

Alan Hopkins

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Mobile F2P Design Leadership · Live Operations · Monetization Systems · Player Retention · Unity Production · AI Co-Development

Summary

Principal Game Designer, 18+ years in console, mobile and F2P. Helped scale Solitaire TriPeaks at GSN into a \$100M+ a year business (designed gameplay, live ops, monetization, and the Clubs social system) and directed Cypher 007 on Apple Arcade. Led design teams across multiple mobile titles, owning retention systems, monetization, social systems, and live ops from concept through soft launch. Recently solo-shipped Word Snap! Merge to soft launch in six weeks of full-time work, owning the full funnel: the game itself, the HTML5 playable, the video ads, and the ASO copy. Built using Claude Code and our internal platform stack, combining deep F2P experience with AI co-development.

Experience

Principal Game Designer — PeopleFun

Jun 2026 – Present · Design Director, Jan 2023 – Jun 2026

- Set long-term design vision across multiple new mobile titles, leading a team of 8 designers, engineers, and artists. Reduced concept-to-greenlight timelines by over 60% through rapid prototyping and clearer creative frameworks.
- Led multidisciplinary squads from concept through soft launch, owning core gameplay, monetization strategy, retention mechanics, and live ops cadence that shaped each title's post-launch roadmap.
- Pushed for a full-funnel ownership model where the development team owns the entire player journey, from ad creative and App Store page through to core loop and monetization. This shift cut game-viability verification from 6 months to 6 weeks. Personally created ad creatives using AI tools, achieving CPIs of \$1.25 to \$4.00 on word and puzzle game prototypes.
- Integrated generative AI across team pipelines for prototyping, art generation, music composition, and content authoring. Built six custom Claude skills that chain together on routine content tasks.
- Solo-shipped Word Snap! Merge to soft launch in six weeks of full-time work using Claude Code and our internal platform stack. Full IAP, AppLovin MAX ads, analytics taxonomy, 1,200 standard levels, HTML5 MRAID playable shipped in one day, and a

complete marketing kit (24 mocks, 3 storyboards, ASO copy, five video ads) shipped in 2.5 days. An early model for how the studio transformed its process with AI.

- Currently leading design on two mobile titles within the new-games team: Book Sort (taken in-house from external contractors) and a new AI co-developed project. Driving content authoring, retention systems, and monetization iteration.
- Recognized with Outstanding Leadership Award, Q1 2023.

Director of Design, Wicked Realm Games — Tilting Point

Mar 2022 – Dec 2022

- Directed UX, content, and feature strategy for Cypher 007 (Apple Arcade), delivering a stealth-action experience aligned with the James Bond IP. The game holds a 4.8 out of 5-star rating on the App Store.
- Created a level design framework on a mid-redesign project, drawing on console-action background (Afro Samurai, Splatterhouse) to give the third-party team a clear creative spine for a premium, no-IAP experience.
- Managed designers across the 007 project and other studio titles including Star Trek: Timelines.

Lead Game Designer — AppLovin

Jun 2020 – Feb 2022 · Palo Alto, CA

- Defined engagement, economy, and monetization strategies for new mobile titles, creating UX flows and feature specs from concept through prototype validation.
- Developed Unity prototypes to test core mechanics, pacing, and retention models, increasing iteration efficiency by 25%.
- Partnered with engineering to build developer tools that streamlined the prototype process.

Lead Game Designer — MZ (acquired by AppLovin June 2020)

Jan 2020 – Jun 2020 · Palo Alto, CA

- Developed gameplay features based on game requirements and target KPIs, utilizing rapid prototyping, game economy analysis, and UI/UX flows.
- Created wireframes and economy flows to refine engagement, monetization balance, and usability.

Manager, Design — GSN Games

May 2017 – Dec 2019 · Palo Alto, CA

- Helped scale Solitaire TriPeaks into a \$100M+ annual business, overseeing feature design, monetization, and live operations.

- Designed and shipped the Clubs social system (Club Management, in-club messaging, Club Tournaments with ranked rewards, Club Shop with currency and real-money gifting, weekly perk events, leaderboards). Drove a 10-15% lift in revenue, retention, and session length post-launch.
- Led design teams, strategic feature development, and economy balancing to optimize engagement. Partnered with analytics and product teams to drive data-informed design improvements.

Senior Lead Game Designer — GSN Games

Apr 2013 – May 2017 · Palo Alto, CA

- Created high-impact engagement, monetization, and live ops features, increasing retention and revenue.
- Directed UX structure and in-game communications for large-scale updates.

Tools & Technologies

- **Game Production:** Unity, C#, Git, Perforce, JSON-driven config systems, custom Unity editors, HTML5/MRAID
- **Mobile Platform:** AppLovin MAX, Adjust, IAP server-side validation, telemetry dashboards (Tableau)
- **Production & Design:** Figma, Adobe CC (Premiere, Photoshop), Jira, Confluence
- **AI Co-Development:** Claude Code, MCP (Model Context Protocol), custom Claude skills, Cursor, Gemini, Nano Banana, Kling, Suno, ElevenLabs, Midjourney

Notable Titles & Projects

- **Solitaire TriPeaks** (GSN Games) — \$100M+ live service title
- **Cypher 007** (Apple Arcade) — Narrative stealth-action, 4.8/5 App Store rating
- **Word Snap! Merge** (PeopleFun, 2026) — Solo-shipped F2P word puzzle to soft launch. 6 weeks full-time after 70-hour prototype. Built with Claude Code + 6 custom skills + production platform stack. An early model for the studio's shift to AI.
- **Cordy 2** (SilverTree Media) — 2D action platformer, Apple Editors' Choice Award
- **Afro Samurai, Splatterhouse** (Bandai Namco) — Console action-adventure