



# INTERVIEW: LEAD GAME DESIGNER GABOR SZABO ON HOW SCI-FI IS MAKING THE SUPERNOVA MOBA STAND OUT

**NEWS** 09:50 am, Jul 13 by: Paul Semel

In many MOBAs, the settings, characters, and combat are all rooted in the tenets of the fantasy genre. But for their upcoming free-to-play MOBA *Supernova*, which Bandai Namco Games will bring to PCs later this year, the good people at Primal Game Studios are going for more of a sci-fi vibe.

With a closed beta starting at the end of the month, we spoke to Lead Game Designer Gabor Szabo about why they went the sci-fi route with *Supernova*, and how it makes their game stand out.

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**GameCrate: *Supernova* is a free-to-play MOBA along the lines of *Dota 2* and *League of Legends*, but one of the big things that sets it apart is that it's science fiction themed as opposed to fantasy. Why did you guys decide to go with a sci-fi theme?**

Gabor: Actually, we think that almost every gameplay mechanic that can be explained with magic in a fantasy game can also be explained with technology in a sci-fi game. In other words, we think that gameplay is not a deciding factor in whether a game should be fantasy or sci-fi.



**GC: And yet *Supernova* lets people use swords, which are typically a fantasy weapon.**

G: You can find a wide variety of weapons in *Supernova*, from high-tech melee weapons and modern missile weapons to futuristic disintegration rays, lasers, and psionic powers. Because of gameplay reasons, we need to have melee and ranged Commanders as well, so players can find a Commander that fits into their playing style.

But while we have a lot of melee weapons, they are usually not just simple swords.

For example B.R.O's chain blades can be activated, which elongates the chain blades and gives them extra powers. Also, not all Commanders in *Supernova* are highly advanced or willing to use the newest technology. Some stick to their traditional combat style, some are simply not advanced enough to understand how a high-tech particle weapon works. They compensate for their weakness by brute force or disciplined martial arts.

**GC: So in deciding how the sci-fi elements would work in *Supernova*, what were some of the books, movies, comics, and other games that you looked to for inspiration?**

G: The team consists of a lot of veteran players with different sci-fi preferences. *Supernova* was not directly inspired by any specific sci-fi universe, series, or books, but as core gamers we have a lot of favorite ones. Just to mention a few: *Dune*, *Starcraft*, *Star Wars*, *Metabarons*, *Star Trek*, *Battlestar Galactica*, *Battletech*, and *Warhammer 40K*.

**GC: What about the back-story for the game, what were some of the things that inspired it?**

G: The creation of the background story of *Supernova*, and the lore of the Commanders and the universe is close collaboration between the Primal design team, and two very talented writers: Cory Lanham and Joelle Sellner .



**GC: Finally, aside from being sci-fi instead of fantasy, are there other gameplay elements of *Supernova* that help set it apart from *DOTA2*, *League of Legends*, and other big MOBAs?**

G: There are several.

Instead of gold collection and item purchasing, players are given attribute and proficiency points for certain actions. These can be used to upgrade their Commanders: Attribute points increase basic statistics like Attack Speed or Maximum Health, while Proficiency points unlock special powers like slowing attack or life steal.

*Supernova* also has a rich meta-game. You can customize your army by choosing which ten units you want to bring into the battle, and also can further enhance the units with different technologies.

Then there's Accessory Crafting: Players collect materials after each game. These materials can be used to craft Accessories which provide small bonuses to the

Commanders. Players can create Accessory Sets composed of different Accessories and with these Sets players can alter a Commander's starting stats.

Players can also choose to upgrade their Commanders automatically, so they can concentrate on the controls, while the Auto-Army feature helps new players learn how army building works in *Supernova*. The system shows suggested units to the player, and also it purchases for them after a while.

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For more information about *Supernova* or to sign up for the upcoming closed beta, visit [supernovagame.com](http://supernovagame.com).



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