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San Jose del Monte, Bulacan*

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN
ENTERTAINMENT AND MULTIMEDIA COMPUTING

Planetfall: Bastion of Genesis A 2D Top-down Sci-fi Fantasy Survival Strategy PC Game

A Capstone Project Proposal

by

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I.   PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT BACKGROUND

This project focuses on creating a Survival-Strategy game that emphasizes simplified controls and an improved tutorial system. This study tackles steep learning curves in Survival-Strategy games by introducing simplified mechanics and an interactive tutorial that make gameplay easily playable by new players while maintaining strategic depth for advanced players with its progressive difficulty. Survival-strategy games combine resource management and long-term planning with the challenge of survival in hostile environments. While engaging, many suffer from steep learning curves due to complex mechanics and limited tutorials, discouraging new players (Chen, 2021). Previous studies highlight the importance of accessibility and effective onboarding, demonstrating that conventional methods like text-heavy instructions often fail due to cognitive overload (Luna, 2025), while detached, simplistic tutorials can lead to higher player drop-out (Benvenuti et al., 2023).

REASON(s) / JUSTIFICATION(s) IN CHOOSING THE PROJECT:

We chose **Planetfall: Bastion of Genesis** because it provides a unique opportunity to merge **strategy and survival** in a way that highlights both creativity and technical skills. Unlike traditional base-building or tower defense games, it introduces a **pollution-hostility system** that ties gameplay progression directly to moral and environmental consequences. This creates a meaningful player experience where survival and progress always come with a cost.
To cater not only to experienced players, but also to new and beginner players of the genre.
This inherent complexity, however, presents a significant onboarding challenge that aligns directly with our research focus. The game's novel mechanics create a clear need for an effective tutorial system to prevent new players from being overwhelmed (Chen, 2021).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This project aims to create a Survival-Strategy game that lowers the entry barrier for new players by providing a more intuitive control system and improved tutorial experience. It seeks to make the genre more accessible to beginners without removing the strategic depth that appeals to experienced players. This project offers a balanced and engaging gameplay experience for a wider audience.

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General Objective

The general objective of this research is to develop a Survival-Strategy game that provides a more accessible gameplay experience by integrating simplified controls and an enhanced tutorial system.

General Objective

To develop a survival-strategy game that reduces the genre's learning curve through streamlined controls and an integrated tutorial system, applying principles of effective onboarding (Benvenuti et al., 2023; Chen, 2021; Luna, 2025) while preserving strategic depth.

Specific Objectives

- To design and implement streamlined gameplay mechanics that let players manage survival resources efficiently, reducing unnecessary complexity while maintaining strategic depth.
- To create an improved, easy-to-follow tutorial system that gradually introduces survival-strategy concepts, enabling players to learn and adapt without sacrificing challenge.
- To assess the effectiveness of the user-friendly controls and enhanced tutorial design in making the game more accessible and engaging for both new and experienced players.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT

This project is significant as it addresses one of the most common barriers in strategy-based games, the steep learning curve caused by complex controls and insufficient tutorials. By creating a survival-strategy game with simplified mechanics and an improved tutorial system, the study contributes to making the genre more accessible to a wider audience, including beginners who are often discouraged from playing such games. This project adds to the field of game development by exploring design practices that balance accessibility with depth, serving as a reference for future developers who aim to create engaging yet user-friendly strategy games. In doing so, it promotes innovation in gameplay design, user experience, and player engagement within the broader domain of game development research.

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- New and Beginner Players: This group is the primary beneficiary. The research directly addresses the steep learning curve and insufficient tutorials that often discourage them. By creating a more accessible game with an "improved tutorial system, the project aims to lower the barrier to entry and make the survival-strategy genre more welcoming to them.

- Game Developers: The project serves as a practical reference for future developers. By exploring design practices that balance accessibility with depth, it provides valuable insights and a framework that developers can use to create their own "engaging yet user-friendly strategy games," thereby saving time and resources on research and development.

- The Game Development Research Field: The study adds to the field of game development as a whole. Its contributions to knowledge in gameplay design, user experience, and player engagement benefit academics and researchers by providing a case study and advancing the understanding of how to create more effective and inclusive game designs.

- The Survival-Strategy Genre: The broader genre benefits from this research. By demonstrating a successful model for combining simplified mechanics with strategic depth, the project promotes innovation and helps evolve the genre to be "more accessible to a wider audience, ensuring its longevity and relevance.

Unique Feature/Innovation:
1. **Pollution–Hostility System**
   - Unlike typical base-building or survival games where enemies attack based on scripted waves, in this game the level of pollution generated by facilities and research directly influences how hostile each fantasy race becomes.
   - This creates a dynamic relationship where every decision. expanding too quickly or over-mining resources has immediate narrative and gameplay consequences.
2. **Tech vs. Magic Conflict**
   - Most strategy-survival games lean fully into either sci-fi (robots, machines) or fantasy (magic, creatures). This project blends both, placing a technologically stranded protagonist against magical civilizations.

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3. **LAN Multiplayer Mode**
   - Integrating LAN cooperative play, the game allows players to defend together against enemy raids as players controlling one base.

II. MULTIMEDIA PROJECT OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION

Planetfall: Bastion of Genesis is a **2D top-down survival strategy game** where futuristic technology clashes with a magical world. Stranded on a hostile planet, you command robotic swarms to build facilities, gather resources, and defend against humans, elves, dwarves, demons, and to leave this planet as your growing pollution turns them against you.

Featuring a **50-mission narrative campaign** and **LAN multiplayer**, the game challenges you to balance survival expansion and defense while racing to construct a spaceship and escape. Playable on **PC**, it combines classic base-building with modern survival mechanics in an atmospheric pixel-art world.

STORYLINE

Rain hammered against the canopy; each drop a percussive beat on the broad, alien leaves. O'deasä, the lone survivor, watched from the gaping wound in their ship's hull—a scar of twisted metal and frayed wires. The emergency crash landing had been a disaster; their vessel, the Olympus, now a tomb of lost dreams. The spaceship was destroyed; its sleek lines reduced to a pile of wreckage and electrical mess, leaving them stranded in a dense forest teeming with alien life.

Days blurred as O'deasä worked from a makeshift workshop, their plasma torch singing a harsh tune against the forest's quiet hum. They scavenge resources, using strange crystalline rocks for power and thick vines for cables. But their presence was a blight. The machinery's whir, the acrid smoke, and the oily sheen on the river were polluting the environment.

The locals, the Lumina, watched from the shadows. Their technology was one with nature, and they saw O'deasä's industrial operations as an infection on their sacred forest. A fierce desire to stop the environmental damage warred with primal curiosity. O'deasä's advanced technology

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was a double-edged sword: a source of destruction, but also a chance to benefit themselves. They yearned to harness this knowledge, to merge the machine with their natural way of life.

The Lumina decided their sacred forest, threatened by foreign tech, must be saved. They resolved to eliminate the polluting technology while simultaneously seizing it to not only restore the forest's health but also advance their own traditions.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Intended Users / Market
- Primarily **PC gamers** who enjoy strategy, base-building, and survival management genres.
- Players who like thoughtful decision-making, resource balancing, and strategic tradeoffs rather than fast-paced reflex games.
- Players aged 13 and older, aligning with the ESRB's "T (Teen)" rating (Entertainment Software Rating Board, n.d.). This classification accommodates the game's themes of environmental conflict and strategic survival while ensuring the content remains appropriate for a broad audience, from teenagers to adults. The simplified onboarding system is designed to be accessible for this age range, introducing strategic concepts without relying on mature content.
- Also appeals to fans of fantasy + sci-fi hybrids because of the mix of technological themes (robots, pollution) and fantasy enemies (elves, dwarves, demons).
- Players who enjoy campaign/missions progression rather than endless or roguelike modes; plus, interest in LAN multiplayer for cooperative play with friends.

References / Support
- The **ESRB Ratings Guide** helps define what age categories games fall into depending on violence, fantasy content, etc. A game that may contain violence, suggestive themes, crude humor, minimal blood, simulated gambling and/or infrequent use of strong language might be rated "Teen" or "13 +," depending on severity.
- Reports on gaming demographics show that **strategy games are popular among players aged 18–34**, especially on PC. Strategy and adventure genres have strong appeal within this segment.
- The Quantic Foundry "Strategy Audience Profiles" show that strategy game players tend to prefer planning, thinking, and managing systems; they're less motivated by reflex or

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fast action. This lines up with games that challenge them strategically rather than via speed.

- As shown in Luna's (2025) Text-Based Game Tutorials Don't Work article.
  The core of their argument is that players learn by doing, not by reading. Overloading a new player with written instructions before they've even started playing creates a significant barrier to entry. This approach often leads to cognitive overload, where the player is forced to remember multiple commands at once, and fails to engage them in the active, hands-on learning that games require for success.
  Instead of relying on text, the most effective onboarding seamlessly integrates teaching moments into the gameplay itself. This means introducing a control or mechanic at the exact moment the player needs it and providing a safe space to immediately practice it. By making the tutorial an invisible part of the experience, developers can guide players naturally, respecting their intelligence and fostering engagement from the very first minute.

- Benvenuti et al.'s (2023) research "An Approach to Assess the Impact of Tutorials in Video Games" explored what makes game tutorials effective. They discovered that the most successful tutorials are woven directly into the game's story and world. In contrast, tutorials that feel separate from the narrative can cause players to lose interest and stop playing.
  The researchers ultimately recommend that developers move away from designing by gut feeling. Instead, they should use a structured framework to create an onboarding experience that feels like a natural part of the game itself.

- Chen's (2021) research "Practices of making game tutorial" found that developers typically use two main methods. The first is the "Flashcard," which is informative but can interrupt gameplay. The second is the "Follow-to-Do" prompt, which feels more intuitive but is often harder to build effectively. Chen argues that the best approach is usually a blend of both.
  His testing revealed that players overwhelmingly prefer learning by doing interactive tutorials. However, if these tutorials are poorly designed, they can easily be ignored or even confuse the player.
  The key takeaway is that a great tutorial must be perfectly clear without overloading the player. This is best achieved with strong visual cues and voice-over guidance. The study also stresses that testing these tutorials early with brand-new players is essential, as they will spot confusing points that developers, who are already experts, might miss.

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- The game Eco (Strange Loop Games, 2018) is a compelling multiplayer simulation that explores the delicate balance between economic progress, environmental governance, and long-term sustainability. In the game, players face a dual mission: they must work together to build a civilization capable of stopping an incoming meteor, all while carefully managing a living ecosystem that reacts to their every decision.
A central feature of the game is its cause-and-effect system. Actions like mining, industrial production, and passing laws have immediate and visible consequences on the virtual world, which can lead to ecological collapse if not managed wisely. To succeed, players must form governments, create regulations, and rely on data from tools like pollution maps and ecosystem health indicators. This approach turns complex theoretical concepts of environmental policy into a concrete, hands-on experience, making the game a valuable subject for studying collaborative problem-solving and systems thinking.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS
Scope
- The project will deliver a **2D top-down survival strategy game** with **50 levels** divided into progressively harder missions.
- The game will feature **LAN Multiplayer** for cooperative play.
- The **core gameplay loop** includes facility construction, resource gathering, pollution management, research progression, and defense against hostile factions.
- The game will include **five major facility types** (e.g., mining, energy, research, defense, production) and **four unit types** (Builders, Soldiers, Extractors, Researchers) derived from robotic swarms.
- **Enemy factions** will consist of four races: Humans, Elves, Dwarves, and Demons, each with distinct attack styles and escalation patterns.
- The **pollution-hostility system** will be implemented to control difficulty and narrative tension.

Limitations
- The game will not feature a **full open world**; exploration is limited
- There will be **no complex 3D graphics**; all visuals will be in **2D pixel art**.
- The game will not include advanced **diplomacy or trading systems** beyond basic hostility mechanics.

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- Multiplayer will be limited to **LAN only** (no online matchmaking or servers).
- The project will not implement **procedural world generation**; levels will be handcrafted for scope control.
- Characters are limited to **robotic swarm units and enemy factions**; there will be **no detailed hero progression system** or RPG-style customization.

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

(a) Development Requirements
Hardware:
- Processor: Intel i5 / AMD Ryzen 5 or higher
- Memory: 8GB RAM (16GB recommended)
- Graphics: Dedicated GPU (NVIDIA GTX 1050 / AMD RX 580 or equivalent)
- Storage: 500GB SSD minimum
- LAN networking equipment for multiplayer testing (routers, switches, cables).

Software:
- **Game Engine:** Unity
- **Programming IDE:** Visual Studio / Visual Studio Code
- **Art Tools:** Aseprite, Photoshop, or Krita
- **Audio Tools:** Bandlab, Cakewalk Sonar
- **Project Management:** GitHub
- **Collaboration Tools:** Discord, Google Drive

(b) Deployment Requirements
Hardware:
- OS: Windows 10 or later (64-bit)
- Processor: Intel i3 / AMD Ryzen 3 or higher
- Memory: 4GB RAM
- Graphics: Integrated GPU (Intel UHD / AMD Vega)
- Storage: 5GB free space
- LAN capability (Ethernet/Wi-Fi) for multiplayer mode

RELATED STUDIES
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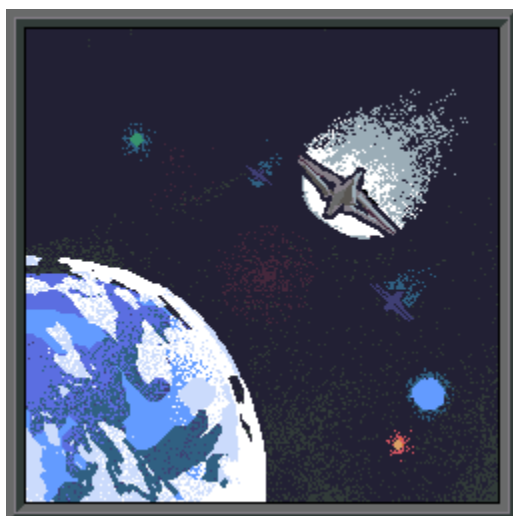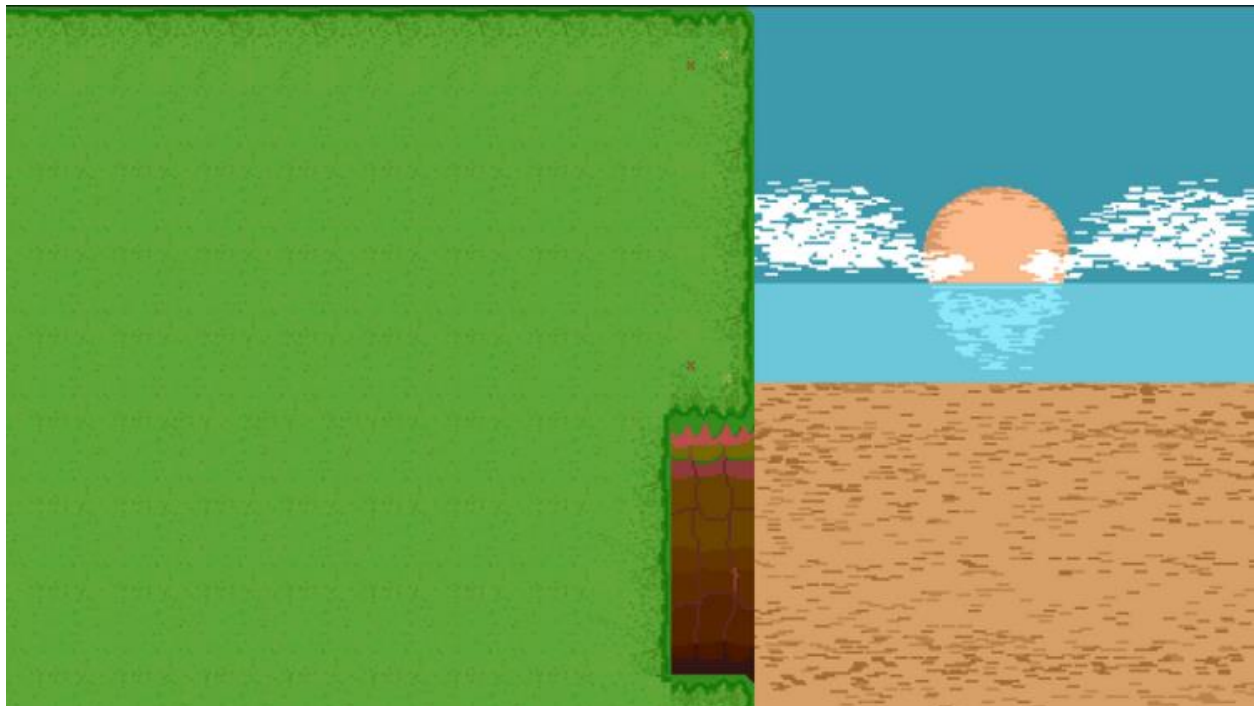
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Enemies

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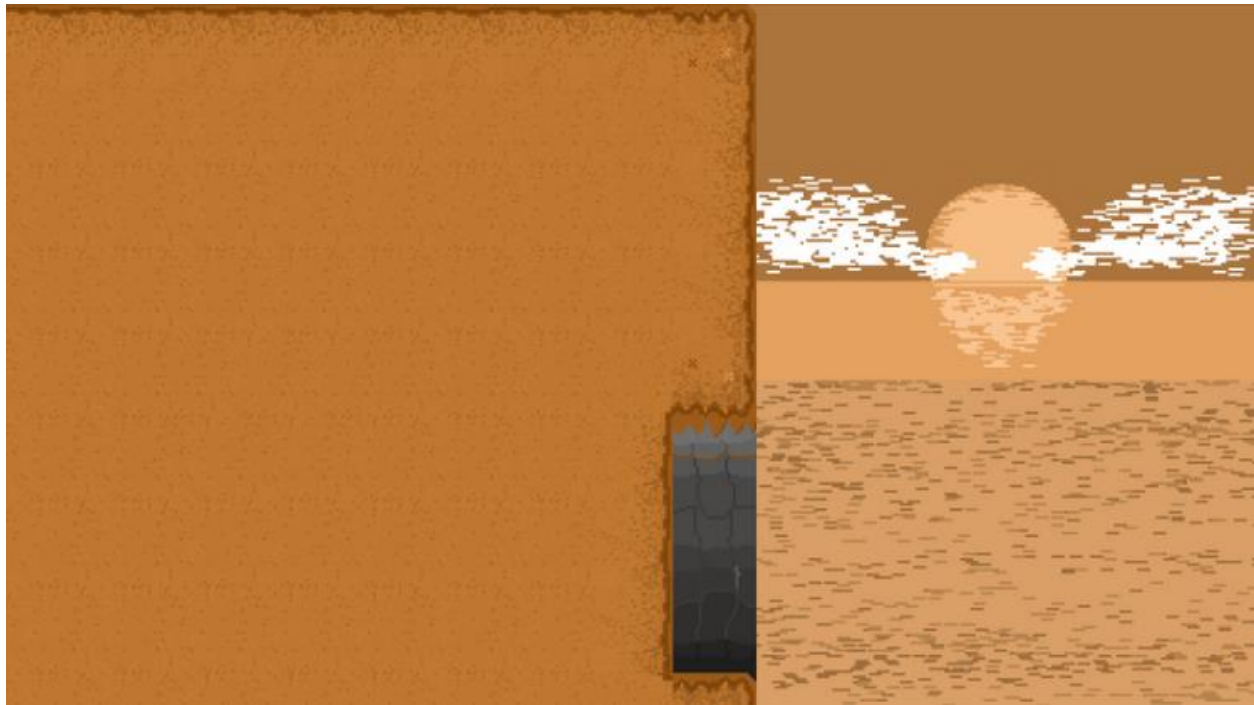ENTERTAINMENT AND MULTIMEDIA COMPUTING**

Location Maps

Non-Polluted Area

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Polluted Area

Title Screen

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Main Menu

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