

# THE VIDEO GAME & VFX INDUSTRY:

## STRATEGIES TO GET A JOB AT A TOP WORLDWIDE COMPANY

### LECTURER ....

#### VFX - ANIMATION - XBOX - PLAYSTATION

**BRENT J. ZORICH MA BSID**

**GLOBALLY PUBLISHED ■ LEAD RIGGER ■ ENTREPRENEUR**

BRENTZORICH.COM

BRENT@BRENTZORICH.COM

LINKEDIN.COM/IN/BRENTZORICH



AUTHOR OF BZP PRO 'SMART SKINNER' ANIMATION SOFTWARE  
COMPLETES 80 HOURS OF COMPLEX 'ILM' LEVEL RIGGING IN 10 MIN  
250 UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS ON 6 CONTINENTS  
**FEATURED IN THREE WORLDWIDE MAGAZINES**



-Presented to George Lucas  
-ILM Weekly Creature R & D  
-Best Practices Committee  
-Skywalker Ranch Alum  
-Executive Trainee

Steven Spielberg Project

-Co-Founder & CEO  
-Siggraph & GDC Booths  
-Negotiations with FORTUNE 100s About Acquisition of LLC



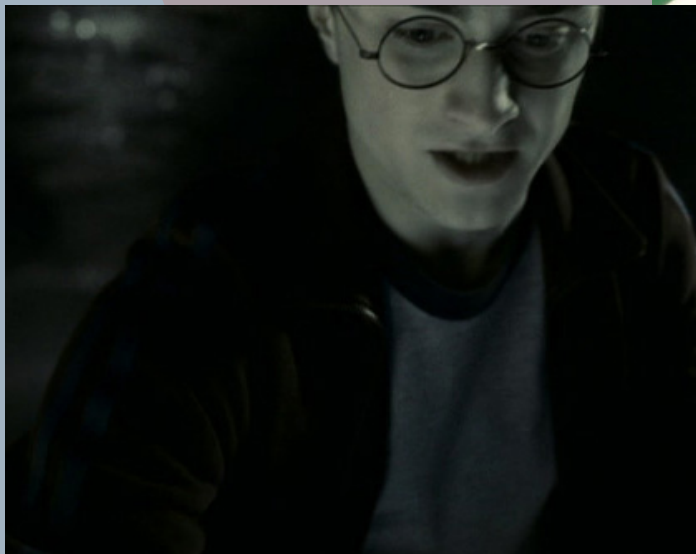
ARCHITECTURE FIRM  
RANKED #2  
WORLDWIDE

ARCHITECTURE FIRM  
RANKED #1  
WORLDWIDE



# VIDEO GAMES AND VFX:

## MY WORK



# INDUSTRY SALARIES:

## SALARIES BASED ON GLASSDOOR.COM

See more Walt Disney Company Salaries

### Senior Technical Director

1 employee salary in \$ (USD)



Base (1)

\$192,753

\$186K

\$200K

Total Compensation

\$XX,XXX

Anonymized Range

### Additional Compensation

Cash Bonus, Stock Bonus, Profit Sharing, Commission and Tips have not been reported for this role. Pay may vary based on location, years of experience, and/or other factors.

Updated September 15, 2007

See more Activision Salaries

### Technical Director

Avg. based on 3 employee reported salaries in \$ (USD)



Base (3)

\$194,606

\$176K

\$204K

\$223K

Total Pay (3)

\$235,952

\$2

### Senior Technical Director (Character Animation) in

1 employee salary in \$ (USD)



Base (1)

\$187,654

\$179K

\$196K

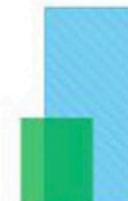
Total Compensation

\$XX,XXX

Anonymized Range

### Executive Producer

Avg. based on 5 employee reported salaries in \$ (USD)



Base (5)

\$205,989

\$195K

\$223K

\$223K

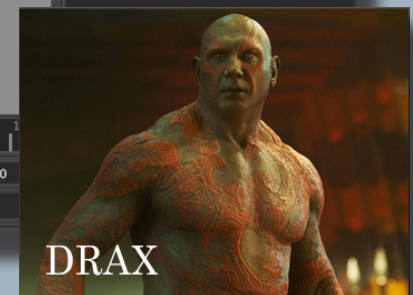
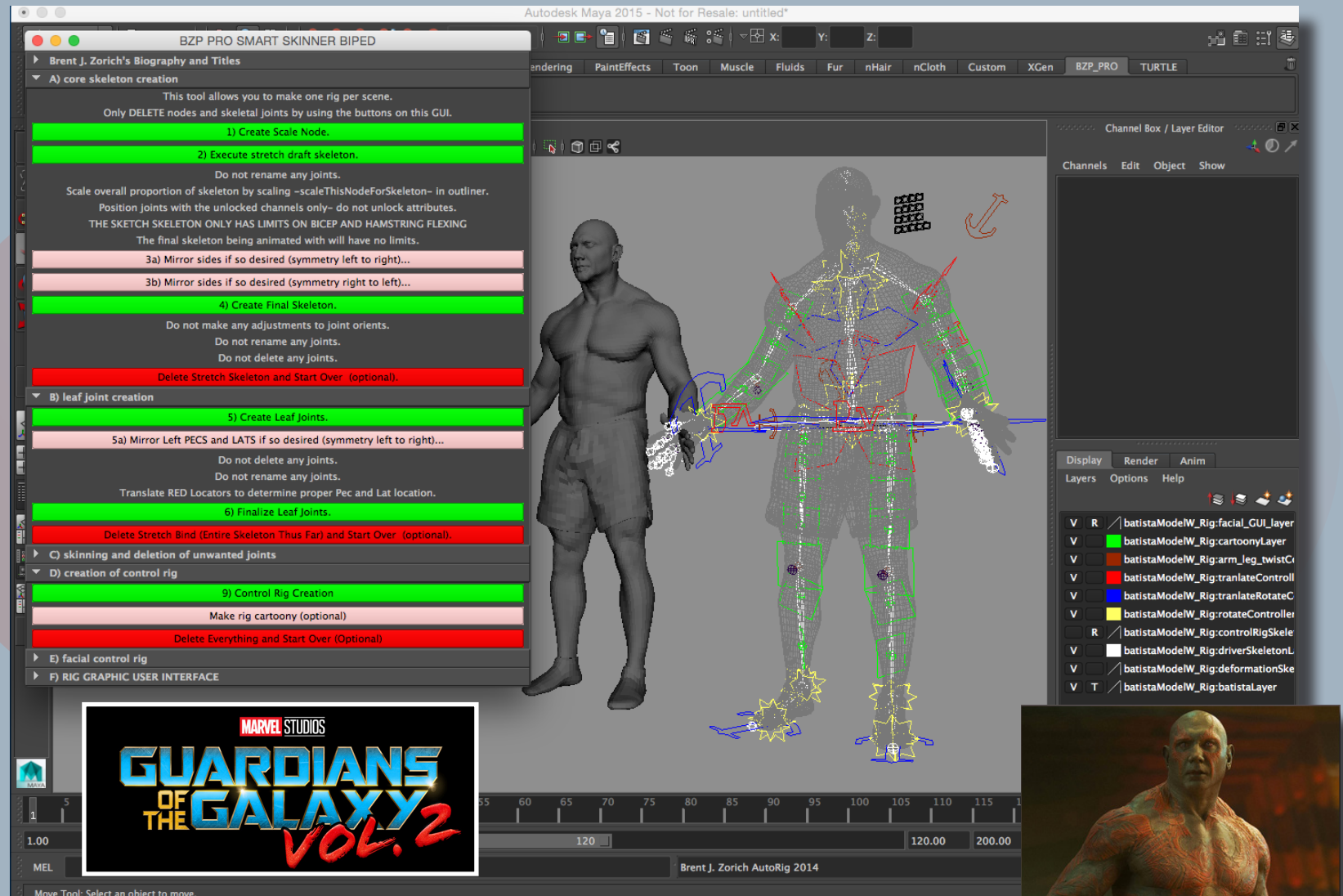
Total Pay (5)

\$476,004

\$989K

# RIGGING TD- WHAT I DO:

## SKELETAL STRUCTURES AND CONTROLS



SONY PICTURES RIGGING PROTOTYPING

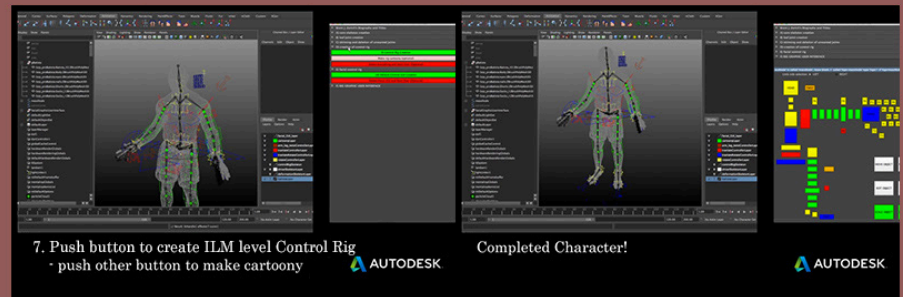
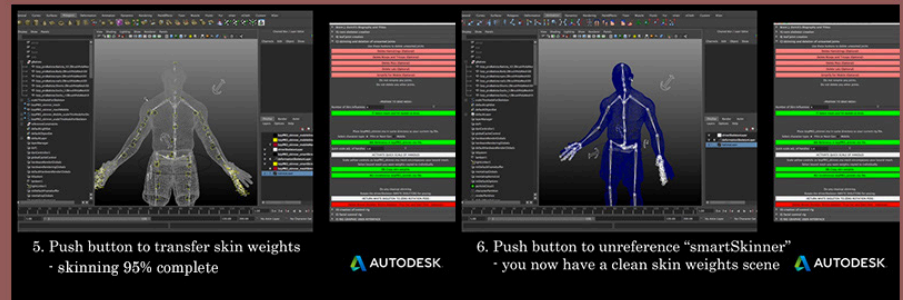
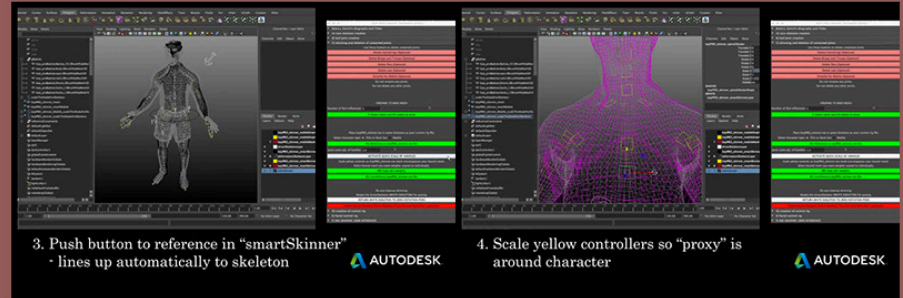
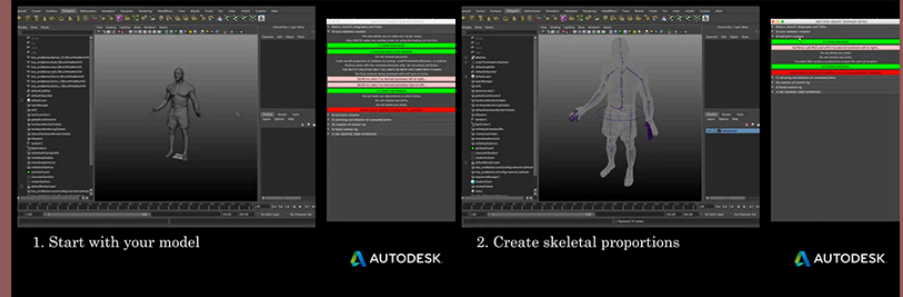
# MY COMPANY:



**BZP PRO**

Animation Software

- **80 HOURS OF RIGGING LABOR IN 15 MINUTES**
- **ENGAGED TO REV 1 VENTURES**
- **MENTORED BY HARVARD BUSINESS ANGELS CHICAGO**
- **THROUGH PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY 250 SCHOOLS ON 6 CONTINENTS RECEIVED PRODUCT**
- **COVER OF WORLDWIDE MAGAZINE**
- **UNDER ACQUISITION REVIEW 3 TIMES**



# WHAT'S WORKED FOR ME:

DUE TO THESE STRATEGIES I HAVE BEEN FEATURED IN THREE WORLDWIDE MAGAZINES AND WORKED AT THREE SEPARATE COMPANIES RANKED NUMBER 1 IN THREE SEPARATE INDUSTRIES WORLDWIDE.

**Gensler** ... #1 in Architecture

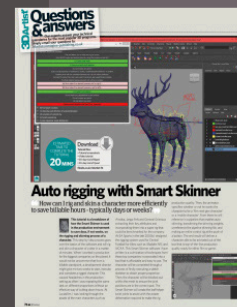


... #1 in Video Games



... #1 in Entertainment

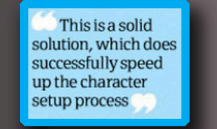
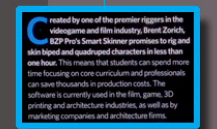
"WORLDWIDE COVER: EXPERT"



"WORLDWIDE TWO PAGE FEATURE"



"SOFTWARE INCLUDED ON WORLDWIDE MAGAZINE'S ACCOMPANYING DISC"



# YOUR PORTFOLIO WEBSITE:

- DON'T MAKE AN ART PIECE, MAKE IT VISUAL COMMUNICATION (NOTHING FANCY)
- MAJOR HIT POINTS ON HOME PAGE, DON'T MAKE THE CLIENT SEARCH FOR INFORMATION. START AT THE TOP AND SCROLL DOWN
- MOST PEOPLE WHEN BROWSING WILL NOT SPEND MORE THAN 2 MINUTES ON A SITE
- USE GOOGLE ANALYTICS TO SEE WHICH PAGES ARE GETTING THE MOST HITS AND ADJUST ACCORDINGLY

The screenshot shows a professional portfolio website for Brent J. Zorich. The top navigation bar includes 'History', 'Bookmarks', 'People', 'Window', and 'Help'. The main content area is a grid of work samples, including 'STAR WARS BOBA FETT', '250 UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS', 'BOBA FETT', 'JABBA THE HUTT', '3 WORLDWIDE MAGAZINES FEATURES', and 'SMART SKINNER RIGGING'. Below the grid, there are two lines of text: 'COFOUNDED A LLC WHERE 250 UNIVERSITIES ON 6 CONTINENTS HAVE MY RIGGING TECHNOLOGY' and 'THAT IS GREATER THAN FACEBOOK'S NUMBER PRE "SERIES A" INVESTMENT'. A prominent section titled 'DEMO REEL: APPROX 4 MINUTES' features a video player with a play button and a progress bar showing 04:06. To the right of the video player is a list of featured work items, including 'Star Wars The Force Unleashed II', 'Madden NFL', 'NCAA Football', 'NBA 2K', 'NFL Tour', 'Star Wars The Force Unleashed', 'Tiger Woods PGA', 'Superman Returns', 'Discovery Channel', 'Star Wars Clone Wars', 'Transformers Revenge of the Fallen', 'Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince', 'BZP SOFTWARE/ MODULAR RIGS', 'BZP PRO Smart Skinner Rigging Software', 'SONY PICTURES Prototyping', 'FBX Scene Optimizer for Unity and Unreal', 'Motion Capture Integration', 'Modular Proof of Concept Harry Potter 3', 'Animation Testing Auto Rigger', 'EXECUTIVE INFORMATION', 'Lucasfilm Best Practices Committee', 'Lucasfilm Exec Training', 'BZP PRO > FACEBOOK school penetration', 'BZP PRO booths at GDC & Siggraph', 'ARCHITECTURE', 'Volkswagen', and 'The Beijing Hotel'.

# YOUR RESUME:


- 1 PAGE FOR EVERY 10 YEARS


- NO MORE THAN 2 PAGES EVER!

- USE BULLET POINTS AND BE CONCISE

- THE "SO WHAT" CLAUSE

**BRENT J. ZORICH MA BSID** Globally Published Rigging Entrepreneur    [brent@brentzorich.com](mailto:brent@brentzorich.com)    [www.brentzorich.com](http://www.brentzorich.com)





**BZP PRO LLC (AUTODESK AUTH DEV)**    **CO-FOUNDER**    **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**    **2011-Current**

**SMART SKINNER RIBBED/ QUADRIPOD SOFTWARE**  
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**MASTERS OF ARTS**    **ACCAD AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**    **2001-04, 2010-11**

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**INTERACTIVE**    **CHARACTER TECHNICAL DIRECTOR**    **2006**

**"NEA ZX8"**  
 (shoulder deformation tweaking, character technical construction)  
 (character technical construction research and development- tested on data of Shaquille O'Neal)

**OUTREACH PROGRAM**    **PARTICIPANT**    **2005**

**URES (THE DISCOVERY CHANNEL)**    **CHARACTER TECHNICAL DIRECTOR/ ANIMATOR/ COMPOSITOR**    **2003-2005**

**PT"**  
 (rigging, animating, and compositing of photoreal dinosaurs for national television "Walking With Dinosaurs Pt.2")

**ECTURE FIRM RANKED #1 WORLDWIDE)**    **INTERIOR ARCHITECT: AUDI, VOLKSWAGEN, LINCOLN MERCURY, GTE, SOLOMON SMITH BARNY**    **1999-2001**

**Salary increased during employment.**  
 graduate school at ACCAD at The Ohio State University by a partner in the firm.  
 (as part of firm training on Industrial Design, Retail, and Brand)  
 (work ability, down between Atlanta and Charlotte studios to handle market rendering)  
 (rigs and construction documentation of both interior and landscape architecture for Fortune 100 clients)

**RE FIRM RANKED #2 WORLDWIDE)**    **POST GRADUATE INTERN: THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA**    **1998-1999**

**SCIENCE**    **Maya (Master Level of experience), Motion Builder, MEL, Python, Photoshop, ZEN0 (ILM's software), After Effects, Final Cut, VIZML, Pixar's Renderman, Slim, HTML, C++, HIK customization and automation for Motion Capture**

- BSID: Bachelor of Science Industrial Design at The Ohio State University: 1998 - Senior Thesis Client: NIKE - Product Invention and CEO Pitch: REEBOK
- MA: Masters of Arts at the Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design (ACCAD) at The Ohio State University: 2011

- Undergraduate Industrial Design Department Chairperson's Recipient Scholarship for being The Ohio State Design Student Body President
- Initiated as a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity
- Selected to be included in several "Who's Who" annual books showcasing top talent in the United States of America

**garthpalmer.co**

**Harry Potter Resume - Caretakerpalmer.co**

**Free Resume**


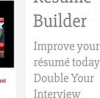

**my Digital resume**

**Harry Potter Resume**

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COFOUNDED AND CEO'D A LLC THAT HAS BEEN FEATURED IN THREE WORLDWIDE MAGAZINES: COVER STORY

- 3D ARTIST MAGAZINE ISSUE 10: "Brent Zorich Worldwide Industry Insider at Lucasfilm"
- 3D ARTIST MAGAZINE ISSUE 66: "Worldwide Industry Product Review for BZP PRO": Software Disc Included in Magazine
- 3D ARTIST MAGAZINE ISSUE 76: "Cover Story of Worldwide Magazine for BZP PRO": Software Disc Included in Magazine

COFOUNDED AND CEO'D A LLC THAT HAS GUEST LECTURED AT OVER FORTY UNIVERSITIES: THE TOPIC WAS CHARACTER TECHNICAL CONSTRUCTION

SCHOOLS LECTURED INCLUDE: USF, SAN JOSE STATE, SHERIDAN, NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY, DEPAUL, LIND CHAPEL HILL AND CCAD

COFOUNDED AND CEO'D A LLC THAT HAD BOOTH REPRESENTATION AT THE TWO BIGGEST CONFERENCES IN ENTERTAINMENT: SIGGRAPH '13 - GDC '14



# YOUR BUSINESS CARDS:

- SEC  
SIMPLE - ELEGANT - CONCISE
- USE EMAIL, NOT CELL:  
SET AN APPOINTMENT  
VIA EMAIL THEN TALK
- CONFERENCES:  
“DUMPING A  
CONFERENCE BAG  
WITH 200 CARDS,  
THEY WILL NOT  
REMEMBER YOU”:  
CREDENTIALS ON  
BACK OF CARD
- ADD LINKEDIN
- USE A THICKER MATTE  
CARD

VFX - ANIMATION - XBOX - PLAYSTATION

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**nbbj Gensler**

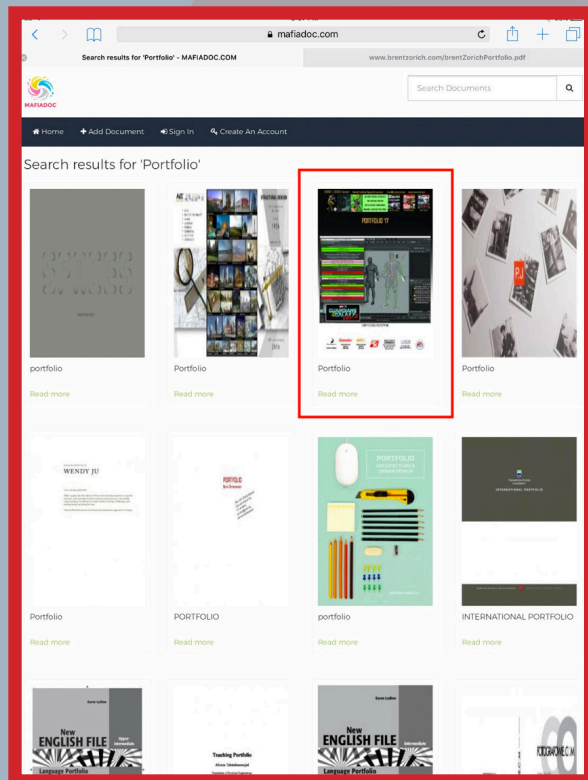
ARCHITECTURE FIRM  
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WORLDWIDE

ARCHITECTURE FIRM  
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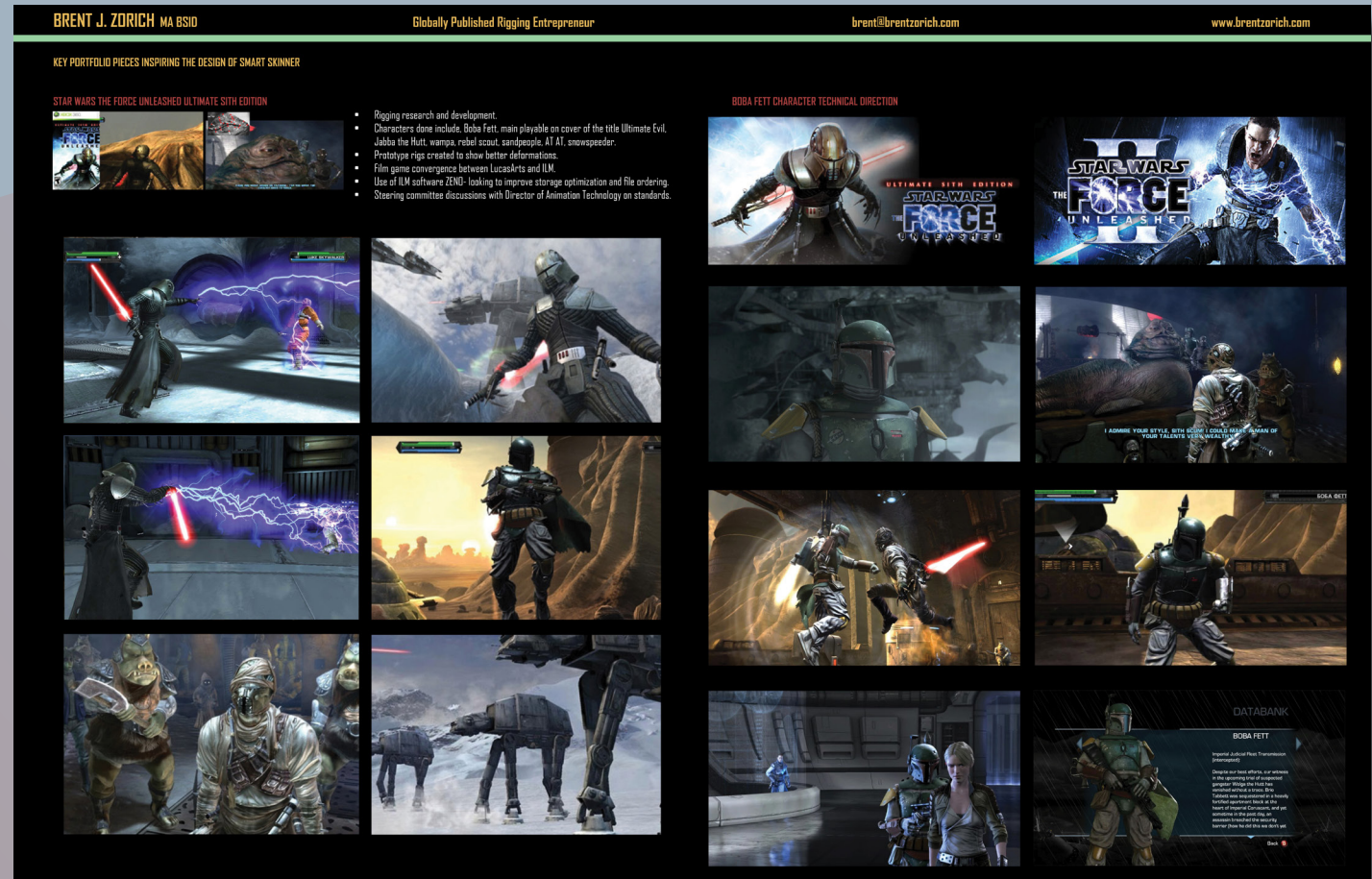


# YOUR PORTFOLIO PDF:

- SEC  
SIMPLE - ELEGANT - CONCISE
- USE AN  
IMAGINARY BORDER
- CONSISTANT LAYOUT  
DESIGN



My portfolio has been used as a template by a professional company



# YOUR PORTFOLIO PDF:

## CHANGING LAYOUTS IN THE SAME PORTFOLIO: DIFFERENT SECTIONS

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KEY PORTFOLIO PIECES INSPIRING THE DESIGN OF SMART OWNERS

BZP PRO AT DREAMWORKS

-THE SMART SKINNER-

BZP PRO      NO GAMES. JUST RIGS. DEADLINES WILL FEAR YOU.      AUTODESK

SONY PICTURES SYMMETRICAL RIGGING PROTOTYPING

240 HOURS OF RIGGING COMPLETED IN 70 MINUTES WITH BZP PRO SOFTWARE

# YOUR DEMO REEL:

- OUT OF SCHOOL 1 MINUTE
- BEST WORK FIRST
- FOR PROFESSIONALS NO MORE THAN 4 MINUTES
- THEY'LL WATCH FIRST 20 SECONDS, IF LIKE WHAT THEY SEE THEY'LL KEEP WATCHING
- COMPARE YOUR WORK TO PROFESSIONAL WORK ALWAYS



# BUCKBEAK RULE:

AS I SAID IN A WORLDWIDE MAGAZINE:  
LET PROFESSIONAL STUDIOS SET YOUR STANDARD

## workspace<sup>3D</sup> Interview

Inside guide to industry news, studios, expert opinion & education

Industry insider  
**Brent Zorich**  
Character technical director,  
Lucasfilm

Each issue, 3D Artist finds out how the top people in the 3D industry got their jobs and what you need to know to get a foot in the door

### About the insider

**Job** Character technical director/lead rigger  
**Education** Masters's of Fine Art at ACCAD at The Ohio State University  
**Company website** www.lucasfilm.com  
**Personal website** www.brentzorich.com  
**Biography** Prior to immersing myself in the animation industry, I had worked for the top two architectural firms in the world. I pride myself on trying to be on a team that does the best work, no matter what project. I push technology as far as I can on whatever team I am affiliated with

**T**here are few people in the 3D industry who can claim to have worked on bestselling EA games titles one year and hung out at Skywalker Ranch with Lucasfilm the next, but Brent Zorich is a man who can. Zorich was part of a steering committee meeting for Lucasfilm on film/game convergence. In addition, he was lead rigger on *The Force Unleashed: Ultimate Sith Edition*. On this title, he was working in the LucasArts division, looking at pipeline and storage optimisation and lead rigging on such characters as Jabba the Hutt and Boba Fett. Zorich was also dealing with convergence on all divisions from Lucasfilm to LucasArts, Lucasfilm Animation, Industrial Light & Magic and Lucasfilm Animation Singapore.

**3D Artist:** What did this role of working on convergence mean in practice?  
**Brent Zorich:** As a part of the senior staff, I wrote proposals to help set the direction for Lucasfilm Ltd as a company. In Singapore, not only was I part of research and development prior to my promotion and relocation to the home office in San Francisco, I

also worked on colour correction and compositing for *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*.

**3DA:** How did you get this job?

**BZ:** I applied online and was hired after Lucasfilm Animation Singapore saw the great work I did on EA Sports' football franchise.

**3DA:** What kind of course did you do at university, or training did you do?

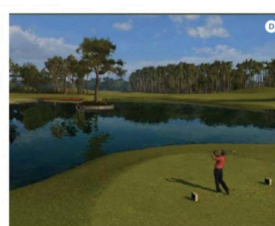
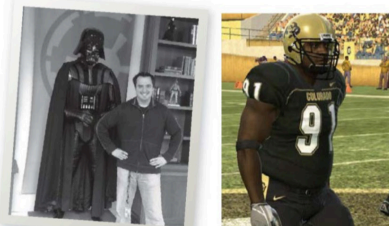
**BZ:** At ACCAD at the Ohio State University, I did extensive research on the following topics: VRML; procedural animation; Pixar's RenderMan; motion capture. I also researched Wayfinding in real-time simulation (the subject analysed and improved upon was the game *Spider-Man The Movie*).

First of all, the Wayfinding tool was created out of VRML and theories worked on with an eminent scholar. I also studied the enhancement of realism in computer animation through the incorporation of biomechanics and fatigue (the subject analysed was *Shrek*). Next, I looked at rigging of prehistoric animals with my project-based thesis *Mystery Dinosaur* work. Finally, I looked at creatures evolving based on the ecosystem around them. Classes were also taken in digital still-life lighting and theatre lighting.

**3DA:** For today's generation of students, what is the kind of educational grounding they should be looking to undertake to get a first job as a character animator, or is the entry level a less specific role?

**BZ:** This is the way that I do it. I have a television next to my monitor. I watch *Harry Potter* and *The Prisoner of Azkaban* (the Buckbeak scene). If I am embarrassed to look at what is on my monitor then I'm not done, plain and simple. I am my own toughest critic and I have zero tolerance.

**3DA:** In your role as associate technical artist or lead



**BZ:** I needed a complete understanding of physiology of humans built for strength and speed. Because I was an athletic trainer who trained football players, it came to me naturally. I know how they run and I know how they get prepared for collision. Often, because I have a football player's body, I would go into the washroom at EA where there was a mirror, take off my shirt and flex both my traps and my arms to see the proper deformation. This is how I got into character and what made it so easy is that the character I was getting into was myself!

**3DA:** Is there much of a culture or professional working practice difference between working for someone like EA and a company like Lucasfilm?

**BZ:** You are who your team is. Lucasfilm, as a company, is a natural fit for me. We both have zero tolerance when it comes to the quality of our work. We push the absolute limitation of technology in every way, shape and form. Because we are not on yearly titles, we have the ability to push back a launch date to guarantee that we are doing our best to break new ground.

**3DA:** What software packages and tools have you used for rigging and animation?

**BZ:** I use Maya, the proprietary software to Industrial Light & Magic, and After Effects and HyperCam for documentation.

**3DA:** Do you think there is a shortage of skilled digital artists doing animation and did you find it difficult getting into the industry?

- Tiger Woods PGA Tour 09
- Character work on NFL Tour
- Indiana Jones and the Staff of Kings
- Artwork from SW: TFU Ultimate Sith edition
- College Hoops 2K7
- The Ultimate Edition in full



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### Portfolio highlights

Zorich has worked on a host of videogames over the years. Feast on these...








- 2008-9 *Star Wars: The Force Unleashed, Ultimate Sith Edition*
- 2008-9 *Indiana Jones and the Staff of Kings*
- 2008 *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*
- 2008 *EA Sports MMA*
- 2007-8 *NFL Tour*
- 2007-8 *NFL Head Coach 09*
- 2007-8 *NCAA Football 09*
- 2007-8 *Madden NFL 09*

- 2007 *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 09*
- 2007 *Madden NFL 08*
- 2007 *NCAA Football 08*
- 2007 *College Hoops 2K8*
- 2007 *NBA 2K8*
- 2006 *College Hoops 2K7*
- 2005 *Superman Returns: The Videogame*
- 2003-8 *The Mystery Dinosaur for The Discovery Channel*



- Character rigging on SW Force Unleashed
- Brent at Lucasfilm Animation
- NCAA college football from EA

# CONSULTING STRATEGY:

 <b>Software Engineer II</b> Imageworks n/a	1 salary	<b>Senior Technical Director (Character Animation) in</b> 1 employee salary in \$ (USD)  <b>Base (1)</b> <b>\$187,654</b> \$179K \$196K Total Compensation \$xx,xxx \$xx,xxx Anonymized Range
 <b>Digital Character Designer</b> Imageworks n/a	1 salary	
 <b>Intermediate Technical Director</b> Imageworks n/a	1 salary	
 <b>Senior Technical Director (Character Animation)</b> Imageworks n/a	1 salary	
 <b>Graphic Designer</b> Imageworks n/a	1 salary	
 <b>Technical Lead</b> Imageworks	1 salary	

- SALARY FOR TITLE ON GLASS DOOR / 40 HOUR WEEK / 52 WEEKS IN YEAR + (.25 SALARY)
- \$188K / 40 HOUR WEEK / 52 WEEKS IN A YEAR = \$90 PER HOUR
- \$90 PER HOUR + (.25 X \$90 PER HOUR- FOR FREELANCE) = \$110.00 PER HOUR

**SHOW WEBSITE:**

**[WWW.BRENTZORICH.COM](http://WWW.BRENTZORICH.COM)**

# QUESTIONS:

