

PREFACE

Although the first edition of this book appeared a little over ten years ago, the world of video games has both transformed and exploded in the last decade.

That time has seen the number of players, platforms, and business models proliferate. We've moved from a world where most games were sold in boxes at brick-and-mortar retail stores to one in which most games are downloaded—to smartphones, to consoles, and to computers.

Billion-dollar global companies release years-in-the-making “AAA” games that are epic in their scope. Tiny one-person development teams release quirky little mobile games. Billions of dollars have been spent in the last several years by hundreds of companies trying to make a market for virtual reality. *Pokémon Go* proved the market for augmented reality games in a weekend.

There have never been more games competing for the attention of more players. Never before has game quality—and stability—been more important. The process and discipline of game testing is crucial for any development team of any size to learn and adhere to, especially in this new age of constant patches, updates, feature roll-outs, expansions, and DLC releases. It seems today that with so many games, development is never finished. Neither, then, is testing.

Software engineers will continue to make mistakes; game designers will introduce exploits; artists will fail to close vertices. It is still up to the game

tester to advocate for the players by breaking the game before the player ever gets to play. It is up to we game testers to save the player from frustration, confusion, and lost time—and thereby help to ensure the commercial and critical success of the game. Like the Night's Watch in *Game of Thrones*, we are the anonymous, out-of-sight, and unsung heroes of the realm of video game development. Our hope is that the material presented in this updated version of our book will help you to hone your skills as a tester, or test manager, remaining ever vigilant. The players, though they may not know it, are most grateful for your hard work.

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