



PSI-PUNK

Corps and Criminals



by
Jacob Wood

Crime Pays for Some

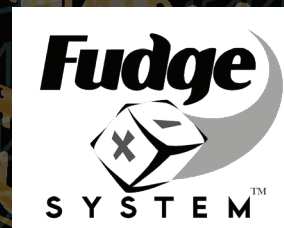
What's the difference between a megacorporation and a mafia? One of them isn't being watched by the government.

They say absolute power corrupts absolutely, but some would argue that corruption comes first. Getting to the top requires cunning, guile, and influence. *Staying* there requires wealth, prestige, and firepower. Great leaders possess all of these qualities, whether they run the corporations which control our lives or the criminal empires which keep the corps in check.

Corps and Criminals introduces you to several different types of organizations to use in your next game of Psi-punk. From street gangs who are working their way up to the brightest beacons of capitalism, you'll find plenty of organizations to align with—or against.

This book includes:

- 8 Megacorps, each with a unique corporate culture, advice for GMs on how they fit into your game and tips for players on how to include them in your background.
- 12 Cartels of 3 varieties: ghost cartels, arms cartels, and trafficking cartels. GM advice on how each of these organizations fit into your world and how to interact with them.
- 14 gangs with their own motives and methods, with sample NPCs for their leaders and goons.
- 7 Mafias from around the world, including sample NPCs for their bosses and henchmen.
- Plenty of inspiration for Game Masters and players.





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Contest Entries

The following people contributed content via the first Psi-punk Design Contest, held in July 2013 in conjunction with the Dorkland! Blog (<http://dorkland.blogspot.com>).

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Andrew Y.	The Cabal (page 23)
Gwen Gray	Fantasma Biotécnica (page 25)
Merry Wilson	Espessura (page 30)
Maire Gray	Muertos Carmesí (page 33)

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About Fudge

Fudge is a roleplaying game written by Steffan O’Sullivan, with extensive input from the Usenet community of rec.games.design and other online forums. The core rules of Fudge are available free on the Internet at <http://www.fudgerpg.com> and other sites. Fudge was designed to be customized, and may be used with any gaming genre. Fudge gamemasters and game designers are encouraged to modify Fudge to suit their needs, and to share their modifications and additions with the Fudge community. The Fudge game system is copyrighted ©2000, 2005 by Grey Ghost Press, Inc., and is available for use under the Open Game License. See the fudgerpg.com website for more information.

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Megacorps

1

No entity in the world holds as much wealth and power as a mega-corporation. Even governments bend to the will and beg for the influence of these powerful organizations which run nearly every facet of our daily lives. From manufacturing and selling the clothes we wear and nano-food we eat to establishing armed militaries and peacekeeping forces, mega-corporations truly run the show.

Mega-corporations, also known as megacorps or corps, vary wildly in the types of services they offer, goods they manufacture, and people they employ. They do all hold one thing in common, though: they operate worldwide. Every mega-corp has offices in multiple countries

and across multiple continents. The largest of them even have bases of operations on the moon, although that territory is still primarily an international safe-haven.

Megacorps have adopted their own corporate cultures. Employees often dress the same, behave the same, and in some cases even speak their own corporate language regardless of which country the employee is from. Though slight regional differences do exist, it's easy to tell one Macroware employee apart from a Magicorp employee no matter which continent they're on. Most employees even identify as corporate citizens first and national citizens second.

MACROW



1

Megacorps in Your Game

Megacorps play a prominent role in nearly every game of **Psi-punk**; after all, it's hard to ignore their power and influence. Whether used in character backgrounds or as a plot device, megacorps make a great backdrop for many stories and adventures.

These companies make great villains for epic plots. They represent everything that is wrong with the world today—their unsustainable farming practices caused the Great Famine (see the **Psi-punk** core book) and left everyone dependent on nano-food, their push for corporate governance caused the NAU to develop policies that favor the rich and powerful and weaken the lower classes, and their private militaries and police forces often do little to protect the people most in need of protection. It's easy to come up with entire campaign arcs which revolve around the shortcomings of these massive powers.

They don't always need to be painted as big bad guys, though. Most employees of mega-corporations are just normal people trying to make a living. Player characters may come from corporate backgrounds, and they may even be proud to be part of a corporation that develops a lot of helpful new technologies for the world.

Megacorps and Player Characters

It's likely that at least one of the characters in any campaign is a corporate citizen of some sort. They may be drones who constantly tow the corporate line and believe their employer is infallible, but more likely they're just a person trying to make a living. They may be corporate employees by day, street runners by night, or they may be involved with a corporation's military arm and join a team as a hired mercenary or corporate spy.

Citizens who are also street runners have to be careful not to let their secret life become known. They're somewhat like masked superheroes, only they're just as likely to shoot someone as to save them, provided the pay is right.

Like masked vigilantes from the comic books of old, street runners tend to cross the boundaries between what is legal and what is a grey area. Few corporations tolerate the illegal activities almost always embarked upon by runners, even if many of them do secretly hire these mercenaries to do their own bidding. As they say, "it's only wrong if you get caught." So don't get caught.

Being one of The Man's drones may come with perks, especially if you hold Rank within the corporation, but these come with the cost of having to live a double life. GMs may allow player characters to take a Fault such as "secret life" when the player decides to be a corporate citizen, but the character will need to take great care not to get caught doing something seedy.

Corporate Citizens and Rank

Recall from page 36 of the **Psi-punk** core book that Rank is a skill, usually linked to Status, that says a lot about a character's standing within the corporate hierarchy. Rank is required to purchase and carry what would otherwise be illegal firearms and other gear, and it also lets a character use his influence within an organization to gain some sort of benefit.

Not all corporate citizens have Rank within their corporation. The baseline, low-level employee has a Rank of Poor (-2), which is the same as an untrained skill. These characters may be employees and are entitled to wear the uniform and speak the language, but they answer to everyone and delegate to no one.

Characters with Mediocre (-1) Rank aren't much better off. They're floor supervisors in call centers or manufacturing plants, or they're some other form of low-level management. They can tell entry-level workers what to do, but they're just another cog in the system as far as the broader organization is concerned. Fair (+0) Rank is only slightly better; these characters are managers to supervisors and may oversee an entire team of employees, but they still have a lot of upper management to answer to.

Corporate citizens with Good (+1) Rank are those who've truly sold some part of their soul to the Man. They may oversee an entire call center or production department, or they may be the lead accountant for a single branch of a franchise.

Great (+2) Rank employees are regional managers. They oversee an entire geographical region and occasionally receive travel perks. They may receive bonuses for good performance in their region, but they are also subject to severe scrutiny and penalties for underperforming branches. Still, they get to call a lot of the shots.

Superb (+3) Rank is the highest that most player characters can reasonably expect to attain. They are regional Vice Presidents, ranking officials in the corporate military or highly trusted spies with high levels of clearance. They have a lot of pull with the organization, but

the company demands a lot of their time and constantly watches over their shoulder. It can be difficult to be part of a street running team without risking everything, but they may be able to join a campaign based on some other premise (such as joining a team that infiltrates a rival corp or government).

Wonderful (+4) and Phenomenal (+5) Rank characters are exceptionally rare, especially where player characters are concerned. These may be Vice Presidents or Presidents of regional or even national branches of a corporation. Simply too much of their time is in demand for the character to lead any sort of secret life, and characters with such Rank are never sent to do field ops.

Specific Megacorps

There are many corporations in the world today and it's important to know who they are. Even if you're not one of their drones, chances are the actions of these entities will have some effect on your daily life.

Die Oberbank

Helen sat at her desk, staring at the clock. It currently read 17:58:29, 30, 31... another minute and a half and her weekend would begin. She tapped idly at a few prompts on her workstation, closed out of an open account she'd been working on, and got ready to clock out.

18:00:00. *Click.* She was free for the weekend.

She grabbed her belongings and headed for the building's exit. Helen walked through the exit scanner and placed her hands in the yellow circles. A quick scan, a green light, and a cheerful beep were enough to tell the security guard she wasn't trying to make off with any of the company's equipment.

"Have a nice weekend, Stan," said Helen as she stepped out of the scanner.

Stan tipped his hat and opened the door for her. He never said anything, but a hat tip was enough for Helen to know she was still on his good side.

As she walked out the door, Helen loosened the tie around her neck. Working for the largest bank in the world had its perks, but the dress code was killer. She couldn't wait to slip into her weekend clothes: a loose shirt, comfortable pants, Kevlar vest, and a pair of pistols. Now that's comfort.

Just a few hours later she was sitting in Radcliff's Pub, one of the quieter dives on this side of Die Oberbank's district. She liked Radcliff's because the music was never turned up too loud—none of that psychopop or tech-metal those kids listened to these days—and the fluorescent lights seemed dimmer here than at most bars.

Helen ordered a nano-beer before glancing around the room at the clientele. She spotted the man she was looking for and casually headed over to him. He was plain looking, but the heavily-wired bodyguard sitting next to him was enough to tell any astute observer that he was a Dealer.

"Helen," said the man as she approached his table. "Just the woman I was hoping to see. You interested in a job?"

Die Oberbank is the world's largest financial institution. Formed from a series of Swiss and German bank mergers, DOB is known for its superior security and don't-ask-don't-tell policies. Though the bank is headquartered in Bern, it has branches in nearly every major city in the world.

During the World Financial Collapse of 2052, most major financial institutions crumbled. Much of the world was impacted by a sudden decrease in investments, offshore account closures, and property foreclosures. The demise of the world's leading firms left a hole to be filled, and Die Oberbank—one of the few stable institutions—was in the prime position to fill it.

The company promised and delivered sweeping changes to global banking practices. They successfully lobbied to end the Federal Reserve bank in the NAU, which they pointed to as the reason for the collapse. Meanwhile, Die Oberbank began the switch to a world currency, usable by any participating business or person and backed by DOB. Before long the Neumark was the de-facto standard for currency, and today nearly every government has adopted it.

Corporate Culture

As a leading financial institution, die Oberbank likes its employees to keep a high class appearance. Every employee wears a suit and tie to work, regardless of gender or regional location. They value professionalism and do not tolerate laziness or insubordination. It's a demanding, high-stress atmosphere, but those who can stand it are financially rewarded.

Not every DOB citizen is wealthy, but their average wages are higher than other corporations. This makes even entry-level jobs desirable, but fewer than five percent of all job applicants make it to the interview process. Those who are lucky enough to work for DOB are the envy of their friends.

Die Oberbank keeps a close watch on its employees to prevent theft and embezzlement. They frown upon their employees having cybernetics because Brain Banks and Cyber Eyes can make it especially easy to scan and memorize sensitive account details. Only the company's private security teams are allowed to have any sort of cybernetic enhancements. The same holds true for magic devices and psionic powers, which means nearly every DOB employee is a normal, unmodded human.

Die Oberbank in Your Game

Die Oberbank is an enticing target for many criminals, but only the most experienced cartels or street runners would consider trying to pull a job on them. Their private security teams are second-to-none, and their anti-ghost software has never been surpassed. If a team of runners were to somehow bypass their physical, cyber, and Astral defenses, they would certainly be able to make off with an impressive haul. Of course, they'd probably be dead within the week.

DOB employs private security to monitor all aspects of their business, but they aren't above hiring outside help. Though DOB isn't a loan shark, they do occasionally need to hire muscle to collect especially large debts. They legally hire mercenaries under the Bounty Hunter Act, which allows a corporation to seek justice for slights against them.

Though a campaign could include adventures design to infiltrate DOB, it may be just as interesting for players to be a team of collections agents for the company. Collectors have the authority to do whatever it takes to get the job done.

Die Oberbank Characters

Though not necessarily as straight-laced as MSI employees, DOB characters tend to follow the rules more than most. They are wealthier than other characters, but don't possess any cybernetics unless they happen to be part of a DOB security team.

Street runners aren't necessarily sanctioned by DOB, but the company does often hire bounty hunters to do their bidding. Characters may be part-time or freelance workers for die Oberbank, in which case they may be allowed to possess magic, psionic powers, or cyberware.

Bounty hunters are never given access to the company's own data or account information; any character wishing to obtain that information must be on the company's full-time payroll, and that means being a vanilla human.

Ranking employees of DOB enjoy plenty of perks, but they're constantly under scrutiny by their employer.

Kojicorp

The chemical mixture Akamu was working on was just about right, and he knew he was getting close to a breakthrough. Just a few more drops of the red stuff and the new sonar-enhancement drug would be ready for testing.

"There," he said aloud to no one in particular. "Time to test this out."

Akamu wandered over to the cage where they kept the rats. Kojicorp was using them to test new psi-enhancing drugs, but that meant having to breed special psychic rodents. For some reason though, Akamu didn't think it was strange to have sonarkinetic rats making ultra high-frequency squeaks. In fact, he found it comforting because his own sonarkinesis powers were just strong enough to let him hear them.

The scientist was just about to administer a dose of the new drug to his favorite rat, Khanyou, when the rodent's ears perked up. It quickly scurried into the back of its cage and began shaking.

"What's wrong?" Akamu perked up his own ears and focused his power to enhance his auditory senses.

Bam. Scream. Bam. "Get down!" Tata-tat-tat.

That didn't sound good. In fact, it was downright frightening. The sounds of gunfire were drawing nearer his lab, and Akamu made a split-second decision. He opened his mouth, threw back his head, and downed the experimental concoction he was about to feed to his rats.

BAM-BAM-BAM. The sound grew exponentially louder as Akamu's sonarkinesis power jettisoned to new levels. It was painfully loud, and he had to focus all of his thoughts on controlling the ability. With effort, the explosions grew fainter, but he could tell they were drawing nearer.

Ducking behind a table, Akamu held his breath and waited. He could hear voices shouting to one another as they searched nearby rooms for something. What it was, he couldn't tell. What he could tell was that they were almost to his location.

The door to his lab burst open, and Akamu heard three distinct voices shouting at one another. He concentrated his thoughts on creating a distraction in the opposite corner of the room and hoped the assailants fell for it.

"Over there!" he heard one man shout.

Bingo. Akamu poked his head up from behind the desk and watched the three men as they turned their attention toward the opposite corner of the room. They were obviously hired guns, because they weren't wearing uniforms or other identifying marks. He couldn't be sure why they were there, but he wasn't in the mood to start asking questions.

Akamu conjured a rattling noise in the corner, and sure enough one of the mercenaries took the bait. Just as he fired his weapon, Akamu caused the sound of the gunshot to amplify at least ten fold. The resulting blast was enough to shatter a nearby beaker, but more importantly it shattered the man's eardrums. He fell to the ground, red liquid seeping from his ears, screaming in agony.

The other two instinctively clapped their hands over their ears. They weren't close enough to the blast to have been severely injured by it, but it wasn't comfortable for anyone in the room. Akamu noticed the rats weren't terribly fond of it either, because they were emitting ultrasonic squeaks of terror.

One of the men turned toward the rats and pointed his gun. He squeezed the trigger and the rodents went silent, their tiny bodies turning to a fine red mist.

"NO!" Akamu shouted as he glanced over and saw what remained of Khanyou's body splattered against the floor. He gave away his own position, but he was done playing defense.

The two remaining mercenaries whirled toward Akamu, their guns instinctively pointed in his direction. It was too late for them though. Akamu had already begun channeling ultrasonic energy into a deadly blast of sonic force that shattered the bodies of the intruders along with everything else in their half of the lab.

The devastation was massive, but the threat was eliminated. And it appeared as though the new mixture worked just fine.

A technology and paranormal research company from the Asia-Pacific Union, Kojicorp formed in 2070 shortly after Magicorp opened its doors. Though it took them years before they got their hands on Magicorp's technology to reverse-engineer it, they immediately began researching ways to enhance the abilities of mentals in an effort to counter their rival company's efforts.

The company has one of the most knowledgeable Psionics and Magic divisions on the planet, and they recruit many of the world's top psychic minds. Most of their research focuses on how to enhance the potential of gifted mentals, which puts them directly at odds with Magicorp. Despite this, many of their consultants and researchers are non-mentals who possess several magic devices which they reverse-engineer and enhance—much to Magicorp's chagrin.

Because Kojicorp is headquartered in the APU, they don't consider themselves subject to many of the patents held by companies from other countries. This doesn't win them many friends, but their attitude toward patent law does afford them the ability to do what they please with the technology of others.

Unfortunately for Kojicorp, this means they must defend themselves not just in court, but from corporate espionage and sabotage. They are constantly involved in shadow wars with other corporations, which is costly in both wealth and manpower. Still, they have developed some new technologies with extreme potential and are not afraid to defend themselves against rivals in an effort to produce and market their new toys for others.

Among these technologies are psi-enhancing drugs which improve a subject's innate abilities, prototype magic devices which emulate complex combinations of powers (such as a device which combines both *photokinesis* and *sonarkinesis* into a single cloaking ability), and so forth. The company is rumored to be researching methods to create new magic devices which do not fail when used by innately psychic beings, which could have the potential to dramatically alter the state of magic and once more place mentals squarely in the lead.

Corporate Culture

Kojicorp is a research-oriented company. Most of their ranking staff are scientists, engineers, and practical philosophers. The abundance of highly skilled, incredibly intelligent workers has a dramatic impact on overall company culture; namely, competition amongst research teams is fierce and new discoveries are lavishly rewarded.

Lower-tier employees consist of standard security agents, customer service workers, and janitorial staff. Kojicorp outsources very little of this work to other companies even though they could potentially save money in doing so; they consider their trade secrets to be too sensitive to risk falling into the wrong hands (ironic, given how their company is built on the trade secrets of others).

Though the company offers ample paid vacation time, very little of it is ever actually used. Perhaps no other company breeds as many workaholics as Kojicorp, and the company does little to promote the use of these employment benefits to existing workers.

The company is unable to sell many of their magic devices within the NAU due to patent violations, but they still wind up on the black market and are circulated by means of criminal organizations such as The Cabal. Some of their other, more notable innovations are not inviolate of patents and are therefore legally distributable, such as their psi-enhancing drugs. Though technically legitimate, many powerful companies oppose their adoption due to the risks involved with granting even more power to psychics.

Kojicorp in Your Game

Kojicorp has the potential to be a powerful asset or a terrible hindrance to your players. Those who sympathize with their psi-enhancements are likely to find them a great asset while players with Magicorp backgrounds may not be as pleased by what the company is doing.

The company offers a lot of potential plot devices for your campaign. Players may be asked to steal trade secrets from other organizations and deliver them to Kojicorp, or they may be asked to defend against their espionage practices. GMs can use the company to introduce new experimental magic devices into the game or devise potent psychic enemies with powers far beyond what the players may have encountered so far.

The shadow wars alluded to by the company's introduction are perfect staging grounds for many missions; after all, street runners are at the very heart of many such conflicts. Companies don't like to use the people on their payroll to initiate attacks on rivals, so they often hire disposable street runners to do their bidding.

Kojicorp Characters

For PCs, Kojicorp is a powerful organization to be affiliated with. Ranking officials often have powerful contacts within the organization and are given access to potent new magic devices. Psychics who are employed by Kojicorp are likely to have undergone some experi-

mental test treatment to enhance their powers (possibly with a few unwelcome side-effects). Whatever the case may be, if a player comes from Kojicorp he's bound to have a powerful ally.

On the other hand, Kojicorp also inherently has its drawbacks. Players who are Kojicorp employees (or even ex-employees) probably do not get along well with Magicorp employees, and the former company is far more economically powerful. Players with Kojicorp backgrounds may also have issues understanding foreign customs, and they're also likely to be highly competitive by nature.

Macroware

For a corporate drone, Kathy Ohms was pretty street-savvy. She may be one of Macroware's low-ranking head-set jockies at the local call center, but she's not an unskilled worker. In fact, she turned down an offer to join the company's Ghost Security division just so she could have more time to freelance outside of work.

Now she was regretting that decision. Being on the team may have eaten up more of her free time, but it would have given her valuable insight into the company's spectral firewalls and anti-ghost measures. That knowledge would be really handy right about now, given that she was about to launch an attack on one of the company's systems.

Kathy steeled her mind and focused. She may not have that insight, but she's no novice ghost. She concentrated on the electromagnetic field surrounding her, the one that let her merge with the 'Net. If she could just mask her body's own signal to make it look like a normal application attempting to access the server, she'd be able to bypass that firewall in no time. Bingo.

"I'm in, boys," Kathy sent a text message out to her companions who were standing guard over her. She could have brought them along for the ride, but the distraction may have made it more difficult to do her job. She was good, but not that good.

Even though the system regarded her as a native application, Kathy knew she wasn't in the clear. If one of those ghost busters happened to wander by while she was poking around, she'd have to avoid them at all costs—even if that meant abandoning the mission.

As she searched the database for the client's records, she wondered if she should reconsider the job offer.

"Found it, boys!" she messaged to her crew as she located a record marked *Belmont, Geoffery*.

"Drop it, thief!" Kathy didn't so much hear the command as interpret the binary string being flung at her.

With little choice, she abandoned the file and severed her connection to the 'Net before she could be tethered by security. She then made a mental note to inquire about that position on Monday.

Macroware is the result of over 50 years of technology company acquisitions and mergers. What started as two major computer hardware and software companies joining forces eventually became the world's leading computer company, a one-stop monopoly shop for all of the world's computer needs. Though their industry dominance is profound, Macroware keeps their prices low to ensure that the public, governments, and other corporations don't try to form any start-ups that might challenge their position of power.

This is the company responsible for the tablet computers that nearly everyone in the world carries, in addition to the global network that links them all together. Macro-ware also writes the software for nearly every functional piece of technology from automobiles to complex security algorithms. It's no wonder that this is the world's wealthiest and largest company, employing more citizens worldwide than any other corporation on Earth.

Though enormously influential, Macroware sees little benefit in attempting to take any sort of governmental power. It is more prudent for a company which supplies security software and hardware to every country on earth to remain neutral; taking some political stance would certainly cause them to fall out of favor with many of the countries in which they operate.

Many rogues have attempted to infiltrate Macroware for a variety of reasons, but few of them ever succeed. In most circumstances, the infiltrators are after valuable information that Macroware might have on a rival company, person, or nation; indeed, the world's largest software giant may know a little something about everyone, but that information is next-to-impossible to get to thanks to the company's high-tech security.

Macroware employs a large number of highly skilled Ghosts to secure their computer systems, meaning that anyone who steps into the 'Net and attempts to infiltrate their network is sure to meet with fierce, and sometimes deadly, competition. It is also rumored that a number of their top security experts are Wraiths who patrol the Astral Plane and watch for invaders from all angles.

Corporate Culture

Macroware employees the world over enjoy a high-tech lifestyle; not surprising considering who they work for. They enjoy small discounts on the company's tech, from personal computing devices to high-end vehicle gadgets, and for many it's a point of prestige to show off their new toys before everyone else can get them.

Nearly every citizen, from entry-level workers to top executives, is decked out in streetware and the company even hosts an annual "Mod Your Bod" contest to showcase the most unusual or extreme chromejobs. Last year's winner was an accountant who programmed her case lights to flash green every time her department earned some amount of revenue; it was a simple mod, but the judges loved watching their company make money.

Macroware employees are encouraged to work closely together to improve products across all lines. The result is a culture of openness, and they pride themselves in being one of the most widely accepting corporations. That's not to say there isn't occasional in-fighting and rivalry, but as big business is concerned Macroware is perhaps the friendliest place to work.

Macroware in Your Game

As one of the only computer manufacturers in the world, Macroware is sure to touch the lives of every character. It would be rare to find anyone not living with the Amazonia Luddites who didn't own at least a few Macroware devices.

The company is dominant in the tech industry, but they aren't completely ruthless—at least not outwardly. They keep their prices low to keep people complacent; nobody likes a monopoly which uses its power to suck people dry, but a monopoly which seems to act fairly and in the best interest of the people is more tolerable.

Behind the scenes, Macroware likes to pull the strings. They supply tech to every country in the world, but that means they can cut off anyone who doesn't play by their rules. It's a quiet game of dominance, but one that doesn't go wholly unnoticed. Many other corporations and nations hire street runners to infiltrate Macroware and uncover secrets that may be used to put an end to their power.

Macroware Characters

Characters with backgrounds as Macroware employees are probably technology-minded individuals. They may be hackers, psi-jackers, or even ghosts. Characters with a Rank of Good or better enjoy access to some of the company's unique hardware and software, but the company's biggest secrets and most tightly-secured systems are still off limits to them.

Not every Macroware employee is a tech-head, though. The company still needs accountants, customer service reps, marketers, security guards, and so forth. While even these employees enjoy some amount of technical knowledge, it isn't necessarily their focus.

Magicorp

Salamander's team was getting close. In another minute or two, they'd be inside Magicorp's Factory 21, the place where they manufacture about half of their *antipsi* tech. If they can shut down operations, even for a short while, it would mean a huge blow to the organization.

"Phreak, you still with me?" asked Salamander through their Brainwave.

"Still here, Sal. I'm working on bringing down the building's security cameras, but they're guarded by *antipsi*. Naturally," Phreak responded.

Phreak was one of the best psi-jackers Sal knew. He hadn't expected Factory 21's cyber security to pose such a challenge, even though he knew their defenses were sure to be tough.

"What about you, Slade?" Sal didn't like that Slade had been silent for several minutes, but he knew the thief worked best when he wasn't distracted by conversation.

"Just waiting for those cameras to go down so I can hack this lock," Slade responded. "What's taking so long, Phreak?"

"Like I said, it's *antipsi*. And something else, I think. Something I've never seen before. But I think I've got it... there! Now you should be free to do your part."

Slade quietly crept up toward the factory's side door and started running diagnostics on the lock when an unfamiliar voice yelled at him to stop.

"Not today, scum!" was the last thing Sal heard coming through Slade's communicator before shots rang out in the night.

Magicorp is one of the world's largest and most prominent corporations. Founded in 2069 by former members of the Anti-Psi League, Magicorp's mission is to put psi-like technology into the hands of every normal citizen, thus evening the playing field between normals and mentals. This technology, which they have dubbed "magic", emulates psionic abilities in nearly every way but doesn't always come cheap.

Demand for Magicorp's technology is on the rise, and nearly every normal citizen with a moderate income has at least some piece of magic equipment in their home. Most of the magic is reserved for higher-paying clients though, such as wealthy citizens, governments, and even other corporations.

Magicorp also uses its psi-like equipment to dabble in healthcare (providing equipment to nearly every hospital on the globe) and security (providing magic security systems to consumers, governments, and other corporations). They have also begun to experiment in the fields of bio-tech, cybernetics, and robotics, attempting to find new ways to embed magic directly within the human body and to employ it in autonomous robots.

Magicorp holds the patents for literally every piece of magic equipment on the planet. Though the vast majority of their tech comes from their own research, other companies have tried to get on board, only to either be promptly bought out or curiously shut down within months of their initial launch. The patents from these companies are either folded in to Magicorp's own or rendered obsolete when the company that applies for them suddenly shuts its doors.

The company's relatively brief history has been tumultuous. It first met stiff opposition from the NAU government when the mentals in office felt threatened by the rise of psi-like technology that sought to challenge their power. In the end, though, the public's demand for a free and fair job market and economy defeated every at-tempt the government made at shutting the company down, and to this day it stands as a testament to the power that the non-mental majority still has in this world.

There have been many attempts by rogue psychics to infiltrate the corporation, either to undermine its power or attempt to strike a blow from within. These sorts of attacks continue to this day, but so far the company's high level of security has put down every one of them, earning it a reputation as a force to be reckoned with.

Though headquartered within the NAU, Magicorp operates globally and funds its own private military. Few nations have the capacity to stand up to it, and those which try often swiftly back down. Conspiracy theorists rumor