



# **Quality of Life Summit: An IGDA Think-Tank**

**March 8, 2005  
Game Developers Conference  
San Francisco, California**

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## Contact Info

### **International Game Developers Association**

870 Market Street, suite 1181  
San Francisco, California  
USA, 94102

Phone: +1.415.738.2104

Fax: +1.415.738.2178

Email: [info@igda.org](mailto:info@igda.org)

### **Jason Della Rocca**

Executive Director, IGDA

[jason@igda.org](mailto:jason@igda.org)

### **Francois Dominic Laramee**

Chairperson, IGDA Quality of Life Committee

[fdl@francoisdominiclaramee.com](mailto:fdl@francoisdominiclaramee.com)

### **Quality of Life Committee**

[www.igda.org/qol/](http://www.igda.org/qol/)

[qol@igda.org](mailto:qol@igda.org)

## Agenda

### Tuesday, March 8th

**10:00 - 10:10:** Welcome/Introduction

**10:10 - 11:00:** The State of Game Industry QoL

**11:00 - 11:15:** *morning coffee break*

**11:15 - 12:30:** Case Studies: Problems > Solutions > Outcomes

**12:30 - 14:00:** *lunch break*

**14:00 - 15:00:** Keynote: Business Case for Improved Production Practices

**15:00 - 16:00:** Labor Relations 101

**16:00 - 16:15:** *afternoon coffee break*

**16:15 - 18:00:** Towards a Sustainable Future: Panel & Discussion

## QoL Summit Abstract

Last year's IGDA Quality of Life white paper documented the long hours and pressures exerted on developers and the toll that these problems take on people and companies. There has to be a better way. This Summit will explore the consequences of poor QoL and ways to improve. Content will focus on case studies of successfully implemented QoL practices and a discussion on how to overcome the issues preventing better QoL.

### **Idea Takeaway:**

Attendees will be inspired by the reality that it is possible to be successful in the games industry, while enjoying a high quality of life. In addition to inspiration, practical tips and case studies for achieving better quality of life will be gained by all.

### **Intended Audience and Prerequisites:**

Developers, producers, managers, those involved in the human resources process and anyone else who is interested in creating a more positive/productive working environment and better quality of life.

## Sessions Descriptions

### **Welcome/Introduction** (10:00 - 10:10)

*Jason Della Rocca* - Executive Director, IGDA

A quick welcome by the IGDA's Executive Director and brief introduction to the agenda and activities of the Think-Tank.

### **The State of Game Industry QoL** (10:10 - 11:00)

*Tom Buscaglia* - Attorney, T.H. Buscaglia & Associates

*Francois Dominic Laramee* - freelance developer, IGDA QoL Committee Chair

*Clarinda Merripen* - Director of Operations, Cyberlore Studios

Members of the IGDA's Quality of Life Committee will discuss the current state of working conditions within the game development industry, covering such issues as: Current/pending lawsuit activity; Globalization, workforce migration and outsource/offshoring trends; Labor shortages; Legal issues related to overtime pay (e.g., FLSA); etc. These and related issues are having a profound impact on how we work in the game development industry and promise to continue to change the nature of the workplace for years to come.

### **Case Blasts: Problems > Solutions > Outcomes** (11:15 am 12:30 pm)

Representatives from a variety of development studios will present brief case studies. Each case will cover a quality of life related problem, the solution that was applied to overcome it and the resulting outcomes. The goal is to give everyone a better sense of the breadth of approaches studios are using to overcome quality of life related challenges. (Attendees who pre-registered for the Summit were sent details regarding these case blasts and the steps required to present one.)

### **Keynote: Business Case for Improved Production Practices** (2:00 pm 3:00 pm)

*Steve McConnell* - CEO and Chief Software Engineer, Construx Software

Best selling author and software industry leader Steve McConnell will explain the dollars and cents of production process improvement and maps out the need for improved software development practices in a way that is meaningful to managers and executives. The average software company spends 2-3 times as much on each project as best-in-class companies spend to deliver similar functionality. The average organization wastes 25% or more of its budget on projects that are ultimately cancelled. Technical staff members are all-too-aware of the need for improved practices. But how do you make the case to upper management?

Sponsored by:



**Labor Relations 101** (3:00 pm 4:00 pm)

*Gina Neff* - Assistant Professor, Department of Communication, U. of California, San Diego

How can organizations and associations improve the quality of life across an industry? What are unions and how do they function? What are the alternatives for solving workforce problems? This session will examine cases of how other tech and creative industries have dealt with problems of workforce empowerment, including collective bargaining and other approaches to workforce problems. Along with presenting the pro and cons of unions, this session will present some of the new, innovative solutions to the problems of working in the new economy.

**Towards a Sustainable Future: Panel & Discussion** (4:15 pm 6:00 pm)

*Jason Della Rocca* (*moderator*) - Executive Director, IGDA

*Michel Allard* - Vice President of Continuous Improvement, Ubisoft Montreal

*Julian Eggebretch* - President/Lead Producer, Factor 5

*Joe Minton* - President & CEO, Cyberlore Studios

*David Perry* - President, Shiny Entertainment

*Rich Vogel* - Executive Producer, Sony Online Entertainment

This panel of industry leaders will explore the potential for a sustainable future where passion is rewarded, instead of exploited. A future where projects are well scheduled, contracts offer a sustainable business model, and developers are treated as the true creative engines of the game industry. They will share their horror stories and their revelations, and provide insight on how they're working towards a future where the industry's workforce doesn't burnout and leave before they've done their best work. Specifically, the panel will discuss:

- Maturity of production practices
- Business climate and pressures
- Status and need for continuing education
- Current state of tools and technology
- History and roots of the industry

The panel will be a dynamic, lively and interactive debate and discussion amongst the moderator, panelists and attendees.

## Speaker Bios

### **Michel Allard**

Vice President of Continuous Improvement, Ubisoft Montreal

M. Allard is Vice-president, Continuous Improvement at Ubisoft Entertainment. He is located at the Montreal studio and is involved in defining, implementing and improving best practices in project management for developing video games. The main challenge is to keep fostering the creativity that characterizes the Montreal studio while improving the control of operations. Holder of a bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering and an MBA, his main fields of interest are international business and New Product development strategies and methods. Prior to joining Ubisoft, M. Allard founded and owned a consulting firm specializing in New Product development strategies and best practices with customers in Canada, the United States and Europe serving both large and small corporations with a wide array of technologies. Previous to that, he worked for several multinational corporations in various positions with New Product Development responsibilities.

### **Tom Buscaglia**

Attorney, T.H. Buscaglia & Associates

Tom Buscaglia, the Game Attorney, practices technology law in Miami, Florida. Tom is a principal in the law firm T.H. Buscaglia and Associates in Miami, Florida and is admitted to practice in Florida and in all Federal Trial and Appellate Courts, including the United States Supreme Court. In addition to obtaining his Law degree, with honors, from Georgetown University in 1985, Tom holds a B.A. in Philosophy from S.U.N.Y., Buffalo, with honors. Tom is dedicated to the computer and video game industry, assisting developers around the world in all aspects of their legal and business needs and has been representing game developers since 1991. Committed to helping independent game developers get the right start in business, Tom has written numerous articles and frequently speaks on the business and legal matters that people starting out in the industry should and should not do in order to have a solid business foundation for their new studios. He recently released a start up developer's business and legal kit with information and contracts that every start up developer needs. [www.gamdevkit.com](http://www.gamdevkit.com) Tom is also the Executive Director of the Interactive Entertainment Institute, LLC, which is founded on the principle that video game technologies and techniques are the most profound learning methodology since the advent of the written word. The IEI is dedicated to building bridges between the members of the game development community and those in the government simulation and training area as well as in the academic disciplines who can adopt and utilize our technology and techniques in new beneficial applications. IEI will be presenting its first event, the G.A.M.E.S. Synergy Summit from January 26 - 28, 2005, in Orlando Florida. [www.synergysummit.com](http://www.synergysummit.com) Tom is the Founder and Executive Director of Games-Florida, a nonprofit committed to building the Computer and Video Game development industry in Florida. [www.games-florida.org](http://www.games-florida.org)

**Jason Della Rocca**

Executive Director, IGDA

Jason oversees the day-to-day management of the International Game Developers Association, working to build a unified global game development community and provide a common voice for developers. Jason and the IGDA deal with such diverse topics as anti-censorship advocacy, academic relations, business issues, workplace diversity and developer quality of life. Jason also oversees the running of the Game Developers Choice Awards, an annual industry event which recognizes and rewards outstanding achievement within the game development community. Jason has been a member of the game development community for many years, and has spent time at Matrox Graphics, Quazal and Silicon Graphics. Jason can be reached at [jason@igda.org](mailto:jason@igda.org).

**Julian Eggebretch**

President/Lead Producer, Factor 5

Julian Eggebrecht is co-founder of Factor 5, a game and technology developer located in Marin County, California. Factor 5 was founded in Germany in 1989 and moved to the U.S. in 1996. Factor 5 is a technology partner for Nintendo's Gamecube console and provider of the MusyX sound tools. Julian's work includes the Turrigan line of games, Star Wars: Rogue Squadron (LucasArts), Ballblazer Champions (LucasArts), Indiana Jones - Greatest Adventures (LucasArts), Indiana Jones & The Infernal Machine (LucasArts), International Superstar Soccer Deluxe (Konami), Contra: The Alien Wars (Konami). Most recently he was director of Star Wars Rogue Squadron II: Rogue Leader for the Nintendo GameCube. Julian is Factor 5's president and lead director/producer and currently working on two titles.

**Francois Dominic Laramee**

Freelance developer, IGDA QoL Committee Chair

A game developer since 1991 and a freelancer since 1998, FDL has designed, produced, programmed and/or written over 25 games on half a dozen platforms. He has edited and co-written two game development books, "Game Design Perspectives" and "Secrets of the Game Business", as well as more than 100 articles. He is also the chair of the IGDA's Quality of life committee and a stand-up comedy writer whose material has been performed on stage at the Just For Laughs comedy festival.

**Steve McConnell**

CEO and Chief Software Engineer, Construx Software

Steve McConnell is Chief Software Engineer at Construx Software. His first two books (Code Complete and Rapid Development) won Software Development magazine's Jolt Excellence award for outstanding software development books of their respective years. Steve has also written Software Project Survival Guide, Professional Software Development, and numerous technical articles. He is past Editor in Chief of IEEE Software magazine, and in 1998 readers of Software Development magazine named Steve one of the three most influential people in the

software industry along with Bill Gates and Linus Torvalds. Code Complete, 2d Edition is now available.

**Clarinda Merripen**

Director of Operations, Cyberlore Studios

Clarinda Merripen coordinates finance, IT needs, human resources and facilities at Cyberlore Studios by bringing its guiding principals into play. Her specialty is incorporating strategic influences into everyday activities. In her seven years at Cyberlore, she has been actively involved in the growth of the management group, the creation of a solid fiscal infrastructure, and shepherding the company into a dynamic and constructive human resource policy. Additionally, she is an active member of the game industry though speaking, writing and industry groups focusing on two issues: operations and increasing the female market share. For the last several years she has spoken at the national Game Developer's Conference, and in 2004 spoke at the World Science Fiction in Boston and Austin Women's Developer's conference. She contributes to Game Developer Magazine. Through the Int'l Game Developer's Association (IGDA), she participates on the committees for Business, Women in Game Development and Quality of Life and help found the Human Resource Special Interest Group.

**Joe Minton**

President & CEO, Cyberlore Studios

Joe is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of Cyberlore. He has been central to growing the company and keeping it stable through turbulent times in the industry. Recent key events for the company include transitioning to console development and focusing Cyberlore on becoming the best sim game company in the industry. Cyberlore is 100% bootstrapped, has never suffered layoffs in its 12-year history, and enjoys a very low turnover rate. This is due, in part, to Joe's fiscal discipline and his focus on fostering an employee-friendly workplace. Joe spearheads the sales process of getting new projects, oversees the Cyberlore management team, and works to solidify relationships with publishers and licensors to create true partnerships. Years ago, Joe transitioned Cyberlore to open book management and is a strong believer in open communication. Joe was featured in the Wall Street Journal and serves on the board of the region's Technology Enterprise Council. Joe's recent Executive Production credits include Playboy: The Mansion, Risk: Global Domination, MechWarrior4: Mercenaries and Majesty: The Fantasy Kingdom Sim. In 2004 he stepped out of the production role to focus on bringing new business to Cyberlore, which includes the creation of a Serious Games Division.

**Gina Neff**

Assistant Professor, Department of Communication, U. of California, San Diego

Gina Neff is an assistant professor of communication at the University of California, San Diego. Her research is on entrepreneurial behavior in high tech and cultural industries, with a particular emphasis on how people working in these fields experience economic and financial risk in their

jobs. She currently teaches courses on work in the new economy and was previously a postdoctoral research fellow in the Institute for Labor and Employment at the University of California, Los Angeles. Before becoming an academic, she was both a high-tech temp and a union organizer.

**David Perry**

President, Shiny Entertainment

David Perry is the president and founder of Shiny Entertainment, Inc. A 22-year game industry veteran, David launched his professional career at just 15 years of age by writing video game programming books in his native country, Northern Ireland. Since then, David has developed 32 games (serving as lead programmer on 24 of them), totaling 88 individual retail titles across 23 video game platforms. All told, David's games have totaled more than half a billion retail dollars. David sits on the Advisory Board of the Game Developers Conference and is a regular speaker at industry conferences, award shows and colleges. His last project was "Enter The Matrix", a #1 game made by working in close collaboration with the writer/directors of the Matrix universe, for more information visit: [www.dperry.com](http://www.dperry.com) [www.shiny.com](http://www.shiny.com), [www.enterthematrixgame.com](http://www.enterthematrixgame.com)

**Rich Vogel**

Executive Producer, Sony Online Entertainment

Rich has been doing game development for 12 years. He has worked on Console, PC, and online games. He was the Producer of Meridian 59 and Ultima Online. He helped launch and run the service for both online games. He is currently V.P. of Development at Sony Online Entertainment - Austin. He is overseeing the development of Star Wars Galaxies. He speaks frequently on issues of online world design, online development process, and online community management.

## Summit Attendee List

The following list was generated on March 3rd, 2005, and represents all those pre-registered to attend the QoL Summit. *Sorted alphabetically by last name.*

Name	Title	Affiliation
Mette Agerbæk Ruby		IO-Interactive
Joseph Aina	Operator	Talking Faculty
Michel Allard	VP of Continuous Improvement	Ubisoft Montreal
Melinda Barker		Rockstar Vancouver
Dawn Beasley	PR & Marketing Manager	Climax Action
Stephen Blair	Senior Artist	SCEE
Tom Buscaglia	Attorney	T.H. Buscaglia & Associates
Angela Butler	Doctoral Student	Pepperdine University
Jason Chamberlain	Lead Developer	Fuchi Industries
Alfred Chane Pane	Chairman	NPCube
Gaivan Chang	Studio Chief Technology Officer	Electronic Arts Canada
Alex Chatfield	Development Director	Electronic Arts - Tiburon
Roger Cooper	Associate Professor	Ohio University
Fujii Daisuke	Planning Director	Konami Computer Entertainment Studios
Alan Dann		SCEE
Lisa Dawson Bryant	VP Product Development	Intellivision Productions
Jason Della Rocca	Executive Director	IGDA
Michael Delp	Senior Software Engineer	WXP
Julian Eggebretch	President/Lead Producer	Factor 5
Daniel Esbensen	Director of Advanced Research	Touch Technologies
Chigaku Fukuhara	Artist	SEGA Corporation
Gil Garcia	Senior Character Artist	Sony Computer Entertainment
Adrian German	Faculty	Indiana University Bloomington
Kelly Gibson		Rockstar Vancouver
Richard Gilbert	Producer	Blue Omega Entertainment
Robert Gordon		Schell Games
Neil Haldar	VP Interactive	MGM Studios
David Hewitt	Lead Game Designer	Tantalus Interactive
Hank Howie	President	Blue Fang Games
Vivek Jawa	Grad Student	Entertainment Technology Center
Kellie Johnson	HR/Acctg Mgr	Retro Studios
Jin Younh Ju	Game designer	NCSOFT
Ahn Jung Jin	International Management Manager	WEBZEN
Patti Kail	Director of Human Resources	Monolith Productions
Melanie Lam	Masters Candidate	Carnegie Mellon University
Francois Dominic Laramee	freelance developer	
Manjai Lee	Vice President	ETRI
Noel Llopis	Lead Technical Architect	Sammy Studios
Steve McConnell	CEO and Chief Software Engineer	Construx Software
Adam Mechtley	Animation Artist	Rainbow Studios
Clarinda Merripen	Director of Operations	Cyberlore Studios

Joe Minton	President & CEO	Cyberlore Studios
Don Moar	Lead Programmer	BioWare Corp.
Chris Murray	Associate Director	FIEA
Rie Nakano	Translator	Konami Computer Entertainment Studios
Gina Neff	Assistant Prof., Dept. of Communication	U. of California, San Diego
Glenn Oberholtz	Systems Engineer	BAE Systems
Jay Obernolte	President	FarSight Studios
Tomoya Onda	Programmer	Polygon Magic
Kim Pallister	Technical Manager	Intel
David Perry	President	Shiny Entertainment
Sheri Pocilujko	Game Designer	High Voltage Software
Aaron Pulkka	VP Development	Hyper Entertainment
Brian Reynolds	President	Big Huge Games
Karen Riggs	Director	Ohio University School of Telecommunications
Evan Robinson	Agent of Mischief	Engines of Mischief
Shawn Robles	Senior Artist	SCEA
Dan Roy	Student	University of Massachusetts Amherst
Samantha Ryan	CEO	Monolith Productions
Matthew A. Sakey	writer	
Tobi Saulnier	VP Product Development	Vicarious Visions
Jay Scott		Rockstar Vancouver
Chacko Sonny	CFO / Creative Director	Savage Entertainment
Hakon Steinø		IO-Interactive
Joshua Taylor	Technical Designer	Schell Games
Gregory Thomas	President	Visual Concepts
Denny Thorley	Studio Director	Day 1 Studios
Deborah Tillet	President	BreakAway Games
Wade Tinney	Director	Large Animal Games
Scott Triola	COO	Blue Fang Games
Dan Tudge	President	Exile Interactive
David Ventura	Hardest Working Man in Show Business	iNiS Corporation
Rich Vogel	Executive Producer	Sony Online Entertainment
Aaron Walker	Software Engineer	Electronic Arts - Tiburon
Yungchiy Wang	Game Design Supervisor	Gamania Digital Entertainment
Hiroaki Watanabe	Programmer	Capcom
John Wheeler	Co-founder	Blue Fang Games
Mary Welsh	Manager	Electronic Arts
Richard Woods	Managing Director	Black Lantern Studios

## Related GDC'05 Sessions

### **Better Games (and Quality of Life) in 40 Hours per Week (Lecture)**

Speaker: Hank Howie (President, Blue Fang Games)

Time/Date: Wednesday (March 9), 4:00pm 5:00pm

### **Quality of Life - Best Practices (Roundtable)**

Speaker: Francois Dominic Laramé

Time/Date: Friday (March 11), 4:00pm 5:00pm

### **HR Wizardry: People Management in the Game Industry (Roundtable)**

Speaker: Mark Kluchky (HR Manager, BioWare)

Time/Date: Wednesday (March 9), 9:00am 10:00am

Friday (March 11), 2:30pm 3:30pm

### **Pro Active: Tackling Production Challenges (Roundtable)**

Speaker: Stuart Roch (Executive Producer, Shiny Entertainment)

Time/Date: Wednesday (March 9), 2:30pm 3:30pm

Friday (March 11), 12:00pm 1:00pm

### **Feedback Loops: Assumptions That Make a Performance Management System Successful (Roundtable)**

Speaker: Clarinda Merripen (Director of Operations, Cyberlore Studios)

Time/Date: Wednesday (March 9), 4:00pm 5:00pm

Thursday (March 10), 9:00am - 10:00am

Friday (March 11), 10:30am - 11:30am

### **Blind Man's Bluff: Using Automated Metrics to Understand Development Progress and Quality (Lecture)**

Speaker: Dean Margerison (Independent IT Consultant, Dekam)

Time/Date: Friday (March 11), 2:30pm 3:30pm

### **Key Project Management Best Practices (Lecture)**

Speaker: Dylan Miklashek (Director - Product Development, THQ Inc.)

Time/Date: Friday (March 11), 12:00pm 1:00pm

## IGDA – Make a Difference

The International Game Developers Association is a non-profit membership organization that advocates globally on issues related to digital game creation. The IGDA's mission is to strengthen the international game development community and effect change to benefit that community. Do the right thing and join the thousands of members, studios and partners that help make this mission a reality.

### Personal Membership

The IGDA membership is made up of programmers, designers, artists, producers and many other development professionals who see the importance of working together to advance games and game development as a craft. Your involvement is critical to the success of your career, the IGDA and our industry.

By joining the IGDA, you join a worldwide community of game developers that shares knowledge, insight, and connections. From local chapter meetings, to online discussions, to committee output, the IGDA provides invaluable information and resources for your career and the betterment of the industry.

### Studio Affiliation

Your team is your most valuable asset. As a studio manager, you can reward and inspire your development team by affiliating with the IGDA. By joining the Studio Affiliation Program, a studio provides all of its employees with personal IGDA memberships, allowing them to connect with their peers and grow professionally and personally. In addition, Studios receive their own unique benefits, all while showing support for the community.

### Industry Partner

Your organization is essential to game development. Make a difference in the community you've helped to create by becoming an IGDA Partner. Send the message to game developers that your organization supports the growth and development of games as an art form, and backs the community at its roots. Gain exposure with IGDA members for whom game development is a way of life. The IGDA upholds the common agenda of game developers and the game industry. Be a part of that agenda by becoming an IGDA Partner.

**Make a difference:  
[www.igda.org/join](http://www.igda.org/join)**