

Nikita Pogutsa

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Senior Gameplay Engineer with 10 years of experience designing and delivering scalable gameplay systems across mobile, console, multiplayer, and 3D environments. Proven experience leading engineering teams, defining architecture standards, and owning systems from prototype through production and post-launch.

Strong foundation in mathematics and physics, enabling clear reasoning about real-time systems, performance, and interaction mechanics.

Comfortable operating as both hands-on systems engineer and technical lead.

CORE SKILLS

Technical Leadership & Team Mentorship

Unity Architecture & ECS Framework Design

Gameplay Systems Ownership

Multiplayer Systems & State Management

Performance Optimization & Memory Management

Cross-Discipline Collaboration

Production Lifecycle Management

Prototyping to Post-Launch Delivery

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Software Engineer | Independent Consultant, Educator | Unreal Engine | 2025 – Current

- ★ Delivered production-quality prototypes and gameplay systems for 9 clients.
- ★ Defined system architecture and engineering standards for small teams.
- ★ Led a 5-person cross-functional team, overseeing technical direction, task allocation, and delivery timelines.
- ★ Designed reusable gameplay frameworks to reduce feature implementation overhead.
- ★ Provided advanced mentorship in engine architecture, gameplay systems, and performance optimization.

Software Engineer | Side Inc. (formerly Ghostpunch) | Unreal | Unity | 2023 – 2025

- ★ Contributed to development of a major DLC release within a structured production environment.
- ★ Implemented core gameplay mechanics and systems in Unity and Unreal (C#, C++).
- ★ Took ownership of math-heavy gameplay features requiring spatial reasoning and state management.
- ★ Collaborated with designers to refine gameplay feel and interaction responsiveness.
- ★ Improved runtime performance by reducing garbage generation and optimizing update loops.
- ★ Participated in multiplayer systems development and synchronization logic.

Lead Software Engineer | Black Caviar Games | Unity | Unreal | 2021 – 2023

- ★ Led engineering across 3 concurrent projects from prototype through launch and post-release support.
- ★ Established coding standards, architectural patterns, and review processes to improve maintainability.
- ★ Designed and implemented a company-wide ECS-based framework adopted across teams.
- ★ Acted as primary technical decision-maker for gameplay systems and infrastructure.
- ★ Coordinated closely with design, art, and marketing to align technical implementation with product goals.
- ★ Mentored junior and mid-level developers, improving team output and code quality.

Lead Software Engineer | AppQuantum | Unity | 2019 – 2021

- ★ Led and mentored a team of 4 people, guiding 2 projects from ideation to post-release.
- ★ Co-developed and supported proprietary modular frameworks for in-company projects.
- ★ Implemented scalable gameplay systems with clear separation of responsibilities.
- ★ Contributed to full production lifecycles including feature planning, implementation, and live updates.
- ★ Supported cross-team debugging and architectural improvements.
- ★ Reinforced best practices in code structure, performance profiling, and maintainability.

Software Engineer | Early Career | Unreal | Unity | 2016 – 2019

- ★ Implemented gameplay systems within high-traffic multiplayer environments.
- ★ Optimized memory usage and runtime performance in live production systems.
- ★ Contributed to features that transitioned from prototype to released titles.
- ★ Collaborated within cross-functional teams operating under production deadlines.
- ★ Built gameplay systems, controls, and interaction mechanics across AR, VR, and mobile applications.
- ★ Delivered 5 VR applications in medical, training, and recreational domains.
- ★ Solely developed multiple B2B AR applications.
- ★ Contributed to multiplayer VR combat systems and IK-driven interaction logic.
- ★ Stabilized and delivered performance-critical VR projects under schedule pressure.

EDUCATION

M.S. Physics - Moscow State University

B.S. Mathematics, Computer Science - Moscow State University ESI