

David McKenzie

www.david-mckenzie.com

Lead World Designer

Experience

New World: Aeternum & Crucible

3D massively-multiplayer competitive online games built in Lumberyard and crossplay on PS5, Xbox, and PC.

→ Amazon Game Studios

Lead World Designer

Mar 2020 – Jan 2026

New World: Nighthaven (2025)

- Led design and development for Nighthaven, designing and orchestrating nearly every single facet of the zone
- Led a team of 6 level designers across 90+ points of interest
- Led design and implementation of the Tarot Arcana system, the Clocktower, and much more
- Accurately predicted traffic maps for hundreds of thousands of players, collaborating with Server team
- Raised the bar on delivering an expansion zone 15% larger than Brimstone, built in 1/3rd of the time, with half the resources

New World: Aeternum (2024)

- Led design and implementation of total Console (PS5, Xbox) revamp of first FTUE tutorial and MSQ which serviced hundreds of thousands of players
- Accurately predicted traffic maps for hundreds of thousands of players, collaborating with Server team

New World: Rise of the Angry Earth (2023)

- Led development of Elysian Wilds zone, including Pre-Launch First Light Retraction and paid Expansion Gating
- Inventor and Design Lead for the instanced MSQ Soul Trial game mode from Apophis to Artemis and beyond
- Accurately predicted traffic maps for hundreds of thousands of players, collaborating with Server team

New World: Brimstone Sands (2022)

- Led development of Brimstone Sands, designing and orchestrating nearly every single facet of the zone
- Created and implemented the Ancient Glyphs system, the Sandwurm, and much more
- Accurately predicted traffic maps for hundreds of thousands of players, collaborating with Server team
- Raised the bar and expectations for an MMO zone in New World, bringing back tens of thousands of lapsed players and considered as the highest-rated fan-favorite zone in the game for years

New World (2021)

- Led design for Elite Strongholds (ECR) which includes over 30 unique level designs
- Created and implemented the Ghost Ship, widely appreciated as a rare world game event

Crucible (2020)

- Lead Level Designer on project & shipped an overhaul of Main Game Mode shortly before Launch

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Fallout 76 & Fallout 76: Wastelanders & Starfield

3D multiplayer, survival, roleplaying games and expansion in Creation Kit.

→ Bethesda Game Studios

Designer

Oct 2017 – Feb 2020

Fallout 76 | Fallout 76: Wastelanders | Starfield

- World & Level Design, Dialogue/Writing, Playtesting, Documentation, Prototyping
- Wrote dozens of dialogue scenes and stories which continue to receive high praise and accolades
- Designed and prototyped new gameplay systems within two weeks of initial hire date

Fallout 76

- Shipped the FTUE tutorial-town "Flatwoods"
- Shipped the largest city in the game "Morgantown"
- Shipped the FMV supersite "West-Tek Research Center"

Fallout 76: Wastelanders

- Shipped the Motherlode in Wastelanders Expansion

World of Tanks Modern Armor

3D multiplayer, action-combat title, built in a custom engine.

→ Wargaming Seattle

Level Designer

May 2014 – Oct 2017

- Concepted, built, playtested, tuned, and iterated 3D multiplayer levels from layout to final art
- Created and owned the designs and prototypes of multiple major environmental systems
- Daily problem-solver, systems designer, interdepartmental collaborator, level design team liaison, and gameplay ideator

Skills

Game & Level Design. Massive multiplayer balancing, environmental storytelling, landmarking, optimization, tutorials, terrain, AI encounters, server traffic flow, scripting, lighting, sound, cameras, cutscenes, puzzles, usability, metrics & BI

Writing. Creative writing, character design, narrative design, worldbuilding, dialogue, technical documentation, lore notes, flavor text, spec writing

Teams. Mentorship, onboarding, multidisciplinary communication, collaboration, strike teams, tool usability

Languages. Python, C#, MEL, Papyrus, Pascal, Lua, Blueprint, ActionScript 3.0, JavaScript, Unreal Kismet, XML, C++

Engines & Editors. Unity, Unreal, Creation Kit, Source, Zero, Lumberyard, AzothEngine, Adobe Flash/FlashDevelop

Art Tools. Maya, 3DS Max, SketchUp, Flash, Photoshop, Premiere

Project Management. Perforce, TortoiseSVN, TortoiseHg, JIRA, MS Office Suite, MS OneNote, MS Visio, Confluence

Education

DigiPen Institute of Technology
Bachelor of Arts in Game Design (2014)
English Minor
Dean's List (Fall '12, Spring '13, Fall '13)