

Blake Burns

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Career Summary

- Visionary game design leader with 10+ years of experience shaping innovative, engaging, and commercially successful games.
- Extensive experience driving the entire game design process, from initial concept and prototyping to final release, with a strong focus on user experience, narrative design, and game mechanics.
- Proven ability to manage and inspire design teams, fostering a culture of creativity and collaboration while ensuring alignment with project goals and timelines.

Impact Summary

- Led the creative and design teams on *Town of Salem* and its 2 sequels, shaping the core vision, gameplay mechanics, and user experience.
- Created and managed the game design document for *Town of Salem*, a top title in the Social Deduction genre with over 15 million registered users.
- Successfully designed and launched 2 tabletop card games, balancing gameplay and ensuring an engaging player experience.
- Directed game development for PC, Mac, iOS, Android, and web, ensuring consistent and high-quality experiences across platforms.

Core Competencies

- **Game Design & Mechanics:** Expert in creating and refining core game mechanics, balancing gameplay, and designing engaging, player-focused experiences.
- **Creative Direction:** Skilled in leading the creative vision and ensuring cohesive narrative and design elements across multiple game projects.
- **User Experience (UX):** Focused on developing intuitive and engaging user experiences through well-crafted UI/UX design.
- **Cross-Platform Development:** Experienced in designing games for multiple platforms, including PC, Mac, iOS, Android, and web-based games.
- **Monetization Strategy:** Expertise in designing in-game economies and monetization models, including in-app purchases and premium content.
- **Team Leadership & Management:** Strong leadership and project management skills, with extensive experience guiding design teams from concept to completion.
- **Technical Proficiency:** Possess advanced expertise in a wide range of programming languages, including C++ and C#, alongside extensive experience with leading game development engines like Unity.

Shipped Titles

- *Town of Salem* (2014, Unity/Flash)
- *Traitors in Salem* (2021, Unity)
- *Town of Salem 2* (2023, Unity)
- *Town of Salem - The Card Game* (2016, physical card game)
- *The Savior of Salem* (2018, physical card game)

Experience

Founder, Design Director & Creative Lead

02/2014 – 07/2024

BlankMediaGames | San Marcos, TX

- Directed the full creative lifecycle of multiple game projects, including *Town of Salem* and *Town of Salem 2*, from ideation to post-launch support, ensuring a consistent creative vision across all game elements.
- Collaborated closely with engineering, art, and marketing teams to ensure cohesive integration of gameplay, narrative, and visual design, maintaining high standards across different departments.
- Championed a player-centric approach by analyzing user feedback and game performance metrics, resulting in iterative improvements that enhanced player retention and engagement.
- Led brainstorming sessions and design workshops, encouraging creativity and problem-solving within the design team to tackle complex design challenges.
- Maintained ongoing relationships with publishers, distributors, and key stakeholders to ensure alignment on design objectives and market strategies.

Key Accomplishments:

- Successfully scaled the *Town of Salem* franchise to over 15 million registered users, positioning it as a leader in the Social Deduction genre.
- Designed and balanced in-game economies that generated sustainable revenue streams through monetization strategies such as in-app purchases and premium content.

Software Engineer

07/2013 – 01/2014

Dell | Austin, TX

- Contributed to the technical development and design integration for *OpenManage Essentials*, focusing on improving the user experience by transitioning the platform to more modern frameworks.
- Collaborated with global teams to ensure that the user interface and technical backend worked seamlessly together, enhancing the overall functionality and user satisfaction of the platform.

Associate Software Engineer I

02/2012 – 02/2013

KingsIsle Entertainment | Round Rock, TX

- Supported game design for *Wizard101* and *Pirate101* by contributing to feature development, particularly in areas such as combat mechanics, player abilities, and interactive world-building elements.
- Engaged in playtesting and feedback loops, providing actionable insights that shaped the final design and gameplay experience for both titles.
- Worked closely with senior designers to ensure that gameplay systems were aligned with the overall vision for each project.

Education

Texas A&M University | Corpus Christi, TX | B.S. Computer Science

Graduated 2011