

# Soul Bound

The logo for 'Soul Bound' features the words 'Soul' and 'Bound' in a dark purple, stylized serif font. To the right of the text, there are two purple, faceted crystals of different sizes. A soft, glowing purple energy field or aura surrounds the crystals and extends behind the word 'Bound'.

Business Plan

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# Executive Summary

Soul Bound is a turn based, strategy role playing game, with a character driven narrative. The story has been split into two parts, with the first part being developed and released as one game. In total, Soul Bound has seen significant development in regards to key core systems, art and sound. The key systems completed are: Combat, movement, skills, level creation and layout, user interface, and level transitions. The Soul Bound team, in order to continue development over the summer, needs funding to pay for rent and food for each member. This funding will allow key members of the group to remain in the area to work in the same office as the rest, in order to produce better and most satisfying results.

Over the spring 2015 semester, the team consisted of 11 members. This number will be reduced to 6 over the summer, due to graduations and co-ops having been found in industry by others. The focus for the summer is to develop the first half of the first game, finalizing the levels, enemies, abilities, and the additional systems we will need.

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# Game Description

## Summary

Soul Bound is a strategy role playing game set in a magic filled fantasy world. The player controls a party of 3 to 5 characters - along with their familiar helpers - to defend the world against a 1000 year old threat that has been awakened.

### **Explore:**

The player will be making their way through this vast world of magic, meeting new characters, helping those who call upon them and finding old and forgotten lands and creatures.

### **Forge Bonds:**

The player will meet and bond with many characters, of various size, races and genders, on their adventure. Some will aid them in their travels, and others will follow them into battle against the forces around them.

### **Summon Familiars:**

Awaken and summon special beings known as familiars to take aid you on the dangerous road ahead. As the player explores the world, they will find a vast array of magical crystals known as Lorestones, which house the spirits of familiars inside of them.

### **Fight How You Want:**

Bringing the right team for the job is key. Players will choose the best team of characters and familiars, each with their own unique abilities to defeat the various monsters and enemies they will encounter on their path.

### **Save The World:**

Embark on a quest to learn the secret behind the malicious forces that have started to affect the world. Follow the story of peacekeepers from the Mage's Guild, as they are thrown into an epic journey to stop an evil that has been lying in wait for 1000 years.

# Gameplay

Gameplay is broken into a 4 sections:

- Interacting with towns
- Interacting with other characters
- Exploring fields/dungeons
- Battling.

## **Interacting with Towns:**

The purpose of the towns in the game are to hold a group of characters and quests in an area for the player to interact with. In each town there will be a mages guild branch, which along with various shops to and areas, serve to give the player quests and the capability to complete them. Additionally, there are characters within the town who will give flavor and lore to the world, to create an interactive, immersive experience.

## **Interacting with Characters:**

(Preliminary concepts – can change) Each non-player character that the player gets to use in their party has a backstory and a personal quest line that can be completed to unlock new and interesting powers, items, etc.

## **Exploring Mission Zones:**

Exploration happens on a mission based fashion, with quests sending the player to specific areas in the world. The game runs on a strategy grid system where the player will walk around the maps in real time.

During exploration, the player will reveal the level from the fog of war. When the player can't directly see an area that has previously been revealed, the area is greyed out by the fog of war, with the environment still shown.

Exploration on missions will occur outside battles and serve for the purpose of finding items hidden around the level as well as meeting other characters in the world.

## **Battle:**

Battles are triggered when entering a combat zone. These battles occur in the same world space as missions/exploration and move the player from a semi real time movement system to the battle grid system. At the start of engagement players will be able to position their team relative to where they were prior to the battles beginning. Battles are turn based, where the player's team and the enemies they are fighting are added to a queue based on initiative. From there, after the player takes an action the next character in the queue will immediately take theirs, and so on until it returns to the player's turn. These actions include Movement, Attacks, and Skills. Characters also have the option to summon a familiar into the battle field, which will take

its own place in the combat queue. At the end of battle, the player's party, if alive, will unsummon their familiars and regroup with the player's character. From there the player will continue on with the mission and level.

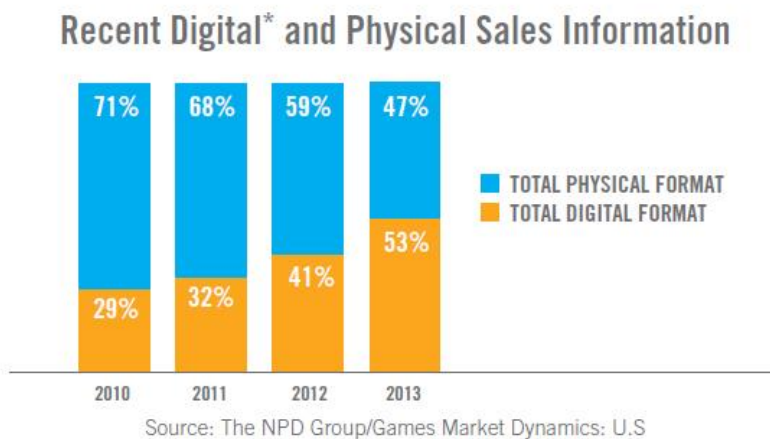
Battles should be preferably 4 – 10 minutes in length, with additional time added for the difficulty of battles against core beasts and boss enemies.

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# Market Strategies

## Steam Greenlight

The team is aiming for digital release through Steam Greenlight. Digital download is a market that has grown significantly over the last 5 years. Digital gives the developers much more control and analysis potential for their products. With Steam, it is possible to track game page views, sales, and how many people are playing the game. Additionally, it is possible to distribute bug patches quickly and easily.



(Source: [http://www.theesa.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/ESA\\_EF\\_2014.pdf](http://www.theesa.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/ESA_EF_2014.pdf))

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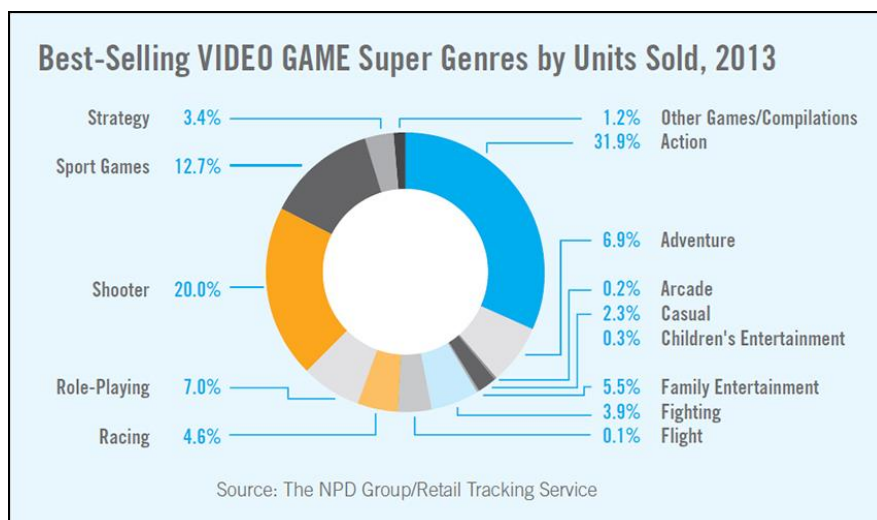
# Competitive Analysis

## Market Share

Soul Bound is primarily of the RPG genre, with elements of Strategy. As such, this analysis takes into the account each of these genres to see potential market share.

In 2013, overall the market share for these genres were as follows:

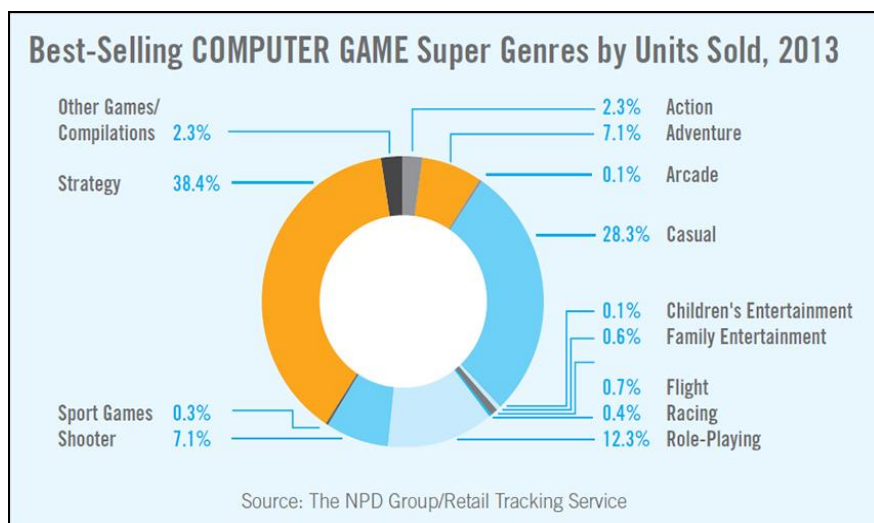
RPG: 7.0%  
Strategy: 3.4%



These numbers are for sales across the entire industry. Overall, these two genres are a relatively small portion of the market, totally only 10.4% of all sales. Here it appears that these two genres are generally niche, leading to the perception that entering this market will have to target a specific audience, and have limited sales. However, this number drastically changes when reduced to just PC sales:

In 2013, the PC market share for these genres were as follows:

RPG: 12.3%  
Strategy: 38.4%





There is a significant difference between all games sales and PC sales, with RPG and Strategy taking a combined 50.7% share. With this information, we learned two things; one, that PC is the correct target platform for the type of game Soul Bound desires to be, and two, that porting this product to another platform would be generally unfeasible. While the audience here is very large, we also understand that there is potential to have zero impact without the proper marketing. This is an issue that will be considered further into development, with potential involvement of a Kickstarter project.

## Market Impact

To preface this section, the ultimate goal of Soul Bound is to increase awareness of the game and story, in addition to having a released game that all those involved can put on their resumes. Our desire is to release on Steam Greenlight, similar to how A.V has been with the aid of MAGIC Spell Studios. Anything additional to this, such as profits, is bonus.

With the effort that has gone into the development of Soul Bound, we think that it would be possible to sell each copy of the game for at most \$5.00. Being fresh developers, and relatively unknown, \$5 seems to be a price everyone agreed upon in the team. The hope would be to gain some compensation for the work put into the game, while increasing awareness for the game and the player's desire for the rest of the story – the second game.

Numbers for Indie developers and units sold are relatively difficult to find, as the information isn't public knowledge unless purposely released by the developers. As such, the potential profits for the game are highly speculative, and simply for awareness.

The optimistic estimate of copies sold ranges from between 500 copies to 1000, putting revenue anywhere from \$2500 to \$5000, less Steam's distribution cut.

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# Design & Development Plan

## Funding Usage

The \$10000 that will be received from the Co-op Start Up program through the MAGIC Center will be used to pay for rent and food for all team members. The current team size is 6, with two members abstaining from payment. The breakdown is as follows:

- \$10000 distributed between 5
  - Evenly: \$200 / week to each member

As it stands, no money is currently appropriated for product licenses or marketing, as release is not expected at the end of summer 2015.

## Summer 2015 Preliminary Schedule

| Weeks                    | Task(s)  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>End of<br/>1 - 4</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Concept Art for 4 act zones (2 missions per zone): Monsters and landscape</li><li>- Design for monsters in locations complete: Skills they have, their battle AI, etc</li><li>- Basic level layout for first 4 missions.</li><li>- Town / Hub level laid out and solidified</li><li>- Modeling started on new environment and monsters</li><li>- Inventory system functional</li><li>- Skill interface begun</li></ul> |
| <b>End of<br/>5 - 8</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- First 4 levels completed for art (environment finished, monster encounters implemented)</li><li>- Monster abilities implemented and functioning</li><li>- Town completed for art (environment finished, NPCs placed)</li><li>- Story implemented via UI interaction</li><li>- Skill interface finished</li><li>- Quest / Journal log implemented</li><li>- Start of event system for map</li></ul>                     |
| <b>End of<br/>9 - 10</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Basic layout for next 4 levels</li><li>- Event system functioning for map</li></ul>  |

## Summer 2015 Preliminary Deliverables

- Town area – Complete
- First half of game – Complete

## Summer 2015 Preliminary Deliverables (Cont'd)

- Additional interfaces implemented:
  - Character chart – Complete
  - Skills interface – Complete
  - Quest log – Complete
  - Map – Complete
- Additional monsters and skills – Complete
- Work begun on second half of game

## Soul Bound Design Document

Please see PDF document located here (Keep in mind, this is a living document, with some sections not finished, or waiting to be updated):

<http://douglasamansell.com/soulBoundGDD.shtml>

## Resource Requirements from MAGIC

The Soul Bound team simply requires office space and computers for each of our team members.

- Team size of 6.

Additionally, gaining access to the licenses MAGIC Spell Studios has for many of the programs we're using would be key to our release goals.

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# Financial Factors

## Team Size

Our biggest concern at the moment is the team size. Paying this many people to live and work for 10 weeks, on only \$10000 is difficult. Money will be tight, however with certain members having backed out of needing payment, it makes this much more viable.

The other team members who have been a part of the game's development cycle will be offered contracts for a percentage of profit upon release of Soul Bound.

## Product Licenses

The other concern as the project approaches release in early 2016 is product licenses, in particular having used Unity for development. These are costs that will be addressed at a later date, possibly with the use of a Kickstarter project.

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