

MIKE BRANDON OTHINO

Full-Stack Engineer

Nairobi, Kenya (remote) · +254 799926345 · bkb.braock@gmail.com · mikebrandon.xyz · github.com/MikeBrandon

Full-stack engineer with 5 years shipping production platforms end-to-end. Led the frontend of Pudgy Penguins' Pudgy World (a consumer web3 brand with \$400M+ lifetime sales), then built and led video, spatial-computing, and competitive-gaming platforms in Go, TypeScript, and Rust. Founding engineer of the backend that ran Play Arcade's EVO Japan 2026 booth. Strong in realtime systems (WebRTC, WebSockets), video pipelines (FFmpeg, HLS/DASH, Pixel Streaming), self-hosted AI infrastructure, and GCP.

EXPERIENCE

Agana Studios · Full-Stack Engineer, Contract

2026 – present · remote

Game-platform studio behind Play Arcade and rTracer; lead engineer on the projects below.

Play Arcade: a competitive-gaming platform for physical arcade/esports events, giving any game drop-in matchmaking, networking, ratings, and replays, plus on-site event operations. *Lead engineer for the platform's founding phase.*

- Designed and built the entire initial backend as a modular Go monolith (12 domain packages; chi, pgx/sqlc, Redis) on GCP Cloud Run with private-IP Cloud SQL and cost-controlled provision/pause automation (~\$2–5/mo idle).
- Built the online-play core: JWT auth with refresh rotation and reuse detection, magic-link plus Google/Discord OAuth, WebSocket WebRTC signaling with coturn TURN (per-session HMAC credentials), skill-based matchmaking, and a race-safe match lifecycle (first-report-wins under row locking).
- Implemented Glicko-2 ratings on a Redis pub/sub event bus, hybrid leaderboards (Redis ZSET hot path with Postgres snapshots), and a telemetry pipeline ingesting 12k events/min/player.
- Engineered anti-cheat and integrity systems: rollback-netcode desync detection via state hashes, severity-ranked cheat flagging, dispute/forfeit flows, and telemetry-derived match replays, proven in two reference Godot games I authored (deterministic fixed-point simulation, rollback netcode, commit-reveal anti-cheat).
- Sole author of the Tauri 2 (Rust) booth companion (a single FFmpeg invocation producing both MP4 replays and rolling HLS live streams, per-controller Win32 RawInput telemetry, QR pairing) and of the TypeScript bridge SDK that integrates any web or Godot game in one script tag.
- The platform ran the EVO Japan 2026 booth: 4 stations, 200+ on-site player registrations, with the live online tournament and companion capture running end-to-end.

rTracer: a racing-game platform, in development.

- Owned architecture and infrastructure through the game-to-platform transition; built a UE 5.8 Pixel Streaming cloud platform: GCP GPU VMs with managed-instance-group autoscaling, a session broker allocating per-user game instances behind auth, and latency/FPS benchmarks.
- Onboarded developers onto the team's self-hosted Forgejo workflow and trained designers on AI-assisted frontend development.

Gradient Rising · Full-Stack Engineer → Tech Lead

2025 – 2026 · remote

Ascents Dialog: a video-collaboration and team-operations platform (Go 1.24/Gin, React 19/TypeScript, LiveKit), in production at dialog.hereandmore.com. Project lead and top contributor (500+ of ~1,400 commits). *Project continued under Agana Studios through 2026.*

- Hardened a fault-tolerant video pipeline (FFmpeg/SVT-AV1 and Google Cloud Transcoder multi-rendition encoding with CMAF-packaged HLS/DASH adaptive streaming), adding an H.264 path that fixed iOS playback, checkpointed transcode jobs with orphan recovery, and storage quotas across S3/GCS/local backends.
- Cut AI costs by migrating captioning and summaries from OpenAI to a self-hosted GPU stack: vLLM with Qwen on GCP A100/L4 VMs behind an OpenAI-compatible gateway, faster-whisper live captions with speaker attribution, and map-reduce summarization for meetings over 4 hours.
- Built and shipped v1.0 of the Tauri 2 (Rust) desktop companion: device-code pairing, telemetry with pre-upload redaction, reflection recording with resilient multipart uploads, and a self-updating NSIS release pipeline.
- Delivered a full team-operations suite in one month (payroll/compliance dashboards, invoices, bonuses, leave, and a contract wizard with live DOCX/PDF preview), plus per-team custom RBAC, passkey (WebAuthn) auth, and 2FA.
- Operated the 9-container production stack on GCP (Caddy L4 SNI routing, LiveKit SFU with Egress, coturn, Postgres, Redis) with IAP-tunneled zero-exposure deploys.

Ascents Compass: a geo-anchored 3D-capture platform where real-world "Spaces" hold Gaussian-splat scans with sharing, privacy, and geo-search. *Tech lead, Jul–Nov 2025.*

- Led frontend and API work across the v3 frontend migration, sharing/privacy and contacts systems, splat metadata services, a WebSocket job-progress service with reconnect/backoff, and the migration to Google Cloud Storage and Cloud Run.

Agency/product studio; long-running client engagements including The Arcadia Group and Pudgy Penguins.

Pudgy World (*Frontend Lead, Dec 2022 – Sep 2023*): a multiplayer virtual world on zkSync Era for Pudgy Penguins (\$400M+ lifetime brand sales).

- Led the frontend (top contributor with ~46% of all project commits, team of 10–20): built the UI and animation system from scratch in SvelteKit, the menu-to-minigame flows, and the Three.js penguin scene with live character customization (outfit changes in-scene).
- The foundation shipped into the brand's Walmart moment: Pudgy Toys in 2,000 US stores, with each toy's QR "birth certificate" onboarding buyers into Pudgy World to claim soulbound "Forever Pudgy" traits.

Casper blockchain explorer (*Jul–Oct 2022; public code: github.com/TheArcadiaGroup/casper-trench*)

- Primary frontend developer (423 of 753 commits, #1 contributor): built the block, transaction, contract, validator, and delegator pages, Chart.js dashboards including sankey diagrams, reusable pagination and sorting primitives, and dedicated mobile versions of every major page.

DashPro: a DeFi trading dashboard (Solana and EVM token screener with wallet tracking; Sep–Nov 2024)

- Top committer for the engagement: built the interactive product-onboarding tour from scratch (spotlight overlay, route-aware steps, server-persisted progress), integrated the TradingView charting library, and implemented end-to-end dark mode plus watchlist and portfolio features.

Also: rebuilt The Arcadia Group's marketing site solo in 5 days (Next.js 15/React 19, Rive state-machine animations, Framer Motion scroll choreography; Jan 2025). Returned in 2026 to migrate HERE, a real-time spatial-collaboration platform, from Fly.io to GCP (Docker Compose, nginx TLS, private-IP Cloud SQL) and to harden its Gaussian-splat viewing pipeline (pre-signed GCS URLs, FFmpeg tee-muxer streaming, stale-job auto-recovery).

Independent Contract Work · Full-Stack Developer, web3

2024 · remote

- Sole developer of a token-launch and discovery platform MVP for a client's EVM Layer-2 network: Next.js 14 frontend, Express/MongoDB backend, wallet-signature authentication (nonce challenge, signed-message verification, JWT refresh flow), Socket.IO real-time launch and trade feeds, and wagmi v2/viem/Web3Modal, delivered as a documented pnpm monorepo in a one-week sprint.
- Built the complete presale site for a web3 gaming product solo in 6 days: SvelteKit and Tailwind, a custom animation-heavy component library, live raise counter and countdown, mobile-first.
- Production-hardening on a Uniswap-style DEX on Nibiru Chain: a QA sweep across swap and liquidity flows, and migration of the wallet layer from Web3Modal to Reown AppKit.

SELECTED PROJECTS

- **zukai**: a creator-monetization platform for the Kenyan market (in development). Next.js 16, Go/Gin, PostgreSQL; Paystack subscriptions with M-Pesa and cards; tips, digital products with signed-URL delivery, membership tiers; OBS live-stream donation alerts and widgets.
- **jetstream-transfer** (open source): zero-config LAN file transfer for Windows in Rust/Tauri. Resumable QUIC + TLS 1.3 transfers with BLAKE3 verification and a QR-code browser receiver.
- **Discord platform suite** for an ~80k-member gaming community: four TypeScript bots (AutoMod escalation and raid detection with in-process image moderation, XP/leveling, welcome/announce, temp voice channels) plus a Next.js 15 admin dashboard (Drizzle, Postgres, Discord OAuth).
- **Watu Wa Gaming**: lead developer for the East-Africa gaming community. Next.js + Supabase community platform with an awards system; configurable community Discord bot with web dashboard.

SKILLS

Languages: TypeScript/JavaScript, Go, Rust, Python, SQL, GDScript

Frontend: React/Next.js, Svelte/SvelteKit, Three.js, Tailwind, Framer Motion, Rive

Backend: Go (chi, Gin, pgx/sqlc, GORM), Node (Express, Fastify, Hono), PostgreSQL, Redis, MongoDB

Realtime & media: WebRTC (LiveKit, signaling/TURN), WebSockets/Socket.IO, FFmpeg pipelines, HLS/DASH (CMAF), UE5 Pixel Streaming

Cloud & DevOps: GCP (Cloud Run, Cloud SQL, GCS, Memorystore, IAP, GPU VMs), Docker, Terraform, CI/CD

AI: self-hosted LLM serving (vLLM/Qwen), Whisper/faster-whisper STT, LLM product features

Web3: wagmi/viem/ethers, wallet-signature auth, Solidity (basics)

EARLIER

Before engineering (2019–2020): founded ScorpioX Champions, a PUBG Mobile tournament league with official casters, and co-founded Rush Pro Scrims (a 3,500-member Discord with 50+ teams competing nightly). That tournament-operations background now powers the arcade and esports platform work.