Press kit

Fact sheet

Title	Overflow: Roguelite Network Builder
Developer	Sharkbowl Games, London
Team	Two co-founders: Tarik Bensaria and Shan Blackwood
Engine	Unity 3D
Platform	PC (Windows), on Steam
Price	$9.99 USD
Release	2027
Demo	Steam Demo from 3 December 2026
Genre	Strategy, Simulation, Indie
Players	Single player
Languages	English plus 17 more: French, Spanish (Spain and Latin America), Brazilian Portuguese, German, Italian, Polish, Turkish, Indonesian, Russian, Ukrainian, Japanese, Korean, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Thai, Arabic

Short description (300 characters)

Draw traces, route signals, and hold the system together as pressure escalates. A tense minimalist network roguelite where one overloaded node ends the run, instantly and permanently. Upgrade between cycles, deploy emergency abilities, and see how long you can delay the crash.

One line

Mini Metro's clarity with a permadeath run underneath it.

Long description

Overflow is a real time network game about keeping a system alive slightly longer than it wants to stay alive.

Nodes generate Signals. You draw Traces between them. Autonomous Runners travel those Traces, collect Signals and carry them to Hubs for processing. You never control a Runner directly. You only shape the network they move through, and that indirect control is the whole game.

Backlog is the pressure. Every Node queues the Signals it has generated but not yet had collected, and if any single Node fills its queue, the run ends. Not a lost life, not a setback. The run is over. A short grace window gives you seconds to respond when a Node tips over, extended slightly if a Runner is already en route, but that is the only mercy in the system.

The difficulty does not arrive as a spike. Signal generation accelerates, new Nodes appear and demand routing, and in late cycles the backlog cap itself starts shrinking, so a network that was comfortable becomes fatal without anything visibly changing. The skill the game asks for is reading pressure early: seeing which part of your network is about to become a problem while it still looks fine.

Every seven Ticks you draw upgrades. When routing alone will not save you, three emergency abilities will, briefly.

Key features

One failure state, and it is final. No partial loss, no damage bar. A single saturated Node ends the run. Everything else in the design exists to make that one moment legible before it arrives.

Indirect control only. You draw Traces, place Hubs, set Hub policies and trigger abilities. Runners route themselves. You are designing a system, not commanding units.

Connectivity is authored, not assumed. Two Traces connect only where you deliberately drew one through the other, or where both dock at the same Node or Hub. Traces that merely touch on screen are not connected. Networks are exactly what you built, including the mistakes.

Emergency abilities, not optimisation tools. Priority Dispatch (Q) throws every idle Runner at your worst Node on a 90 second cooldown. Overclock Trace (E) boosts Runner speed on your busiest segment. Cache Purge (R) empties a Hub queue instantly, scores you nothing for it, and is usable once per cycle with no banking. Each is a way to survive a mistake, not a way to play better.

Escalation that keeps going. Faster Signal generation, then Node proliferation, then a shrinking backlog cap in late cycles. The system tightens on multiple axes rather than scaling one number.

Three ways to play. Endless, seeded and replayable, with random terrain layered onto the chosen Layout. Daily Challenge, one seeded board and objective, the same for everyone that day. Scenarios, twelve fixed challenges with live objectives, each one unlocking the next.

Twelve Layouts across three worlds. Substrate, Solder Mask and Bare Silicon, four Layouts each, unlocked world by world. Each pairs hand-authored terrain with its own rules: rivers that push you towards Bridges, ridges that reward Vias, Traces that cost double, a Data Bus whose pulses make Runners wait at its crossings, two Hubs or three.

Deterministic runs. Every mode is seeded, so a run can be repeated exactly.

Node state never relies on colour alone. By default a filling Node shows its count, and at critical it gains a pulsing outline and faster jitter. A separate colourblind palette is available in Settings.

Positioning

Overflow sits where the minimalist line drawing games meet the roguelite. It takes the visual clarity of that genre and removes the calm.

The nearest comparisons are Mini Metro and Mini Motorways as a visual anchor, Thronefall as the precedent for minimalist but tense, Against the Storm for roguelite management, and Loop Hero for the minimalist and roguelite crossover.

What it deliberately is not is relaxing. That word is load bearing for nearly every game in this visual space, and it is the wrong promise here. Overflow is a game about watching something you built start to fail and deciding what to sacrifice.

Asked and answered

Why does one Node ending the run not feel unfair? Because the grace window is real and the warning is early. A Node that hits its cap gets ten seconds before the run ends, twenty if a Runner is already assigned to it, and bringing it back under the cap resets the timer. Beyond that, new Nodes spawn within reach of your existing network and, while protected, receive no Signals and cannot overflow, specifically so a run cannot end because of where the game decided to put something.

Can you undo a bad Trace? Yes. One step on Z, refunds the infrastructure it placed, and works in every time state, including while paused.

Credits

Made by Sharkbowl Games, a London indie studio: Tarik Bensaria (Chief Shark and co-founder) and Shan Blackwood (Chief Tech Shark and co-founder). 3+ games shipped, 120K+ players reached.

Press enquiries and key requests: games@sharkbowlgames.com

Links

X	https://x.com/sharkbowlgames
YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2poXUJwWQ_3dDbrLTLrNmA
TikTok	https://www.tiktok.com/@sharkbowlgames
Reddit	https://www.reddit.com/user/Sharkbowl_Games/
Discord	https://discord.gg/WuBbUqdQWM
Steam	Steam page launches 19 November 2026
Announce trailer	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_cPKf99JnI
itch.io	Demo from 3 December 2026
Press contact	games@sharkbowlgames.com