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 - o Sony PSP
 - o PlayStation 3
- Xbox
 - o Xbox 360
- GameCube
- Revolution
- Game Boy Advance Nintendo DS
- N-Gage
- Wireless
- PC

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- News
- Reviews
- Previews
- Screenshots
- Movies Columns
- Features
- Cheats
- Forums

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Magic: The Gathering Online 3.0 and the Theory of Virtual Objects. (PC)

The success of Magic: The Gathering Online may indicate the future of MMOs.

By Allen 'Delsyn' Rausch | May 27, 2005

At first glance, Wizards of the Coast often seems like an odd company to have such a large booth presence at E3. Oh sure, it's the holder of the Dungeons & Dragons property which is currently licensed out in videogame form to Atari and Turbine. Dungeons & Dragons videogames and their other licensed properties are more than adequately represented by their license holders, though. Every other product done by the company belongs squarely in the paper-and-pencil RPG world -- except one. That product is Magic: The Gathering Online. Launched several years ago, it's quietly become an enormous success for the company, and as the game prepares to enter its third version, the lessons learned by the company may have a profound impact on the future of gaming.

"We always laugh when we see MMO developers or companies arguing over the nitty-gritty of virtual objects." Justin Ziran, Brand Manager for Magic: The Gathering said to me during my demonstration of Magic: The Gathering Online 3.0. "We worked a lot of that out with our customer base years ago." Ziran's not kidding. One of the biggest bones of contention right now in the MMO scene is the secondary aftermarket for virtual items.

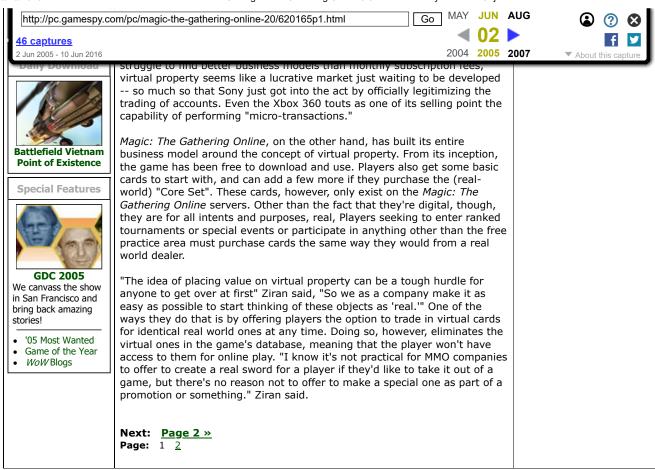




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1/2





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