How to Release 15 Skins Every Month

Without Losing Your Mind

Introduction!

Kellen Malone
Audio Lead - SMITE

Previous work:

- Paladins
- Realm Royale
- DKO
- Rogue Company
- Cosmo's Quickstop
- Jurassic World Revealed
- Jack Ryan: November Morning
- Casino games

Introduction!

Pablo Schwilden Diaz
CTO - Demute

Previous work:

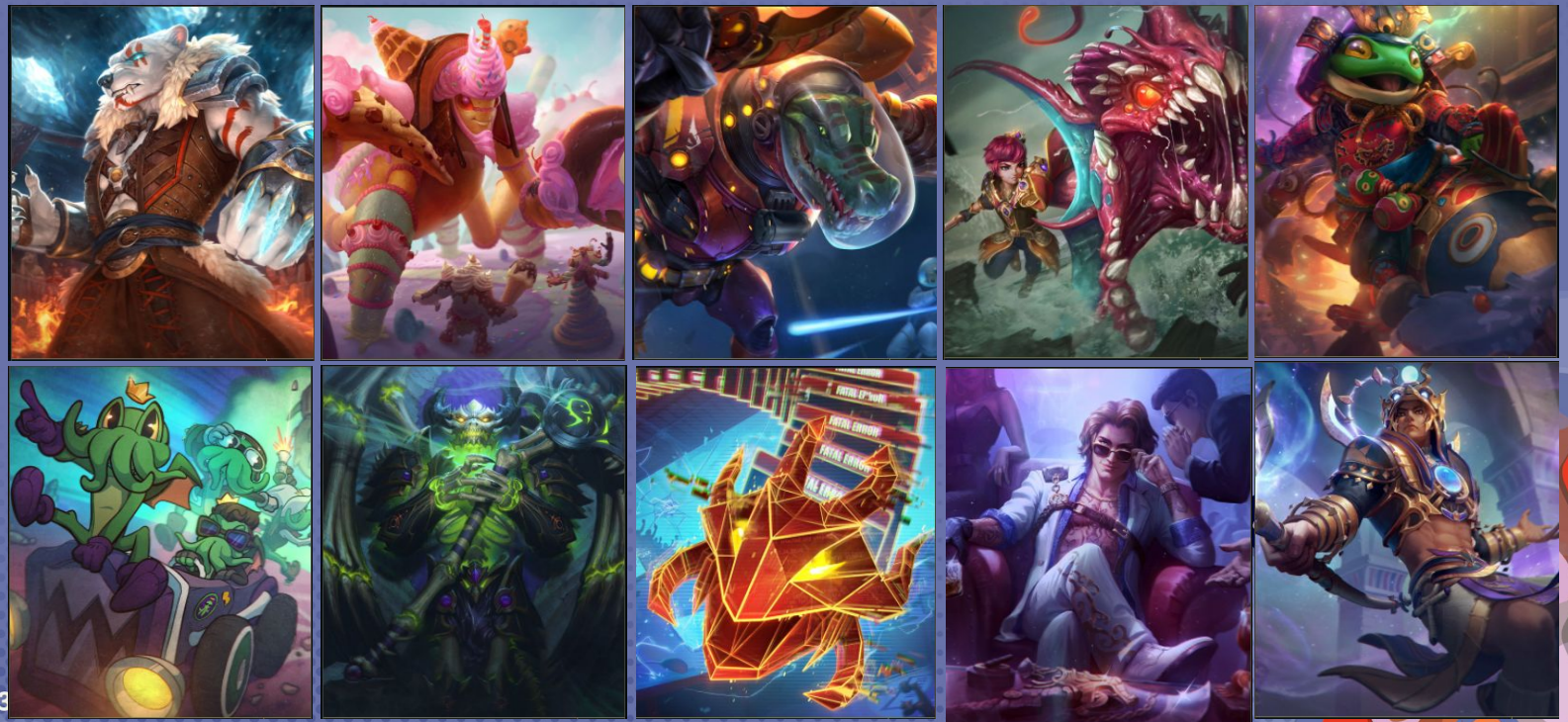
Paladins
Divine Knock Out
Rogue Company

Outcast 2
Century : Age of Ashes
Warhammer 40K : SBT
…

SMITE Overview

- Third-person action game
- 125 Gods
- Skin monetization
  - New voice packs and Sfx
- 3 week production cycle

Skins!



Skins!

How do we manage this much content?

Pre-Production

Planning meetings
Brainstorming sessions
Strategically prioritizing content
Documentation

Production

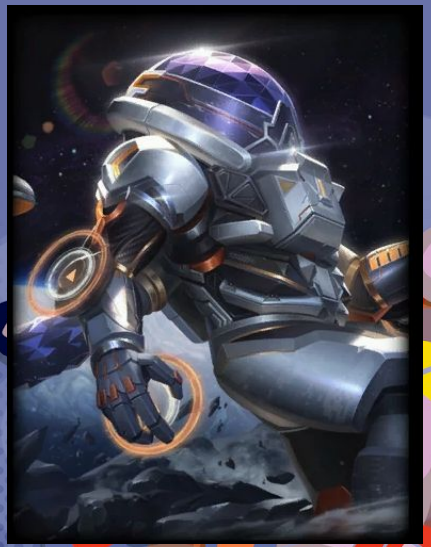
- Utilizing in-house and outsourced design and implementation
- First/second-pass and final due dates
- Automation tools
- Producers!

Pre-Production

- General idea of Scope
- Potential issues (are you turning a dog into a bunny? Will this require additional prog support?)
- Brainstorming
- Discuss which sounds are key to the character that can’t be changed
- Gauge which skins to outsource and which to keep internally

How to Prioritize Content

High Profile Events
Player interest
Complexity



In-house and Outsourcing

In-house

- Faster and more frequent iteration
- Higher visibility on sound design progress and direction
- Internal designers have a deeper understanding of the project
- Internal designers generally have a deeper sense of responsibility to the project
- Limitations on bandwidth

Outsourcing

- Contractors are generally able to take on more work
- Wide range of skills
- Generally unfamiliar with the project
- Difficult to get exactly what you envision

What Sound Designers Need

- Character background
- Notes from Design team
- General audio direction
- List of assets
- Sounds to not touch
- Clear due date expectations
- Render settings

What Technical Sound Designers Need

- Character background
- Package names
- Shortcut commands
- Implementation and testing steps
- Timeline expectations
  - When to expect Sfx/VO
  - Clear due dates

Multi-Tiered Due Dates

- First-pass due date
- First, second, and final pass review sessions (internal)
- Early final due dates

What is designing audio for Smite?

- 10 to 15 skins to redesign with each 60 to 200 sfx
- 10 to 15 voices to clean and post-process
- Trailers, cutscenes, reworks
- Extra emotes or new objects

Every month!

Our goals

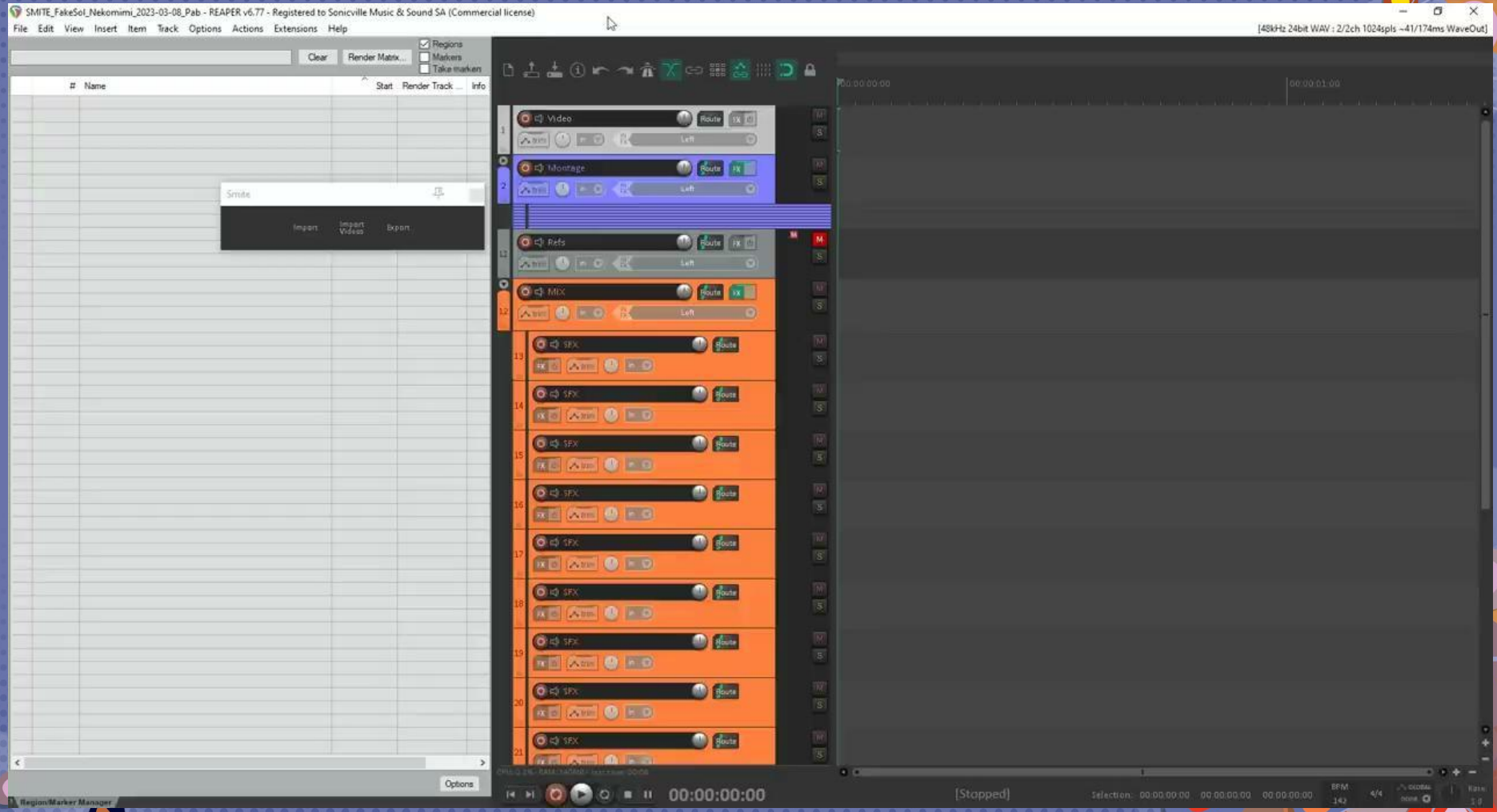
- Create catchy and interesting content every month
- Ensure consistency for the players
- Deliver on time
- Keep the team happy
- Not lose our minds

How to lose your mind

- Boring repetitive tasks
- Endless back and forth
- Lack of creative input
- Too tight deadlines
- No evolution

Boring repetitive tasks → Automation

- Session Templates for VO and Sound Design
- Automatic Import and Export


SMITE_FakeSol_Nekomimi_2023-03-08_Pab - REAPER v6.77 - Registered to Sonicville Music & Sound SA (Commercial license)
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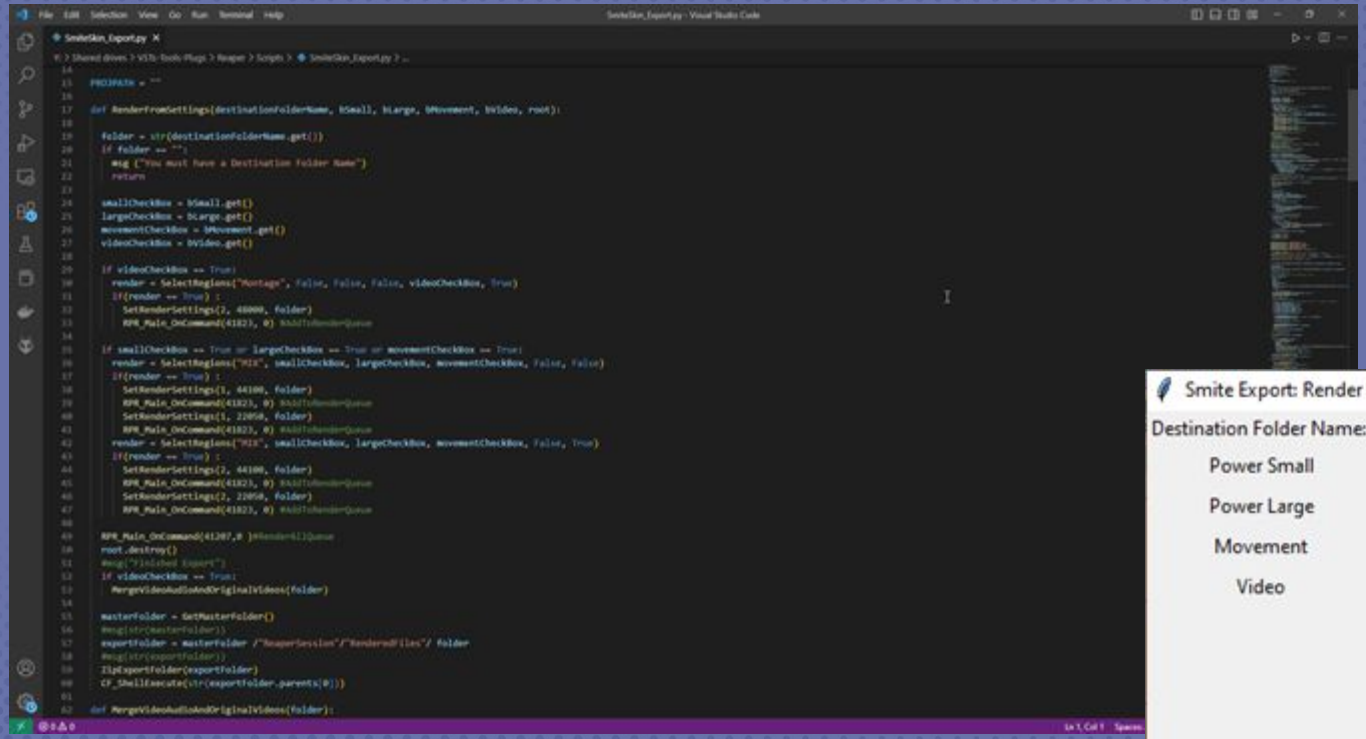
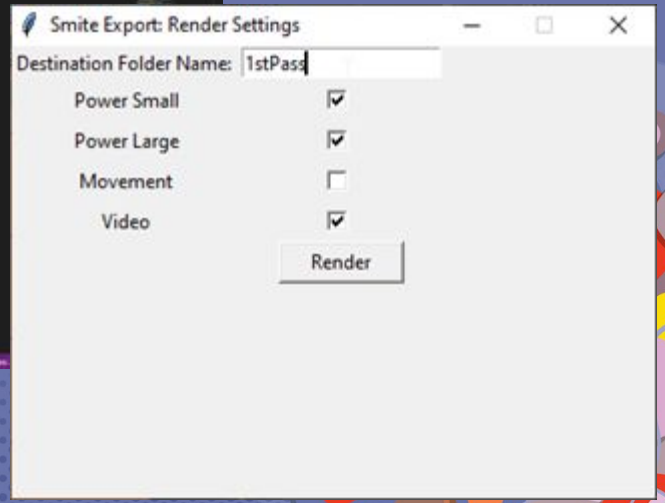


```
PROPATH = ""

def RenderFromSettings(destinationFolderName, bSmall, bLarge, bMovement, bVideo, root):

  folder = str(destinationFolderName.get())
  if folder == "":
    #msg ("You must have a Destination Folder Name")
    return

  smallCheckBox = bSmall.get()
  largeCheckBox = bLarge.get()
  movementCheckBox = bMovement.get()
  videoCheckBox = bVideo.get()

  if videoCheckBox == True:
    render = SelectRegions("Montage", False, False, False, videoCheckBox, True)
    if(render == True) :
      SetRenderSettings(2, 48000, folder)
      RPR_Main_OnCommand(41823, 0) #AddToRenderQueue

  if smallCheckBox == True or largeCheckBox == True or movementCheckBox == True:
    render = SelectRegions("MIX", smallCheckBox, largeCheckBox, movementCheckBox, False, False)
    if(render == True) :
      SetRenderSettings(1, 44100, folder)
      RPR_Main_OnCommand(41823, 0) #AddToRenderQueue
      SetRenderSettings(1, 22050, folder)
      RPR_Main_OnCommand(41823, 0) #AddToRenderQueue
    render = SelectRegions("MIX", smallCheckBox, largeCheckBox, movementCheckBox, False, True)
    if(render == True) :
      SetRenderSettings(2, 44100, folder)
      RPR_Main_OnCommand(41823, 0) #AddToRenderQueue
      SetRenderSettings(2, 22050, folder)
      RPR_Main_OnCommand(41823, 0) #AddToRenderQueue

  RPR_Main_OnCommand(41207,0 )#Render All Queue
  root.destroy()
  #msg("Finished Export")
  if videoCheckBox == True:
    MergeVideoAudioAndOriginalVideos(folder)

  masterFolder = GetMasterFolder()
  #msg(str(masterFolder))
  exportFolder = masterFolder /"ReaperSession"/"RenderedFiles"/ folder
  #msg(str(exportFolder))
  ZipExportFolder(exportFolder)
  CF_ShellExecute(str(exportFolder.parents[0]))

def MergeVideoAudioAndOriginalVideos(folder):
```



Endless back and forth

→ Close collaboration

- Double check of all material and briefs
- Easy access to any sound designer and producer
- Reaper sessions as part of the delivery

Lack of creative input
→ Working as a team

- Sound moodboards and affinity
- Rotate sound designers
- Internal peer reviews
- Fostering boldness and creativity

Too tight deadlines
→ Planning ahead

- Monthly workload assessments
- Gantt charts with detailed breakdown
- Investing in talent

Hi Rez Tracker

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Share

K:K =K2

Title	Skin Name	Batch	VFX Expected	Draft Due Date	Final Due Date	Workload	Owner	State	Category
SM	[redacted]	10R4	-	03/03	03/13	3	JB	Validated	[redacted]
SM		10R4	02/24	03/06	03/13	3	Pab	elivered 2ndPa	
SM		10R4	03/03	03/09	03/16	3	Kar	elivered 2ndPa	
SM		10R4	03/10	03/15	03/20	3	JB + Kar	elivered 2ndPa	
SM		10R4		03/09	03/16	3	Kar	elivered 1stPa	
SM		10R4	03/03	03/09	03/16	3	Pab	elivered 1stPa	
SM		10R4	03/03	03/09	03/16	3	Wal	elivered 1stPa	
SM		10R4	03/03	03/09	03/16	3	Kar	elivered 1stPa	
SM		10R4	03/07	03/10	03/17	3	Ant	elivered 1stPa	
SM		10R4	03/07	03/10	03/17	3	Cor	elivered 1stPa	
SM		10R4	03/07	03/10	03/17	3	Flo	elivered 1stPa	
SM		10R4	03/07	03/10	03/17	3	Kar	elivered 1stPa	
DKO						3	Kar	edback Recei	
DKO				03/24	03/31	3	Wal	In Progress	
DKO				03/24	03/31	3		Not Started	
DKO				03/24	03/31	1	Loic	In Progress	
SM		10R5	03/17	03/24	03/31	3		Not Started	
SM		10R5	03/21	03/27	03/31	3		Not Started	
SM		10R5	03/31	04/06	04/10	3		Not Started	
SM		10R5	04/03	04/07	04/10	3		Not Started	
SM		10R5	04/03	04/07	04/10	3		Not Started	

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
02/26	02/27	02/28	03/01	03/02	03/03	03/04	03/05	03/06	03/07	03/08	03/09	03/10	03/11	03/12	03/13	03/14	03/15	03/16	03/17	03/18	03/19	03/20
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																			VFX			

No evolution

→ Post-mortems and feedback

- Internal and Hi-Rez feedback and reviews
- “Post-mortems” regularly
- Give a voice to your team
- Go to GDC?

Batch Implementation Automation Tools

- Look for frequently repeated tasks in your pipeline and work with your programmers to develop tools
- Before automation tools ~ 1 hour
- After automation tools ~ 5 minutes
- Total savings per patch ~ 10 hours of work
- Quality checks still needed

Empowering Production!

- Emails
- SOW
- Info dumps (sound design/implementation needs and guidelines)
- Asset list

Team and Project Management Tips

- Be flexible with your workflow
- Allow time for polish, bugs, and life events
- Keep your team healthy
- Maintain a positive relationship with your outsourcers
- Encourage career growth and personal responsibility
- Be excited about players enjoying the content
- Celebrate the team’s wins

Bringing this all together

- Early planning meetings
- Documentation
- Strategically prioritize content
- Utilize in-house and outsource design and implementation
- Multi-tier due dates
- Automation tools
- Your Producer probably needs a raise

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Q&A

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