

Game Pitch Document

Aleksander Postelga (xposte00)

Title: Shadows of the Crown

Genre: Multiplayer Grand Strategy with Negotiation, Diplomacy, and Warfare

Style: 2D/3D hybrid with stylized medieval fantasy visuals

Platform: PC (primary), future potential on consoles and online ecosystems

Market: Fans of grand strategy, negotiation-based board games, and political intrigue (Ages 16+)

Elevator Pitch: A 6-season struggle where noble houses negotiate, conspire, and wage war to claim Ilydia's throne following the mysterious death of King Goldrick.

The Pitch

Introduction

Shadows of the Crown is a multiplayer grand strategy game blending diplomatic negotiation, resource management, and tactical warfare. Across six seasons, 2-3 players per noble house form alliances, deceive enemies, and command armies in their bid to ascend the throne of the fallen King Goldrick's kingdom, Ilydia.

Background

The inspiration stems from classic diplomacy board games and grand strategy titles, fusing face-to-face negotiations with the depth of digital resource management. We draw on epic medieval fantasy tales, political intrigue, and the fluidity of shifting alliances to create a game that feels fresh, social, and strategically rich.

Setting

The kingdom of Ilydia lies in turmoil after King Goldrick's untimely demise. Rumors suggest an assassination, while others blame a wild boar's fury. With the throne empty and clarity absent, five great noble houses compete for power. Each player commands one house, managing its capital, expanding its realm, and forging delicate agreements—or betrayals. Over six seasons, this unstable equilibrium reshapes the map and the future of Ilydia. The narrative emerges through player choices and alliances, evolving organically as seasons progress.

Phases of Play

Each season is divided into three main phases: The Summit (Negotiation), The Council (Planning), and The Battlefield (Warfare). After these phases conclude, the game updates the world state and moves forward to the next season, ultimately culminating after six intense rounds.

Phase 1: The Summit (Negotiation)

Players' representatives gather in a neutral hall—an area where no combat can occur. Instead, words are weapons. During a timed, structured dialogue:

- Each house has a turn to address all players for one minute. Twice per game, a house may extend its speaking time by three additional minutes. No one may interrupt during these speeches.

- After all houses speak, a short free-form negotiation session begins (approx. 2 minutes). Here, everyone can talk simultaneously, forging alliances, sowing distrust, or making clandestine offers.
- Players aim to secure agreements: non-aggression pacts, troop support, economic deals, or plans to sabotage rivals.

The Summit phase is critical for shaping perceptions and laying the groundwork for strategic cooperation or deception. The outcome of these talks sets the tone for the entire season.

Phase 2: The Council (Planning)

After The Summit, each house returns to its own capital. Players now strategize privately:

- ****Infrastructure and Resources:**** Improve buildings (e.g., armories for troop growth, taverns to boost happiness) and manage resources (gold, troops, goods). Each improvement grants tangible benefits, like increased troop generation or higher gold income.
- ****Happiness Management:**** The happiness of your subjects influences resource production and army size. Low happiness can trigger unrest, risking revolts that weaken your position.
- ****Diplomatic Missions:**** Dispatch envoys to other houses to broker secret deals. Negotiate mutual defense treaties, offer gold for peace, or propose a joint strike on a rival.
- ****Economic Warfare (Sanctions):**** Impose costly sanctions on others, reducing their income and happiness. However, sanctions cost you 10% of your per-turn income. Overuse can backfire, draining your economy and provoking retaliation.
- ****Army Allocation:**** Decide where to station troops. Prepare defensive garrisons in your castles or stage armies for invasion. Plan where to strike next and how best to exploit enemy weaknesses.

The Council phase turns the promises and threats from The Summit into actionable strategies. It's where you balance your economy, ensure loyalty, and ready your forces for the battles ahead.

Phase 3: The Battlefield (Warfare)

Now, words give way to steel. Players simultaneously commit troops to attack enemy castles or defend their own:

- ****Castle Sieges:**** Each house starts with one capital and multiple lesser castles. Capitals produce special resources and serve as the heart of your domain. Lesser castles generate gold and can be conquered for additional income.
- ****Combat Resolution:**** Battles are resolved by troop counts. The side contributing more soldiers claims or retains the castle. Defenders and attackers incur proportional losses. If multiple houses attack the same castle (not aligned), the last one standing claims it. If two allied houses coordinate an attack, they share the spoils proportionally.
- ****Vassalage:**** Losing your capital does not remove you from the game. Instead, you become a vassal of the conquering house, forced to serve alongside your conqueror. While you can no longer claim the throne, you remain a valuable ally or tool in their arsenal.
- ****Strategic Advancement:**** To claim an enemy capital, you must first conquer their lesser castles. Once the capital falls, the victor absorbs its resources. Subsequent turns offer opportunities to invest in these captured territories, further strengthening your position.

The Battlefield phase manifests the consequences of negotiation and planning. Unexpected alliances might rally against a common foe, while secret pacts come to fruition on blood-soaked fields.

Season Transition

After the warfare concludes, the season ends. Players review the updated map, tally their gains and losses, and assess the balance of power. Over six seasons, fortunes shift. Houses might rise to dominance or collapse under combined pressure. As the final season ends, the house (or alliance) holding the greatest domain and boasting the most developed capital emerges victorious. Even smaller empires can triumph if they've meticulously invested in infrastructure to offset fewer holdings.

Features and Uniqueness

- ****Dynamic Player Interaction:**** Face-to-face (local) or online negotiations give the game a social dimension seldom seen in digital strategy titles.
- ****Layered Diplomacy:**** Sanctions, envoys, and secret deals create a web of trust and betrayal, making human interaction as crucial as tactical prowess.
- ****Flexible Victory Paths:**** Dominating militarily is not the only route. Skillful diplomacy, shrewd investments, and well-timed alliances can secure victory, even for smaller factions.
- ****Replayability:**** Each session evolves differently, as players shape the narrative through their choices. Six seasons is enough for a tight, dramatic arc, while encouraging repeated play.

Genre

A unique blend of grand strategy, negotiation, and territory control, *Shadows of the Crown* distinguishes itself from traditional single-player campaigns by centering on live, emergent diplomacy. It marries the depth of resource and city management with the interpersonal tensions of a tabletop negotiation game.

Platform

Initially developed for PC, where voice chat and UI clarity can shine. Future considerations include console ports and possibly a mobile companion app. Cross-platform online play and optional local “hot-seat” modes ensure accessibility for various groups—be it friends gathered at home or global competitors online.

Style

The visual style is a stylized medieval fantasy, merging painterly maps and character portraits with clear, informative interfaces. Neutral halls for negotiations are depicted as atmospheric 3D scenes; strategic planning screens feature ornate UI elements and heraldic symbols. The battle map is a dynamic, evolving tapestry of conquests and alliances, visually reflecting shifting power.



(a) Conceptual castle view.



(b) Neutral negotiation hall.



(c) Strategic UI.

Conclusion

Shadows of the Crown offers a multiplayer experience that balances diplomacy, strategy, and warfare. Its phased gameplay, rich social interaction, and open-ended approach to alliances and conquests create a dynamic narrative each session. With six seasons of evolving intrigue, players will return time and again, forging their own legends in the chaotic realm of Ilydia.