



AMBER

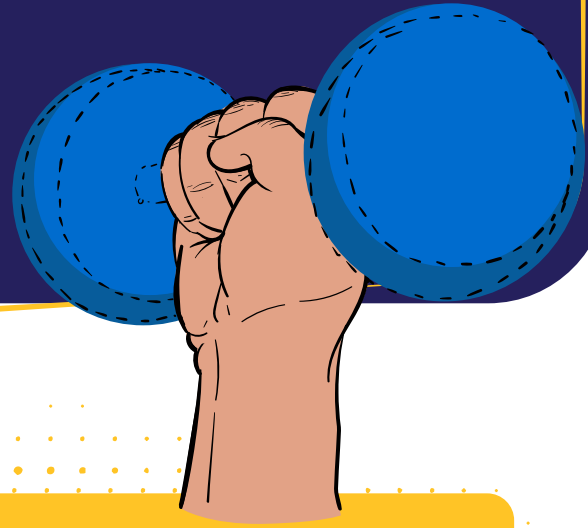
THE SCIENCE
OF FUN AT SCALE:

AMBER'S LEVEL DESIGN
MODEL FOR LIVE PUZZLE
& CASUAL GAMES

Introduction

We help partners build fresh, polished, live-ready content for mobile puzzle and casual games, where every level needs to feel fair, satisfying and challenging. Our level design model combines creative exploration with structured production, KPI-informed iteration, and close partner alignment. The goal is simple to say and hard to do: keep players engaged over time while delivering high-quality content at scale. We build systems that support both creativity and consistency.

THE CHALLENGE



1 Alignment & Vision

Partners rely on us to quickly grasp their vision, goals, and desired player experience. Structured onboarding covering research, mechanical analysis, regular syncs, and documentation reviews ensures fast, lasting alignment to the client's needs.

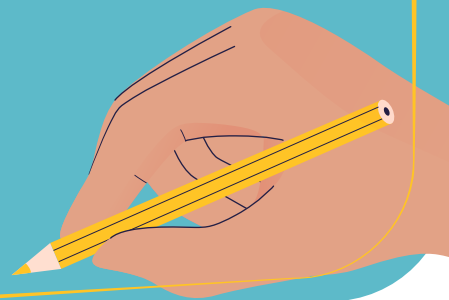
2 Maintaining freshness and quality at scale

Long-running projects risk fatigue and repetition with continuous delivery at scale. Consistent quality requires creative discipline, structured processes, and alignment with the vision.

3 Reliable, regular delivery of live-ready quality

Delivering live service levels requires balancing predictable output, polish, and freshness. The challenge is building a pipeline that delivers speed, consistency, and alignment with the product vision.

KEY DELIVERABLES



Regular content delivery

Live-service projects need a structured approach to content planning and delivery. Key practices include:

CONSISTENT PRODUCTION:

We develop levels in batches on a defined schedule to maintain the pipeline.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND DOCUMENTATION:

We use project vision specifications and detailed written plans. One example is the Beat-Chart, a document that outlines key gameplay moments, game mechanics involved, and pacing in each level. This ensures our updates are varied, high-quality, and match project goals.

ITERATIVE DEVELOPMENT:

We follow rapid prototyping, tuning, and refinement cycles, incorporating early internal and partner feedback to balance creativity, quality, and efficiency.



This combination of planning, regular cycles, and iterative refinement ensures fresh, engaging content that meets both internal standards and player expectations.

Balance new and legacy content

To maintain a cohesive and engaging live service experience, we give careful attention to both new and legacy content through:

ENSURING ALL LEVELS, NEW OR OLD, REMAIN POLISHED, ENGAGING, AND UP TO STANDARDS IS ESSENTIAL.

We regularly analyze older levels to ensure consistent difficulty and player experience.

CONTINUOUS REVIEW

We also focus on adjusting legacy or new content that deviates from the intended design, addressing issues like difficulty spikes, pacing, or mechanical changes.

TARGETED REWORKS

This ongoing evaluation and adjustment process keeps all content aligned, delivering a seamless, high-quality experience that preserves the game's integrity and longevity.

LIVE KPI TRACKING: TURNING PLAYER BEHAVIOR INTO BETTER LEVELS

In live puzzle and casual games, player behavior tells a story. KPI tracking helps us understand where players are engaged or struggling, and where content may need tuning. When live data is available, we use it to evaluate whether levels are performing as intended and to guide practical design improvements.

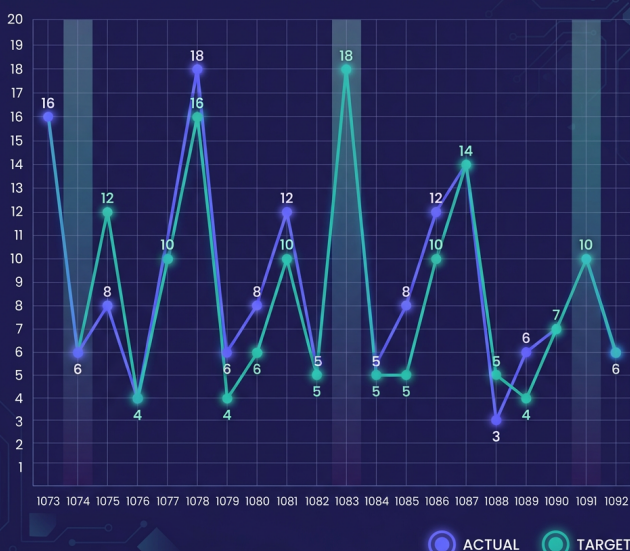
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Continuous performance monitoring

We track signals such as pass rates, retries, completion time, progression, and drop-off points to identify friction, difficulty spikes, or unexpected player behavior.



Actual vs Target Difficulty



Data-driven adjustments

The goal is to match the intended difficulty curve, create fair challenge, and preserve a satisfying rhythm between tension, reward, and progression.

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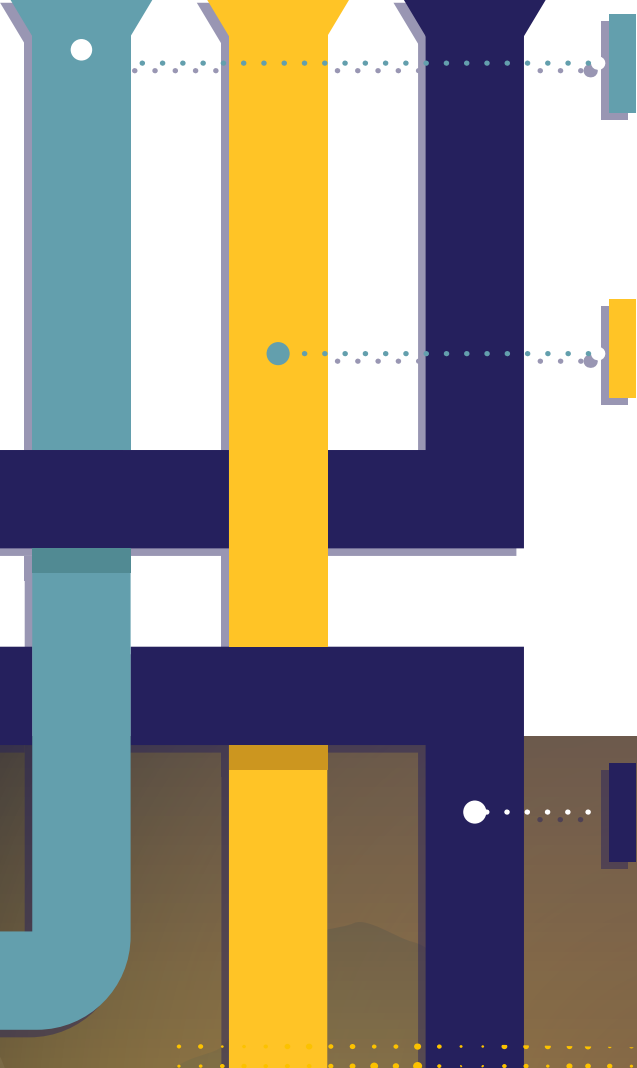
Proactive optimization

When data shows that a level is underperforming, we refine layouts, move counts, mechanic combinations, pacing, and difficulty balance to improve flow and player satisfaction.

Good content keeps players challenged without making them feel blocked. It supports progression, encourages retries for the right reasons, preserves clarity, and helps players stay engaged session after session. By combining KPI signals with design expertise, **we help partners make level improvements that are targeted, measurable, and player-focused.**

SCALABLE LEVEL DESIGN PIPELINES: HOW FUN MOVES FROM IDEA TO LIVE CONTENT

A strong pipeline keeps production organized but also protects the quality of the player experience while allowing teams to create, review, improve, and deliver content at scale. For live puzzle and casual games, our workflows are structured enough to support predictable delivery, but flexible enough to respond to new mechanics, partner feedback, and player data.



Tailored pipelines

Each project has its own mechanics, audience, difficulty philosophy, and live operations rhythm. We adapt the workflow to fit those needs instead of forcing every game into the same production model.

Structured development stages

A typical content cycle includes research, design intake, Beat-Chart planning, level creation, internal playtesting, tuning, partner review, iteration, final validation, and delivery. Each stage has a clear purpose: define the intent, build the level, test the experience, refine the balance, and make sure the content is ready for players.

Beat-Chart integration

Beat-Charts help designers plan the rhythm of a level batch. They organize mechanics, difficulty intent, pacing, variation, and key gameplay moments so content feels fresh without becoming random or repetitive.

The result is a repeatable system for building live-ready content: planned carefully, tested thoroughly, improved through feedback, and delivered with both creativity and consistency in mind.

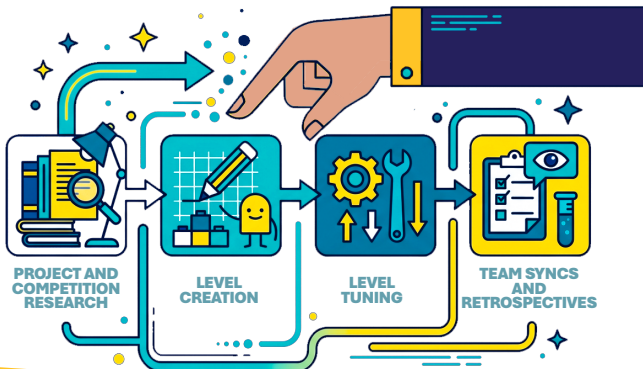
THE METHOD / QUALITY + COMMUNICATION

Our method is built around a simple idea: great casual content is designed, tested, tuned, discussed, and refined before it ever reaches players. We combine creative level design with production discipline, partner communication, and continuous feedback so every level supports the intended player experience.

1

Quality through Methodical Level Design

Quality starts before a level is built. We research the game and comparable content to understand what makes the experience work. From there, we create levels with a clear design purpose, tune them through internal review, and refine them based on feedback. Each level is evaluated for clarity, fairness, pacing, challenge, and alignment with the partner's vision.



→ Project and competition research:

We analyze mechanics, pacing, player expectations, and relevant market benchmarks to create levels that feel fresh while staying approachable.

→ **Level creation:** We design levels based on project documentation, Beat-Chart planning, mechanic goals, and the intended player journey.

→ **Level tuning:** We run internal tuning passes to adjust difficulty, layout, flow, and moment-to-moment readability before partner review.

→ **Team syncs and retrospectives:** Regular team reviews help identify bottlenecks, improve standards, and turn lessons from one batch into better decisions for the next.

This process helps each level do its job: teach, challenge, reward, surprise, or support progression, without breaking the flow of the game.

→ **Weekly partner syncs:** Regular syncs keep priorities clear, decisions fast, and expectations aligned.

→ **Shared channels:** Open communication channels help teams exchange updates, questions, feedback, and production context as work evolves.

→ **Structured feedback rounds:** Documented feedback helps designers understand what needs to change, why it matters, and how to improve the next iteration.

→ **Centralized documentation:** Shared resources keep everyone aligned on guidelines, mechanics, tuning rules, and current project direction.

Trust is built through clarity: clear goals, clear feedback, clear ownership, and a shared understanding of what “good” means for the game.

2

Communication and Trust Building

Live content creation works best when teams move together. We keep communication structured, transparent, and practical so feedback becomes part of the production rhythm.

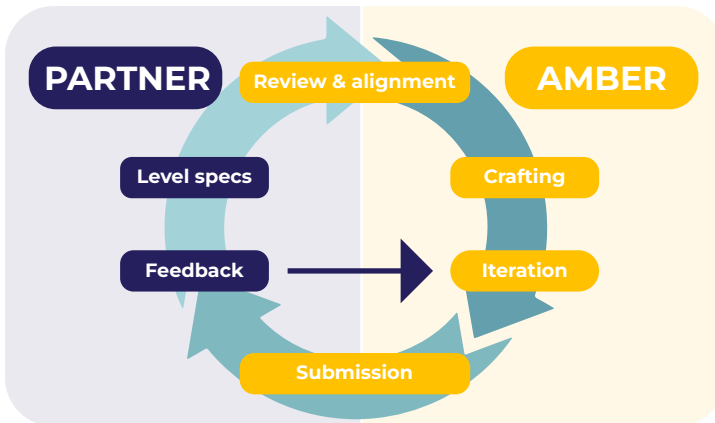


THE METHOD / ADAPTABILITY + DOCUMENTATION

3

Adaptability

Live puzzle games change constantly: new mechanics, new player behaviors, new difficulty needs, new product priorities. Our teams are built to adapt without losing consistency. We monitor content performance, respond to feedback, refine older levels, and adjust workflows when the project needs it.



→ **Rapid issue identification:** Through testing and KPI monitoring where available, we identify difficulty spikes, pacing issues, unclear mechanics, or content that does not perform as intended.

→ **Refinement of older content:** Legacy levels are updated when needed to stay fair, engaging, and consistent with current mechanics, player habits, and quality standards.

→ **Flexible pipelines:** We adjust workflows to match partner needs, feedback cycles, project constraints, and live operations priorities while protecting content quality.

→ **Gameplay mechanic updates:** When new mechanics or changes are introduced, we integrate them carefully so they feel natural, readable, and rewarding for players.

Adaptability helps keep live content healthy: fresh enough to stay interesting, stable enough to feel consistent, and responsive enough to support long-term engagement.

→ **Beat-Charts** Beat-Charts help designers track level features, pacing, difficulty intent, mechanic usage, iteration history, and content variation across batches.

→ **Centralized content storage** Shared repositories keep levels, tools, guidelines, documentation, and feedback accessible as content evolves.

→ **Knowledge sharing and onboarding:** Training materials, examples, process updates, and guidance documents help new team members understand the workflow faster and keep production standards consistent.

Strong documentation turns individual knowledge into team capability, making the pipeline easier to scale, repeat, and improve.

4

Documentation and Resource Hubs

At scale, good ideas are not enough. Teams need shared knowledge, clear references, and accessible history. Documentation helps preserve design intent, support onboarding, track decisions, and keep level batches consistent across multiple designers and feedback rounds.



THE METHOD / ALIGNMENT + PLAYER SATISFACTION

5

Alignment with Partner Vision

Every partner has a different product vision, audience, design philosophy, and definition of quality. Our job is to understand that vision quickly and translate it into level content that feels right for the game. We stay aligned through regular reviews, shared documentation, fast feedback loops, and close collaboration with partner designers, QA, and leads.



→ **Player behavior monitoring:** We look at completion rates, retries, progression, and community feedback from channels such as forums, Discord, YouTube, and reviews to understand how players experience the content.

→ **Balancing challenge and pacing:** We tune levels to create fair difficulty, readable mechanics, satisfying progression, and emotional peaks at the right moments.

Player-focused design supports stronger engagement, healthier progression, and content that keeps people coming back.



→ **Understanding and adherence to guidelines:** We study partner rules, tuning parameters, difficulty expectations, mechanic constraints, and design principles to keep content consistent with the game.

→ **Rapid feedback integration:** We collect, document, and apply partner feedback quickly so design decisions stay aligned across teams and delivery cycles.

→ **Shared work sessions:** Collaborative reviews help validate design intent early, catch issues before they grow, and make sure content supports the intended player experience.

→ **Alignment callout:** Strong alignment keeps content recognizable, reliable, and true to the game, while still leaving room for fresh ideas.

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Player Satisfaction

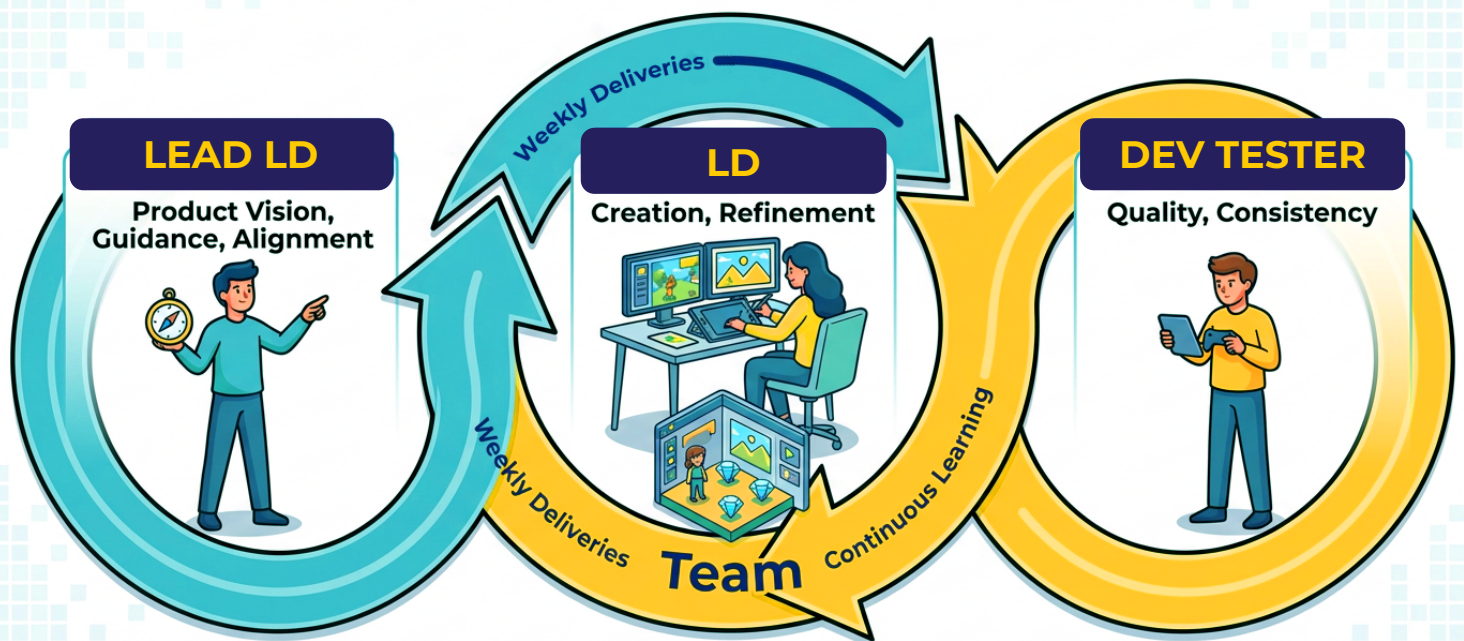
At the end of every pipeline, chart, review, and tuning pass is the same question: will this feel good to play? For puzzle and casual games, player satisfaction depends on clarity, fairness, pacing, challenge, and reward. Levels should make players think, experiment, retry, and progress without feeling lost or unfairly blocked.



THE KEY LEVEL DESIGN TEAM MEMBERS

A **clear division of responsibilities** drives efficiency, consistency, and high-quality content. Each role in our level design teams supports both **creative and operational aspects of level design**, enabling a smooth, collaborative workflow and allowing teams to work autonomously.

THE LEVEL DESIGN TEAM



The Lead Level Designer

Lead level designers ensure quality, guide the team, and maintain alignment with stakeholders. Their responsibilities as team leaders include:

- Setting quality standards: They define expectations for difficulty, pacing, clarity, and production processes to maintain consistency, in collaboration with our partners.
- Managing team and workflow: They oversee team alignment by coordinating tasks, prioritizing work, reviewing output, and keeping deliveries on schedule.
- Aligning with partners: They serve as the main point of contact for our partners, communicating openly to meet goals, address constraints, and uphold gameplay standards.
- Training and enabling autonomy: They mentor level designers to develop skills and work independently within the pipeline.
- Tracking processes with tools: Lead Level Designers create and use Beat-Charts, documentation, and workflow platforms to monitor progress, iterations, and pacing.

Lead designers anchor the team, ensuring efficiency, creative cohesion, and a strong bridge to external partners.

THE KEY LEVEL DESIGN TEAM MEMBERS



The Level Designer

Our Level Designers drive the creation and refinement of playable content. They focus on:

- Creating and tuning levels: Designing levels from concept to final submission, ensuring balanced difficulty, engaging pacing, and alignment with gameplay.
- Maintaining quality standards: Level Designers apply project guidelines and best practices to keep content polished and consistent with partner expectations.
- Tracking work and supporting research: They document progress, analyze references, research mechanics and competitors, and maintain documentation resources.
- Supporting onboarding: They help new team members integrate by sharing documentation, examples, and workflow guidance.
- Executing project vision: Level Designers interpret partner goals and design philosophies with the support of the team leader, to ensure each level fits cohesively within the broader experience.

Level designers are the creative backbone, turning vision and research into high-quality, player-focused content.

The Development Tester

The development tester ensures the quality and stability of all content before release. Their responsibilities include:



- Ensuring content correctness: The Development Testers playtest content and verify that levels function as intended, follow project rules, and reflect the desired vision.
- Validating difficulty and pacing: They playtest levels to ensure fairness, engagement, and consistency with player experience.
- Providing playtest feedback: They offer qualitative insights to help designers fine-tune content for KPIs and gameplay goals.

A strong QA presence ensures every content iteration aligns with the product vision and is ready for players.

CONCLUSION



- Our Level Design partnership model shows that long-term collaboration thrives when structure, communication, and adaptability work together. By establishing clear processes, aligning with partner vision, and refining methods through data, iteration, and feedback, we create a production environment that is both efficient and creatively empowering.
- This approach allows us to support partners at scale, delivering high-quality, live-ready content regularly while remaining flexible to new mechanics, shifting priorities, and player expectations. Through disciplined research, methodical design, transparent communication, and rigorous QA, we ensure every level enhances the overall player experience.
- Ultimately, success comes from strong partnerships. Shared vision, trust, and responsibility enable teams to build sustainable collaboration frameworks, deliver long-term value, and craft experiences that resonate with players.

AMBER

AMBER is an international, preferred game development partner specializing in a diverse range of platforms and genres.

We are evolving the art and science of play by operating on a scaled-up, vertically integrated organizational model to achieve mastery in the full set of game development specializations.

Our global network of multidisciplinary studios functions like an integrated hub, offering a full range of turn-key product development solutions, including concept-to-delivery game production, live operations, co-development, art production, and support services such as QA or localization.

We have deep expertise in product development, cross-platform deployment, parallel launch strategies, user experience optimization, free-to-play monetization systems, data science, live operations, and more.

Contact us

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