JUAN RAMÓN ESPINOSA PEDRERO

Senior Gameplay Designer | Combat, Game Feel & 3Cs | 8+ years of experience

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SUMMARY

Senior Gameplay Designer with 8+ years in the game industry, including 3 years leading Gameplay, 3Cs and VFX. Shipped 3 multiplatform titles for major licensed franchises on PlayStation, Xbox, Switch and PC, and designed and programmed Neon Boost, a first-person action platformer with 500k+ downloads and Very Positive Steam reviews. Designs, prototypes, implements and balances core combat, abilities and moment-to-moment gameplay hands-on in engine. Specialized in game feel: the detail and polish that make mechanics feel right. Strong design voice, collaborative and player-first, with 4 years of remote work.

CORE SKILLS

- **Design:** core combat, moment-to-moment gameplay, player abilities and mechanics, character and enemy design, enemy AI and behavior trees, weapons, balancing, core gameplay systems, progression and economy, game feel and polish, 3Cs (Character, Camera, Controls), first-person movement, traversal
- **Process:** prototyping, pitching, playtesting and iteration, design documentation, cross-discipline collaboration, team leadership, mentoring
- **Technical:** Unreal Engine 5 (UE5) and UE4, Blueprints, multiplayer replication, Unity, C#, VFX, FMOD

EXPERIENCE

Independent Development — 2026 – Present

Game Designer & Gameplay Programmer

Unannounced multiplayer social game (Unreal Engine 5)

- Designing and programming all gameplay systems from scratch with a co-developer.
- Built a data-driven, replicated phase and turn system (GameMode, GameState, RepNotify timer, Data Tables) with online multiplayer through Steam Sessions.

Aheartfulofgames · Madrid, Spain — 2019 – 2025

Developer of licensed games for PC and consoles (studio closed in 2025).

Lead Gameplay Designer, Game Feel & VFX — 2022 – 2025

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutants Unleashed (2024 · PS4/PS5, Xbox, Switch, PC)

- Official gameplay lead: owned combat, 3Cs and game feel, and led teams of up to 11 people.
- Designed the abilities of every playable character and enemy, and prototyped and balanced core combat and moment-to-moment gameplay.
- Designed every boss in the game.
- Fixed loose-feeling combat found in playtests, caused by a clash with the dynamic camera's direction correction, by designing an enemy magnetism system: curve-driven in the editor and supporting more complex aerial attacks.
- Led the design of the traversal mechanics with the Creative Director, and drove level and environment changes so spaces fit combat and parkour movement metrics.
- Ran weekly internal playtests and acted on regular external playtests with experts and young players, looking for the root cause behind the feedback.
- Designed gameplay progression systems and economy with the Narrative and Progression teams.
- Designed new characters and enemies for the franchise with Character Art; the designs were later sold as retail action figures.
- Created VFX for all characters and directed the VFX team to match the movie's art style.

Game Designer & VFX Artist (de facto Gameplay, 3Cs & VFX lead) — 2021 – 2022

DreamWorks Dragons: Legends of the Nine Realms (2022 · PS4/PS5, Xbox, Switch, PC)

- Owned the polish and balance of the combat and movement systems.
- Designed and implemented VFX for characters and environments.
- Implemented and polished SFX for characters and cutscenes with the Audio Lead, using FMOD.
- Polished mechanics and collision across all levels with the Level Design and Environment teams.
- Developed and documented the game concept with the design team.

Game Designer — 2019 – 2021

DreamWorks Spirit Lucky's Big Adventure (2021 · PS4, Xbox, Switch, PC)

- Designed and implemented the waypoint system and several platforming puzzles.
- Built the main town's NPCs, from concept to their gameplay systems in C#.
- Cleaned up collision geometry and custom cameras across the whole game map with the Environment team.

Lead Game, Level, Narrative & VFX Designer — 2019 – 2025

Ironskins (mech strategy game, in development; small-team studio passion project)

- Created and polished the core mechanics and owned game feel, balancing the playable mechs and their weapons.
- Created VFX for all mech weapons and parts.
- Co-wrote the narrative structure, script and missions, and directed several cutscenes.

Across all projects

- Designed and built the behavior trees for enemies and bosses on several games.
- As the studio's longest-serving designer, mentored new designers joining the team.
- Officially led a pitch deck for a Transformers game, presented directly to Hasbro.
- Worked with and for the creative teams of licensors Nickelodeon, Paramount and Disney.
- Hands-on from paper design to low-level implementation, including Unity rigidbody physics for platforming and combat, and integrating assets and data.
- Gave key feedback on the games' marketing trailers, collaborating with every department.

Sample Text Studio (indie studio) · Madrid, Spain — 2018 – 2019

Game Designer & Programmer

Neon Boost (2019 · PC, Steam) · first-person action platformer · 500k+ downloads · Very Positive Steam reviews (90%)

- Led the high-level design and every aspect of the game, from concept to technical implementation.
- Programmed all systems and mechanics from scratch: first-person movement (rocket-jump, wall-run), forces, physics, global logic and Steam integration.
- Created all VFX and SFX, including the particle and sound management systems.
- The game still has an active speedrunning community.

EDUCATION

- **Bachelor's Degree in Interactive Product Design (Game Design)**, U-TAD University, Madrid · 2015 – 2019, degree expected 2027. Included 3 years of Unreal Engine projects: level design, boss design and a VR horror game set in a submarine.
- **Unreal Engine 5 Course**, Coco School · 2026
- **Leadership Training Course**, ADEK, Madrid

LANGUAGES

Spanish: native · **English:** full professional proficiency · **Japanese:** limited

TOOLS

- **Game engines:** Unreal Engine 5 (UE5), Unreal Engine 4, Unity, Godot
- **Programming:** C#, UE Blueprints, JavaScript
- **Audio:** FMOD, Adobe Audition, Audacity
- **Art and video:** Adobe Photoshop, Clip Studio Paint, Aseprite, Blender, Autodesk 3ds Max, Adobe Premiere, Kdenlive
- **Documentation:** Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Google Workspace (Docs, Sheets, Slides), Draw.io, Figma
- **Workflow:** JIRA, Mantis, Plastic SCM, Sourcetree, Notion, Trello, Hack N Plan