

GAME OUTSOURCING SUMMIT

February 19 (Tuesday)

Room 132, North Hall

GAME OUTSOURCINGSUMMIT

With ever increasing demands to develop next-generation titles and the need for developers to continually exceed consumer expectations, outsourcing has become an increasingly important tool for the videogame industry. The Game Outsourcing Summit is tailored especially for industry professionals looking to increase development resource awareness, expand their knowledge of the outsourcing sector, hone existing relationships and establish new partnerships. The summit analyzes outsourcing and off-shoring game development to offer in-depth business oriented seminars supported by research and market analysis from every region in the world.

[\[See Game Outsourcing Summit sessions\]](#)

Sponsored by:



Game Outsourcing Summit Advisor



Jason Robar

Founder

Aristo Creative

Jason Robar joined the game industry when he joined Microsoft in 1994 to make Windows a better gaming platform. In the Developer Relations Group, he was responsible for establishing

relationships for Microsoft with almost all game publishers and developers worldwide. In 1999 he joined Microsoft's game division and worked towards expanding the role of Zone.com in supporting online gaming. In 2000, he joined Go2Net to help lead Playsite.com to be a cross-device gaming platform and portal.

In 2001, he started an independent game industry consulting group working on outsourcing in Asia, game design, technology, and business development with a focus on online, MMPs, advergaming, Asian markets, and the convergence between the game industry and the government modeling, simulation and training industry.

In 2004, he led the development of a major training game for DARPA called DARWARS AMBUSH! to help in the training of convoy personnel.

In 2005, he founded Secret Lair Studios/Studio Ch'in, an independent development group with teams in Seattle, Washington, USA, and Shanghai, China, working towards a new model of "insourcing." The group was working on PC MMORPG technology and content for western and Chinese markets, and also on Xbox360, including projects like CARCASSONNE for XBLA. In 2006, Vivendi Games/Sierra Online acquired the group to form their internal development team.

In 2007, Jason began to look once more at the developing global games market for talent and technology.

Game Outsourcing Summit Sessions

Tuesday (February 19, 2008) 10:00am — 6:00pm

Game Outsourcing Overview

Speaker(s): **Jason Robar** (Aristo Creative)

Time: 10-10:20am

Development 2.0—A Blueprint for the Future

Speaker(s): **Steve Gray** (Vykarian)

Time: 10:20-11am

A proposal for a 3-tier model for building development teams out of (tier 1) small highly creative

game design and prototyping teams of 10-15 people, (tier 2) very technology heavy development teams of 30-40 people and (tier 3) outsourcing to big content development teams in lower cost areas. Can this new model lead to significant increases in creativity, agility and scalability? Can publishers and developers work together to create a new plan for the future of game development?

Coffee Break 11-11:15am

Business of Outsourcing—What are the Gotchas?

Moderator: **Jay Minn** (AristoDigital)

Panelists: **James Jen** (Augmentum), **Chris Kauza** (ACS), **Aaron Pulkka** (Vivendi Games), **Zhan Ye** (Game Creation)

Time: 11:15-12pm

The benefits and pitfalls of outsourcing—the varied perspectives from developers, publishers, and providers will provide valuable insight into the outsourcing process as we delve into the topics of contract terms, communications, travel, and quality control. This session's goal will be to shed light into some of the thornier issues involving the distributed development process.

Audio & Music—Managing Outsourced Audio/Music Teams

Speaker(s): **Alistair Hirst** (OMNI Interactive Audio), **Kane Minkus** (Co-Founder, Soma Tone Interactive Audio)

Time: 12-12:30pm

This session will provide the guidelines you need to select and work with audio and music partners including:

- Sourcing Audio Teams: what are essential elements of an audio team and how to know if an audio team will work for you—signs of a strong audio team, the differences (advantages and disadvantages) between an audio production company/team and an individual.
- Creative Management: how to get the most from your audio team—the creative process (function and expression), language specific to the world of audio, communication techniques, and iteration effectiveness.
- Logistics: contracts, legalities (including the differences involved in music, effects and voiceovers), estimating budgeting and timelines, delivery and integration considerations and the specifics you need to succeed in planning.

Lunch 12:30-2pm

Game Outsourcing Around the World

Moderator: **Jason Robar** (Aristo Creative)

Panelists: **Dib Chaudhuri** (Lakshya Digital), **Kane Minkus** (Soma Tone Interactive Audio), **Donghao Wu** (Shanghai Multimedia Industry Association)

Time: 2-2:50pm

With game service companies in just about every global time zone, it's important to understand the impact of culture, language, and time differences and the effects they can have on a successful outsourcing relationship. This panel will provide specific insights and updated market overviews for the various regions of the world and how that impacts your product plans.

Quality Assurance & Testing—Testing the Future

Moderator: **Ben Wibberley** (Babel Media)

Panelists: **James Galloway** (Activision), **Toby Mast** (LucasArts), **Manoj Mishra** (Wipro Technologies)

Time: 3-4pm

Next-gen is now current-gen and game QA is facing massively increased headcounts, rising costs, more platforms than ever, first time submission rates being non-negotiable and online as only some of these components force us to look at ways to work smarter and more efficiently. What is behind these issues and how do we match them?

Territories such as India, China and Eastern Europe are being targeted by publishers and service companies alike as they strive to lower costs but each new country brings new challenges. What are these and how do we overcome them? How long can this quest for more testers be sustained? How long before we reach a total saturation point where vast warehouses full of QA staff are not enough? What can we learn from other outsourcing industries and their process and practices, and how much of their development processes have they been able to automate? Finally, will we ever get to a point where user tested content is as feted as user generated content?

Coffee Break 4-4:15pm

A Cargo Cult in Room 101—Dealing with Localization and Global Outsourcing

Speaker(s): **Ben Wibberley** (Babel Media)

Time: 4:15-4:45pm

There are areas of outsourcing such as localization that do not require the huge headcounts that

QA and art are demanding, but are nevertheless rarely kept as in-house departments. We not only ship our titles to global markets and have to localize for them as many generate huge retail revenues, but also increasingly developers and service companies are springing up in all over the globe. The prices some of these vendors offer may be attractive but dealing with all this can be a very painful and expensive exercise particularly if not planned for correctly. This lecture will explore not only the practical aspects of localization and QA with tips for avoiding pitfalls but how to effectively manage working with a global network so it does not become your worst nightmare.

Art Specific Processes—The 24 Hour Work Day

Moderator: **Jay Minn** (AristoDigital)

Panelists: **Xin Chung** (Vykarian), **Jeff Selbig** (Sierra Online - Seattle), **Manvendra Shukul** (Lakshya Digital Pvt. Ltd.), **Donghao Wu** (Shanghai Multimedia Industry Association)

Time: 5-6pm

A team of talented artists are waiting overseas to get started. What now? How best to communicate with offshore talent? What are the problem areas to avoid? How do you manage the quality of the vision? What about time difference? Where is my Skype headset?

This panel will discuss from both the client and provider perspectives how best to manage the art development process when working with offshore groups. Communication, quality, speed, personnel management and travel will be some of the topics discussed.