What I Did Over IndieCade Break
By Richard Hoagland

In early August, Super Soul received an IndieCade nomination as one of 32 finalists from over 400 entries. IndieCade is a festival to support and recognize independent video game developers tackling innovative and experimental subject matter, likened to the Sundance Film Festival by the Los Angeles Times.

This nomination gave John and me, as Super Soul, the opportunity to travel to Culver City, California to show off our game "Open Source" and network with others in the game industry. We were honored and thrilled by the nomination and it has been a great opportunity to raise exposure for our game studio as well as the burgeoning game development scene here in Lexington, Kentucky.

In early October we made the trip to California. During the first day we attended IndieXchange, a day of panels and networking. We spent the day demonstrating our published Xbox game "Compromised" to other developers, publishers, and console makers such as Sony, Sega, and Activision. Along with fellow finalists, we learned practical skills in PR, marketing, and legal issues specific to the game industry.

For the duration of IndieCade, "Open Source" was installed in Fire Station 1 in downtown Culver City. The station was open to the public and received a constant flow of traffic, with an estimated 5,000 people moving through the show floor. With this exposure and the IndieCade promoters' emphasis on displaying the talents of small studios, we were interviewed by many notable game media outlets including G4, BBC, Kotaku, and Machinima. Despite being a tiring experience, it was incredible to show the game to so many enthusiastic players.

Based on the experimental nature of "Open Source", and its novel use of sound, we were invited to sit on a panel discussing the current status of sound in games and where the industry is headed. This was a notable milestone for us and was another opportunity to meet game developers. We made contacts with numerous developers from across the world, including Brazil, France, the United Kingdom and distinguished developers from here in the US. We had the incredible opportunity to meet with Steve Russell who developed the first video game at MIT over 40 years ago. Further we made several other connections with universities such as NYU and USC, which will be a great help in developing game curriculum in Kentucky.

Moving forward, the community will continue to reap the benefits of IndieCade. We have developed a relationship with San Francisco based Sifteo, a startup that came out of the MIT media lab. The Sifteo president and the lead designer presented to the local development group, RunJumpDev, and are planning an event with the group in November. Further with the growing game industry presence, the RunJumpDev group was invited to participate in the Indie Mega Booth at PAX East 2013. PAX East, held annually in Boston, is one of the largest gaming expos in the world, drawing in 70,000 visitors. The event will help develop international awareness for the Kentucky game community. None of these achievements would have been possible had we not attended IndieCade. *We would like to thank the Bluegrass Business Development Partnership for their support in making the trip possible.*