

Noah Holmes

noah.holmes@gmail.com | linkedin.com/in/nholmes | Davis, California

Creative design leader with nearly three decades shaping franchise vision, core gameplay systems, and narrative frameworks for live-service games

Principal Narrative Designer

Apr 2024 — Present

Intrepid Studios – Ashes of Creation

- Defined and stewarded long-term narrative vision and systemic play patterns for a large-scale, live-service MMO built in Unreal Engine 5.7
- Established core narrative systems supporting player onboarding, progression, and long-term live-service evolution
- Set gameplay and narrative standards to ensure consistent tone, quality, and systemic cohesion across all authored content
- Shaped narrative pipelines to align story delivery with underlying gameplay systems, engagement goals, and quality expectations
- Guided development of content-authoring tooling in partnership with engineering, enabling scalable implementation, testing, and iteration of narrative content
- Worked closely with narrative designers to review content, integrate feedback, and maintain alignment with established creative direction
- Increased content velocity and system stability through targeted tooling and workflow improvements, reducing bugs while improving iteration efficiency

Neverwinter Narrative Lead

Aug 2018 — Apr 2024

Cryptic Studios – Neverwinter (Dungeons & Dragons)

- Established long-term narrative vision and cohesive story frameworks for the live game, maintaining alignment across features and ongoing updates
- Acted as the primary narrative vision holder while partnering with Wizards of the Coast to integrate franchise IP into live-service content planning
- Evolved narrative systems across 12 live updates, weaving story into core gameplay loops and systemic player experiences

Senior Game Designer III

May 2016 — Jul 2018

Trion Worlds, Inc. – Trove

- Drove creative and systemic direction for the Geode update, shaping narrative content and progression loops that increased player engagement, satisfaction, and monetization through live-service iteration
- Balanced core gameplay systems, encounter pacing, and onboarding flows across multiple classes, refining experience structure through extensive playtesting and data-informed tuning to improve retention by 15-20%
- Collaborated across design and engineering to enhance content pipelines and tooling, accelerating implementation speed while improving workflow efficiency and systemic stability

Lead Game Designer

Feb 2016 — May 2016

Trion Worlds, Inc. – Defiance

- Took responsibility for core gameplay systems and itemization during a studio transition, maintaining design continuity and systemic stability
- Reworked the Cyber Rig Merchants and Chip acquisition systems to improve progression pacing and monetization outcomes, increasing ARPPU by 10% and contributing to a 20% rise in lockbox revenue
- Reviewed and supported junior designers' work through design feedback and technical evaluation, reinforcing quality and consistency across implemented content

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Senior Game Designer II

Jun 2010 — Feb 2016

Trion Worlds, Inc. - RIFT

- Oversaw design and evolution of major crafting and player housing systems, contributing to a 10× increase in associated revenue
- Created and implemented 30+ scripted combat encounters and boss mechanics, combining environmental design with gameplay scripting to support varied play patterns
- Produced in-engine cinematics and narrative-driven quests using object-oriented scripting, delivering complex, high-impact gameplay experiences

Staff Game Designer

Apr 2008 — Jun 2010

Cryptic Studios - Star Trek Online / Champions Online

- Led level and encounter design for the Nemesis System, including whitebox layouts, object placement, and recurring antagonist missions
- Designed and delivered 7 raid experiences and 20+ complex scripted quest lines for Star Trek Online, integrating narrative and gameplay systems
- Built the original Leonard Nimoy-voiced in-engine cinematic using finite state machine-driven logic

Game Designer II

Nov 2002 — Apr 2008

Sony Online Entertainment - EverQuest II

- Owned world and dungeon layouts, boss encounters, and mission flow across 4 major game updates
- Designed and executed the iconic Assassin class epic quest line from concept through live release
- Scripted 30+ quests and raid encounters in LUA, balancing gameplay and supporting systemic player engagement

Level Designer

Jul 1998 — Dec 2001

The 3DO Company - Army Men: Green Rogue / Godai: Elemental Force

- Owned design and iteration of 4 full game levels, delivering varied, engaging, and polished gameplay environments
- Developed and balanced gameplay mechanics and encounters using a C++-based scripting system, ensuring fun and consistent player experiences

Skills

Creative & Franchise Leadership

- Creative Vision & Franchise Worldbuilding
- Design Strategy & Pillars
- Narrative Structure & Story Frameworks
- Design Standards & Quality Bars
- Mission & Player Pacing

Gameplay & Level Design

- Core Gameplay Loops & Systems Design
- Player Progression & Reward Systems
- Live-Service & Seasonal Systems
- Level Layout & Environmental Storytelling
- Narrative + Gameplay Integration

Studio Operations

- Content Pipeline Architecture
- Content-Authoring Tooling Strategy
- Workflow Optimization & Velocity
- Rapid Prototyping & Iteration Processes
- Cross-Team Communication & Facilitation

Tools

Engines & Content Creation

- Unreal Engine 5
- Proprietary Game Engines
- Blueprints / Kismet / FSM
- LUA / C# - Limited Proficiency

Production & Source Control

- Perforce
- JIRA / Confluence
- Balsamiq

Documentation & Support

- Miro / Visio / Draw.io
- Photoshop / Paint.net
- Tableau Reader
- MS Office Suite