

Hawaii-Based Company Cloud Pacific Slayed the Quarantine Slump by Building a Dungeon-Crawler Video Game in Salesforce



Desperate Looter

Health: 2
Strength: 2



Salesforce Slayer

Health: 10
Strength: 5
Energy: 10

Desperate Looter attacks but misses you.

Basic Attack

Energy Attack

Food: 10/10
Water: 8.5/10
Health: 10/10



Hawaii, Honolulu, Jun 15, 2021 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Most people think of Hawaii as a vacation destination. The name evokes visions of sun-bleached sand, sparkling waves, and torchlit luaus.

However, Paul Karaffa, who founded his rapidly growing Salesforce firm Cloud Pacific in Hawaii in 2018, had a different perspective: He saw Aloha State's potential for innovative software development. While tourists sipped umbrella drinks and nursed sunburns, Paul was awake toiling over his keyboard at 2 AM, trying to put Cloud Pacific's Salesforce-exclusive strategies on the map.

In 2020, Paul's work seemed to be paying off. The company had grown from a one-man operation to a team of ten people serving a growing suite of clients. Then COVID-19 arrived, and for a moment, it looked like it could spell "Game Over" for all the firm's progress.

"That period was really concerning," Paul said, recalling the early stages of the pandemic. "We lost three clients in two weeks. A full third of our revenue. The work dried up and everyone feared for their jobs. Nobody knew what was next. Morale was at an all-time low.

"Paul's solution arose from his love of video games, and his unconventional perspective. "I thought, what if we use this time to do something outside the box with Salesforce? How far could we push it if we really tested the flexibility and potential of the platform?"

Out of these questions, and out of the versatile app-building capabilities of Salesforce, blockZero was born.

A retro throwback to the "Dungeon Crawler" genre of adventure games that brought Dungeons-&-Dragons-style RPG gameplay into the digital sphere during the 90s, blockZero feels uniquely modern in its concept.

Opening the game introduces players to a fully automated dystopia scored by eerie synths. After assigning your character ability attributes (and giving them an appropriately Blade Runner-esque name), you are introduced to the metropolis of "New Francisco"-where "Artificial General Intelligence" has merged with humanity. You learn that your character is a cyborg tasked with locating a legendary one million Bitcoin fortune and that this treasure was hidden by the mysterious real-life cryptocurrency creator -Satoshi Nakamoto.

Like the classic games of its style, blockZero unfolds through mostly textual and numerical interactions, with gameplay consisting of navigating gridded maps represented by a series of flowy, colourful stills. Players must manage their food and water intake, keep an eye on their health points, gather clues and keys, purchase more powerful weapons, and slay a rogue's gallery of sci-fi enemies big and small.

Once immersed in the story and mechanics of the game, it's easy to forget that it exists entirely on Salesforce -a platform designed for customer relationship management, not smashing hostile Nanobots with your metal fists.

Cloud Pacific's subversion and expansion of what is possible using Salesforce's extremely flexible app development features caught the attention of Reddit users who discovered the game, drawing thousands of players into the world of blockZero.

"This was a fun exercise, and it's amazing that so many people got to enjoy the game," Paul said about blockZero's success, "but Salesforce isn't a gaming platform, and it's never going to be! We weren't delusional enough to think we were going to turn a CRM into an Xbox. Creating blockZero was

something we wanted to do for the public, and for ourselves during the downtime, COVID forced on us. Our goals were to show people what's possible within Salesforce, to create something unique that nobody had ever done before, and to showcase Hawaii developers. I think we accomplished all of those goals. Plus, on top of everything else, doing this raised morale during a really difficult time for our company.”

With blockZerobuilt and pandemic restrictions loosening, Paul is optimistic about Cloud Pacific's future as a Salesforce development firm. “We really showed people that if it can be done in Salesforce, we're the team to do it.”The Cloud Pacific team has now expanded to nearly twenty people, and as the company doubles in size, it is doubling down on its mission to empower Hawaii companies to compete worldwide. Cloud Pacific visualizes a world where Hawaii is an epicentre for technology and innovation, and Paul has shown that he is dedicated to investing in the community by hiring and cultivating new talent locally whenever possible.

When asked if what Cloud Pacific accomplished with blockZero could be applied to other sectors or industries, Paul laughed and bluntly answered “No.”

After a moment of reflection, though, he did add that “The lesson from this isn't that more companies should be making video games. If the industry can learn anything from this, it's to take care of your people. Get creative. Prioritize morale. When things get hard, that's not the time to lay everyone off. That's the time to come together. Use that time. Innovate. Fight through the dungeon together and slay the dragon. That's what matters.”

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Source : Cloud Pacific

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