2K Marin (2010 – 2013) — The Bureau: XCOM Declassified and DLC**

- Responsible for game editor portion of twice/thrice-daily code releases.
- Responsible for platform-specific performance analysis, both code and asset-level, as the sole QA representative in the Console Performance Group
- Volunteered as QA representative for the PC-specific beautification, resolution enhancement, and performance enhancement team, focusing on PhysX / DirectX 11 implementation.
- Tested and verified all major code integrations for Geomerics Enlighten lighting middleware, as well as multiple Core Unreal Tech upgrades
- Supported scheduled build deliveries to external QA multiple times a week (EU / NA all languages, PC, PS3 and 360)
- Created tutorials and documentation for local build processes, console deployment methods, source control setup, department-wide test plans and knowledge bases for all aspects of game and tool testing

**Education — Hampshire College, Bachelor of Arts, graduated May 2010**

**Technical Skills**

- Unreal Engine 2 / 3 / 4
- Basic knowledge of CryEngine 3, idTech 3 and 4, Unity, 3DS Max, Maya, and Blender
- Xbox One and Playstation 4 performance analysis tools
- Perforce and Git source control systems
- Seapine TestTrack Pro
- Atlassian Confluence / JIRA
- Proficient in Python, Javascript, Microsoft Powershell, HTML / CSS, and AutoHotKey Scripting Language
- Active interest in Rust and Lua, as well as various internal game scripting languages