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MANADYNE

Posted By: Sticks

The Manadyne Corporation bears a shiny, newly-minted AA rating from the Corporate Court, and the sharks are starting to circle.

> In my professional opinion, Manadyne barely qualifies for AA status—I believe their petition was approved because they have so many business partners in the Big Ten, and to give themselves a chance to improve their security.

> Mr. Bonds

I didn't even hear about this Boston, UCAS-headquartered mega until they scored some UCAS government contracts, but apparently they've been making big waves in corporate magic circles since shortly after the corp was founded by MIT&T alumni Dr. Carolyn Winters in 2053. Manadyne had its 15 nanoseconds of fame in 2057 when the Great Dragon Dunkelzahn bequeathed them 80 million nuyen "to further their magical research in accordance with our standing agreement." I don't know what that means except the corp nearly doubled in size.

> I'm personally curious about the nature of the agreement between Manadyne and the old wyrm. I suspect the Draco Foundation might be keeping tabs on them to make sure they hold up their part of the bargain.

> Frosty

The main Manadyne complex is on the outskirts of Boston's tech corridor, with Mangadyne mostly squeezed into their Natick Labs facility (an old Army research installation the Winters' bought for a song). Additional offices and laboratories exist throughout the CAS, UCAS, and Quebec.

> Defense work can require some pretty precise specifications—hiring all UCAS citizens, in a physical location in the UCAS, with a node in the UCAS RTG, all materials from authorized UCAS manufacturers, security clearances—but that's the way to get government contracts.

> Picador

> Do they stamp "Made in the UCAS" on their spell patents, too?

> Baka Debaka

> No, but it can make it hard to infiltrate the corp for a robbery or an extraction if you've got a horrible Japanese accent—and those security clearances on fake SIDs cost money.

> Picador

THE OCCULT AND OCCULTECH

When you break it down, Manadyne is a directed research lab operating on a corporate model; it also floats a very limited number of real products through their Mangadyne division, all of it exclusively software. Their bread and butter is magical research (though that may be changing), paid for by some larger government or megacorp. Manadyne provides the Talent (usually recruited straight out of MIT&T, Harvard, and Boston University), libraries, and laboratories; some other corp provides them what they want researched and gives them a whack of cred.

It's not always that simple, natch. Manadyne accepts contracts for specific research and is expected to produce something salable or worthwhile at the end; in the form of a metamagic thesis, formula, or study, and they have deadlines, budget caps, and all the usual limitations. Sometimes (as in UCAS gov't contracts) they bid for the work against other megacorps, and other times they (as with Mitsuhaman Magical Services) they engage in collaborations, where researchers from either corp can interact, make use of their facilities, and tighter security can be implemented on the project than Manadyne can afford on its own.

> Which is why you sometimes see MCT security at Manadyne labs.

> Stone

> Still easier than hackin' an MCT lab for the same data.

> Pistons

When you look at magic as a business, a few problems jump out immediately: there is a very small market (about 1% of the population) and magic is expensive. If Manadyne focused on providing magical goods or magical services, there is no way they could be competitive with market giants like Pentacle Distributing, Inc. Instead, Manadyne approaches magic from an alternate market angle: manatech and thaumaturgical research.

RESEARCH THAUMATURGY

Trying to get rich selling fetishes is pretty much a losing proposition—but teach a shaman how to make a better fetish, and you can get rich off the intellectual property. Dr. Carolyn Winter's first big breakthrough at Manadyne was to codify a fundamental formula for a fetish as a unique enchantment. That might not sound like much, but it meant that making improvements for fetishes became a possibility. To this day, Winter's patented fetish formula is the thaumaturgical basis for most of the fetishes produced world wide (and a bedrock of Manadyne's bottom line).

> Back in the day, fetishes were so poorly made that half of them were completely exhausted after a single spell. I knew shamans that had dozens of the shoddy things, using one after another. Others were so weak that even if they retained their enchantment through repeated castings, they weren't much more than a psychological crutch. Today's fetishes are much more efficient and durable thanks to Manadyne.

> Lyran

> Not to mention it makes it possible to create new and exciting fetishes—that sounded less perverse in my head.

> Winterhawk

Winters likes to work her people, and is a strong believer in the adage that arcane information comes in handy—which is why Manadyne is constantly pumping out spell, spirit, and foci formulae. While the chances that someone will need a Slay Sasquatch spell at any given moment is small, anyone in the UCAS that really needs that spell has to buy it from Manadyne or one of its licensed dealers (Pentacle Press in North America or The Arcanum in Europe). Most of the researchers are actually student interns from MIT&T or Harvard's Theoretical Thaumaturgy program: the kids get paid to research formulae, and Manadyne splits the patent with the researcher.

> That's actually fairly clever. Most corporate research departments will focus on the immediately useful stuff, but there are a potentially infinite number of spells out there, and they'll never really depreciate in value unless the patent runs out.

> Haze

Of course, the real meat and potatoes comes from contract gigs. Manadyne has a good reputation for advanced warding techniques, metaplanar exploration, and custom spell and foci research.

>>>>> BEGIN SIDEBAR

IN DEVELOPMENT

Posted By: Winterhawk

I pulled in a few favors and got a list of some of the items currently “in development” at Manadyne—half of this stuff shouldn't work, but somebody's paying meganuyen for it anyway.

- *10 Threats* – A by-order grimoire contracted by the FBI and destined for Knight Errant's Firewatch division; this has spells specifically designed for ten truly unruly free spirits that need to be put down. Apparently three researchers have died on astral quests related to this project.
- *Assay on Blood Magic* – A collaborative effort with Mitsuhamas's famed Research Unit 13, this is basically a survey on what is known of blood magic in the Sixth World so far—which includes actually assaying and assensing some blood fetishes and other materials supplied by Mitsuhamas, but no attempts to actually reverse-engineer the techniques.
- *Extended Projection Metamagic Thesis* – This research project is being conducted by Dr. Winters herself and a small staff, the goal of this metamagic technique is to extend the length of time a magician can astrally project, based on a grant from the Draco Foundation.
- *Mana Batteries* – Apparently NeoNET actually sold this failed project to Manadyne, who are picking through the documents for clues and creating some sort of foci to enhance the Absorption metamagic.

- *Mindspeech* – Spell research aimed at magically communicating with dolphins or elephants; early versions of the spell enabled the subjects to sense and possibly share information on emotional states, but the lead researcher was extracted by Tan Tien.
- *Postcognition Metamagic Thesis* – This is intended to be an advanced version of the Psychometry metamagic, enabling the user to “see” hundreds or thousands of years into the history of an object. Contracted research by a private party, apparently with some special research materials supplied.
- *Spellsoft* – Spin-off of a Mitsuhamma-funded project with the avowed aim is to put an entire spell on a skillsoft, allowing a magician to swap out spells on the fly, Manadyne is just attempting to create a tutorsoft for spells.
- *Tarncloak* – Some low-priority project the CAS military keeps throwing money at year after year, this is your actual cloak of invisibility—or poncho of camouflage, something like that—involving quickened spells. Apparently the latest batch of products is ready for testing by the CAS Army Rangers down in Ft. Benning, Georgia.

>>>> **END SIDEBAR**

MANATECH

Mundanes cannot use magic. Well known fact. (Except for magical compounds, quickened spells...you get the idea.) Magical goods themselves are a niche market with low demand—sure, there’s a steady demand on Acme Magic Paint for binding spirits, a single, well-cared for focus can last you a life time and still be passed down to your kids. (Lyran tells me the secondary market in foci is part of the reason the price is so high, but that seems counterintuitive to me.)

Anywho, Manadyne was one of the first corps to seize on the idea that you don’t have to sell magic, you can sell ‘softs specifically tailored for magicians—and if you do it smart, mundanes will want to buy it too. So while most of Manadyne’s research shamans are trying to paint pretty pictoglyphs that let them grant flowery deaths to all and sundry, a handful of practical-minded individuals are engaged in turning out actual software products. Just as with their main research focus, a lot of these are contracted or subsidized efforts—HermeTech paid Manadyne to work up the specialized agent for their Theurgy-oriented alchemical microfac, for example.

> Wait, so these guys are making money off magicians by not aiming at magicians, and making manatech that isn’t actual manatech?

> Stone

> Let me explain something, since apparently you’ve decided to be as dense as your namesake. Your average sorcerer on the street, they are the Awakened equivalent of technicians; they don’t have to understand the spell formula, they just make it go. The research shamans are magical engineers, taking the practical knowledge and putting it to actual purpose to create a working formula or technique. Theoretical thaumaturges are Awakend scientists or dreamers, straight conceptualists working with ideas and theory without an eye toward application. The idiot on the street with the Magical Neo-Postmodern wardrobe is a layman. Now, you don’t need to be Awakened to play with magic at a purely conceptual level, or to work out a formulae, or to put on a pair of WiccanBrass knucks and leave inverted pentagrams in people’s foreheads as a cool and stylish way to pass the time. And all three of those people *also* have cred to burn, but can’t use magical gewgaws. So they’re the ones Manadyne is selling to.

> Sticks

A good portion of Manadyne’s manatech takes the form of knowsofts and subject-specific datasofts produced by their Mangadyne division, though they’re marketed through Manadyne’s normal distribution channels like The Arcanum.

MANGADYNE

Mangadyne was Manadyne’s “brother” corporation—a public corp created by Cale Winters, Dr. Carolyn Winters’ younger brother, in 2054. For quite a few years, Mangadyne flourished as it produced some of the prettiest code in the Matrix for the like of the Pacific Prosperity League, the Malaysian Independent bank, and more rich Korean investors than Cale probably knew existed. Unfortunately, Mangadyne made a disastrous foray into personal electronics in the 2060s that sapped their coffers, and the entire company database was wiped out in the Crash 2.0. Manadyne bought up the outstanding Mangadyne stock for centimes on the nuyen and merged the two companies. Today, Mangadyne is a division of Manadyne.

> There’s more to the story than that. Manadyne started out as a privately-held corporation, but Mangadyne was public—by merging the corps, Manadyne effectively became a public megacorp too, allowing Manadyne to float stock on the public market without going through the hassle of an IPO and continue to fund their research and production. Right now, Carolyn and Cale Winters remain majority shareholders, but Caimbueul-Dupree Holdings has about 12% of their stock.

> Mr. Bonds

- > That son of a bitch-elf. I'll kill him.
- > Frosty

- > Elf senses...tingling!
- > Netcat

- > I didn't know you could wiggle your ears, 'Cat.
- > /dev/grrl

Actually, Mangadyne has been doing real well these days. Without the hassle of running an international megacorp, Cale Winters has gone back to churning out amazing code with hand-drawn manga visuals. The Mangadyne Deva operating system (with optional magical neopostmodern skins) has been a runaway best seller world-wide, and the Manadyne Archmage skillsoft cluster has proven to be a strong seller as well. Unless halted by industrial espionage or a timely extraction, Mangadyne seems set to continue churning out both competitive proggies and magic-themed software for the foreseeable future.

PROJECT MONAD

Mangadyne also has its own (very small by comparison with the rest of the corporation) research area, which is dedicated to Project Monad—an ongoing project exploring the abilities of technomancers and attempting to develop equipment that can expand on or share their abilities. Word on the street is they have experimental hitcher jacks that enable some of the project's technomancer subjects to take researchers along to the Resonance Realms.

- > Word on the street also said three of those said researchers are in comas, and the fourth thought the left side of his brain developed its own personality and was out to kill the right side.
- > Clockwork

- > True. Project Monad gets points for being the most public and humane ongoing TM-research project I know of, though. They only accept volunteers and never attempt any experiment that there is any evidence will harm a TM and their abilities—I just wish they would knock off an the virtuakinetic lingo, it's getting old.
- > Netcat

- > NEWSFLASH! NeoNET and Mitsuhamma just announced that they will be taking part in a joint share-and-tell with Mangadyne regarding technomancer research, and the three corps are going to present a joint report on Technomancer abilities for the annual Matrix Live Research Symposium, which is going to be held in Washington, D.C. this year.
- > Plan 9

- > Oooh, to crash that little party. What a datasteal that wi—er, would be.
- > Pistons

ONE MIND, ONE PERSONA

Not actually a part of Mangadyne, OMOP is Boston, UCAS headquartered non-profit organization founded by Cale Winters to research a cure for Artificially Induced Psychotropic Schizophrenia Syndrome, a condition which continues to effect many of the survivors of the Crash 2.0. The organization is partially funded by sales of Mangadyne Deva, which donates a portion of its profits to OMOP.

- > <snort> A portion of its sales can be a fraction of a nuyen. This is just PR, plain and simple.
- > Clockwork

- > You are a horrible little ork, you know that?
- > Netcat

>>>>> BEGIN SHADOWSEA NANOPIC

CAROLYN WINTERS

B. 2027, Lowell, Mass., UCAS; graduated MIT&T 2047, Doctorate in Thaumaturgy 2048, MBA from Brown University 2051. Founded Manadyne Corporation 2053. President and CEO of Manadyne 2053-2070; Chief Manatechnology Officer 2070-present.

Dr. Carolyn Winters claims two moments changed her life: meeting the Great Dragon Dunkelzahn in 2052 and meeting her domestic life partner Susan Llewellyn in 2061. Winters has been described as a tireless and energetic researcher, and boasts a hundred and fifteen patents under her name for innovations in the magical arts.

Personal Quote: “Mister Knight, stop hitting on my girlfriend or I’m going to turn your testicles to goo.”

CALE WINTERS

B. 2029, Natick, Mass., UCAS; graduated MIT&T 2050, post-graduate work at the Japanese Institute of Science and Technology, no degree awarded. Founded Mangadyne Corporation 2054. President and CTO of Mangadyne 2054-2070; CTO of Manadyne and Vice President of Mangadyne Division 2070-present.

Cale Winters has been described as one of Boston’s most eligible bachelors, and is a regular of Boston society’s technological gatherings. Winters is a known maniac depressive, and regarded as a talented, single-minded, and obsessive programmer, often entering “coding binges” where he stays awake for seven or eight days at a time.

Personal Quote: “I don’t want to make combat programs. The world has enough weapons. An icon with a combat proggie, it’s like seeing an angel walking around heaven with a flaming sword, y’know? I mean, what does an angel have to guard against in heaven? You’re already there. Heaven. Why would you want to go somewhere else?”

>>>>> END SHADOWSEA NANOPIC