

A letter from the Magic Marketing Director "What Card Leak?"

Kyle Murray, **Magic** Marketing Director

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Dear **Magic** players,

My name is Kyle Murray, and I am the Marketing Director for **Magic: The Gathering**. The guys here at MagicTheGathering.com have recently received several emails asking about Wizards' policy regarding the unintentional distribution of card set information (let's call them "leaks"). So this seemed like a good time to restate our policy and explain why we have it in the first place.

The policy itself is pretty simple. We don't comment on leaks. Ever.

The reasons are many. But they all build up to one conclusion. Card leaks are bad for the health of the game, and bad for **Magic** players.

First of all, leaks take a lot of the fun out of discovering a new expansion. Cards are meant to be experienced in their entirety. I don't think anyone would argue that looking at a real **Magic** card is much cooler than reading rules text on a web page. There is also a sense of exploration and discovery that comes with seeing a new card for the first time that you can't get by simply reading a list.

The exploration is further damaged by the extensive analysis that results on the Internet. Before you've even had a chance to open a pack, you may have read a dozen articles telling you what you should think about it.

Another thing about the Internet is that, as crazy as it seems, not every **Magic** player has access to it. That fact is particularly true in international markets. You could make strong argument that when players without access show up at a DCI-sanctioned prerelease tournament, they are at a real disadvantage to those who have been analyzing the set online.

Speaking of prerelease tournaments, they are meant to be the global **Magic** community's shared experience of a new set. There is less incentive for players to go if they already know the whole set. Lower attendance hurts our tournament organizers that rely on these events to fund their year-round tournament programs.

"But Wizards intentionally shows cards early; I just saw Ernhem Djinn in a print ad. How is that different?" The difference is that we do it in a carefully planned manner. The goal is to slowly build

excitement to peak at the prerelease/release date when people can actually get the cards. **Magic** needs to stay financially healthy if we want to continue to put out great sets and if we want to continue to support programs like the Pro Tour and Friday Night Magic for another decade.

"OK, Wizards doesn't like leaks. But why not at least tell us if a leak is true or false?" Well, it's like this... As long as we don't comment on a leak, then it's not clear if the leak is real or not. That keeps people talking and interested until they know for sure. If we confirm a leak then it's case closed, set solved, excitement dead.

One other thing I have to mention: When we discourage people from posting -- or from offering rewards for -- leaked information, there is a legal reason. Since our card lists and mechanics are confidential information prior to public release, anyone who receives them without permission is in receipt of stolen goods. We have taken action in the past, and will continue to do so.

I guess it all comes back to keeping **Magic** healthy and exciting. We believe card leaks can damage the game. Thanks for listening, and I hope that in the future everyone understands when we respond...

"What card leak?"

Kyle Murray
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As always, responsible comments welcome at editor@wizards.com.