

Product Requirements Document

GM Campaign Preference Tool

Helping Game Masters design sessions players actually want to play.

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Author	Product Team
Audience	Engineering, Design, QA, Stakeholders

1. Overview & Problem Statement

Tabletop RPG campaigns fail — not because the GM is unprepared, but because the table is misaligned. Players show up expecting wildly different things: one wants brutal combat, another wants deep character drama, a third wants an open sandbox. Without a structured way to surface these preferences before session zero, GMs are flying blind.


The GM Campaign Preference Tool solves this by giving GMs a short, structured player survey that collects preferences, scores them against four campaign archetypes, and produces an actionable recommendation for campaign theme and tone — before a single die is rolled.




1.1 Target Users

- Game Masters / Dungeon Masters running any tabletop RPG system
- New GMs who lack the experience to read the table intuitively
- Experienced GMs onboarding a new or mixed player group

1.2 The Four Campaign Archetypes

All scoring and recommendations are anchored to four archetypes derived from player preference research:

Archetype	Theme	Core Experience
 The Epic	Grand heroic narrative	Big villain, world-saving stakes, chosen heroes

Archetype	Theme	Core Experience
 The Explorer	Sandbox discovery	Player-driven goals, rich world, open-ended freedom
 The Drama	Character-first storytelling	Personal arcs, NPC relationships, emotional stakes
 The Gauntlet	Gritty survival challenge	High lethality, dark tone, real consequences

2. Goals & Non-Goals

2.1 MVP Goals

- Allow a GM to create a shareable player survey link in under 2 minutes
- Collect responses from 1–8 players via a mobile-friendly form
- Score each response and aggregate across the group using the archetype scoring system
- Present the GM with a clear archetype recommendation and hybrid flavor guidance
- Require zero accounts or authentication for the MVP

2.2 Non-Goals for MVP

- No user accounts, saved history, or dashboards
- No support for custom survey questions
- No multi-campaign or multi-group management
- No integrations with VTTs (Roll20, Foundry, etc.) — post-MVP
- No native mobile app — responsive web only

3. User Stories

3.1 GM Stories

1. **As a GM**, I want to generate a unique survey link so I can send it to my players before session zero.
2. **As a GM**, I want to see each player's archetype scores so I can understand individual preferences.
3. **As a GM**, I want to receive a group-level archetype recommendation so I know what campaign theme to design toward.
4. **As a GM**, I want to see hybrid archetype guidance when the top two scores are close, so I can blend elements effectively.

5. **As a GM**, I want to share or print my results summary so I can reference it during campaign prep.

3.2 Player Stories

6. **As a player**, I want to complete the survey on my phone without creating an account.
7. **As a player**, I want the questions to be clear and fun, not feel like a corporate HR form.

4. Functional Requirements

4.1 Survey Creation (GM Flow)

- GM lands on the homepage and clicks "Create a New Survey"
- The system generates a unique session ID and a shareable URL (e.g. /survey/[session-id])
- GM sees a preview of the 5 survey questions before sharing
- GM copies the link or shares directly via native share sheet on mobile
- GM is given a separate results URL (e.g. /results/[session-id]) to check responses

4.2 Survey Response (Player Flow)

- Player opens the survey link — no login required
- Player enters their name or a display name (optional but recommended)
- Player answers all 5 questions via single-select radio buttons
- Player submits and sees a brief confirmation screen with their top archetype
- Player cannot edit their response after submission in MVP

4.3 The Five Survey Questions

The survey presents the following questions with labeled answer options. Answer options map to archetype scoring weights as defined in Section 5.

#	Question	Answer Options
Q1	What draws you most to a TTRPG?	Dramatic story / Exploring the world / Tactical combat / Chaos & fun
Q2	How do you feel about player character death?	Off the table / Earned & meaningful / Bring it on
Q3	What tone appeals to you most?	Dark & gritty / Heroic & epic / Light & humorous / Horror or mystery
Q4	How much should your personal story matter?	A lot / Some / Not much

#	Question	Answer Options
Q5	Which campaign style excites you most?	Grand story / Sandbox / Series of adventures / Focused storyline

4.4 Scoring Engine

Each answer maps to archetype point values. The scoring rules are:

- Points are added to one or two archetypes per answer as defined in the scoring key
- Each player receives a score for all four archetypes (Epic, Explorer, Drama, Gauntlet)
- Group scores are calculated by summing all player scores per archetype
- The archetype with the highest group total is the Primary recommendation
- The archetype with the second-highest group total is the Secondary recommendation
- If two archetypes are within 2 points of each other, the system flags them as a Hybrid and presents combined campaign guidance

4.5 Results Dashboard (GM View)

- Displays each player's name and their top archetype
- Displays a bar or progress-bar chart showing group totals per archetype
- Displays the Primary and Secondary archetype recommendation prominently
- Displays the appropriate Hybrid Campaign description if triggered
- Provides a "Print / Export to PDF" option for the summary
- Updates in near real-time as players submit responses (polling every 10 seconds is acceptable for MVP)

5. Scoring Reference

The table below is the authoritative scoring key the engine must implement.

Q	Answer	Archetype(s)	Points
Q1	Dramatic story	Drama	+2
Q1	Exploring the world	Explorer	+2
Q1	Tactical combat	Gauntlet	+2
Q1	Chaos & fun	Explorer +1, Epic +1	Split
Q2	Off the table	Drama	+2
Q2	Earned & meaningful	Epic	+2
Q2	Bring it on	Gauntlet	+2

Q	Answer	Archetype(s)	Points
Q3	Dark & gritty	Gauntlet	+2
Q3	Heroic & epic	Epic	+2
Q3	Light & humorous	Explorer +1, Drama +1	Split
Q3	Horror or mystery	Gauntlet +1, Explorer +1	Split
Q4	A lot	Drama	+2
Q4	Some	Epic +1, Drama +1	Split
Q4	Not much	Explorer	+2
Q5	Grand story with big villain	Epic	+2
Q5	Sandbox	Explorer	+2
Q5	Series of shorter adventures	Explorer +1, Gauntlet +1	Split
Q5	One focused storyline	Drama	+2

5.1 Hybrid Campaign Descriptions

The following descriptions are displayed when a Hybrid result is triggered. These must be stored as static copy in the application.

Hybrid Pair	Campaign Guidance
Epic + Drama	Personal stakes within a world-saving narrative — the players ARE the emotional heart of the story.
Epic + Gauntlet	Classic high-fantasy with real danger — heroes matter, but death is always on the table.
Explorer + Drama	Character-driven sandbox — NPCs matter deeply, slow burn, relationships drive direction.
Explorer + Gauntlet	Survival sandbox — the world is dark and dangerous, players carve their path.
Drama + Gauntlet	Gritty character story — tragedy is possible, moral complexity is constant.
Epic + Explorer	Big world, lots of freedom — the villain looms in the background while players explore.

6. UX & Design Requirements

- Mobile-first responsive design — most players will complete the survey on their phones

- Survey must be completable in under 3 minutes
- No account creation or login for either GM or player in MVP
- Questions displayed one at a time on mobile, all at once on desktop (configurable)
- Progress indicator shown to player during survey (e.g. "Question 3 of 5")
- Results page must work without JavaScript for print/PDF compatibility
- Visual design should feel thematic — use fantasy-adjacent typography and color palette, avoid corporate SaaS aesthetics
- Archetype names and emoji icons must be consistently used throughout the UI

7. Technical Requirements

7.1 Architecture

- Frontend: React (or Next.js for SSR/SEO on results page)
- Backend: Lightweight Node.js/Express API or serverless functions
- Database: Any simple persistent store — SQLite, Postgres, or Firebase Firestore acceptable for MVP
- Hosting: Vercel, Railway, or Render — low-cost, fast deployment
- No auth layer required in MVP

7.2 Data Model (Minimum)

Entity	Fields	Notes
Session	id, created_at, gm_label (optional)	Created when GM generates a link
Response	id, session_id, player_name, answers[], submitted_at	One row per player submission
Scores (computed)	session_id, epic, explorer, drama, gauntlet	Calculated on read, not stored

7.3 API Endpoints (MVP)

- POST /sessions — create a new session, return session ID
- GET /sessions/:id — return session metadata
- POST /sessions/:id/responses — submit a player response
- GET /sessions/:id/results — return all responses + computed archetype scores

7.4 Non-Functional Requirements

- Page load under 2 seconds on a 4G connection
- Survey link must remain valid for at least 30 days
- System should handle up to 8 concurrent player submissions per session
- No PII collected beyond an optional player display name

8. MVP Milestones

Phase	Milestone	Deliverables	Est.
1	Foundation	Project setup, data model, API skeleton, session creation endpoint	Week 1
2	Survey Flow	Player survey UI (mobile), response submission, confirmation screen	Week 2
3	Scoring Engine	Archetype scoring logic, group aggregation, hybrid detection	Week 2–3
4	Results Dashboard	GM results view, score visualization, hybrid copy, PDF export	Week 3–4
5	Polish & Deploy	Mobile QA, edge cases, production deploy, GM beta test	Week 4–5

9. Success Metrics

The MVP will be considered successful if, within 60 days of launch:

- At least 50 GMs create a session and share their survey link
- At least 60% of created sessions receive 3 or more player responses
- Average survey completion time is under 3 minutes
- At least 70% of GMs who view their results report the recommendation felt accurate (measured via a single post-results thumbs up/down)

10. Out of Scope for MVP

- User accounts and saved campaign history
- Custom or editable survey questions
- VTT integrations (Roll20, Foundry VTT, etc.)
- Multi-language support
- Native iOS / Android apps

- AI-generated campaign hooks or adventure seeds (post-MVP opportunity)
- GM notes or annotation tools on the results page

11. Open Questions

#	Question	Owner / Status
1	Should players be able to see each other's results, or only the GM?	Product — open
2	Should the GM be able to re-open a session to allow late responses?	Engineering — open
3	What happens if the group scores are completely tied across archetypes?	Engineering — needs tiebreaker logic
4	Do we show players their archetype breakdown, or just a single label?	Design — open
5	Should the survey support anonymous responses by default?	Product — recommended yes for MVP

End of Document | GM Campaign Preference Tool PRD v1.0