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# Magic Dossier: Joe Hauck

Magic Arcana  
Thursday, August 28, 2003



**Name:** Joe Hauck

**Job title and duties:** VP of Wizards Owned TCG Brands. I have Brand Managers who work for me, and my job is to ensure that our group is providing the company with clear strategic direction on where we should go with such products as **Magic**, **Magic Online**, **Duel Masters**, **GI Joe TCG**, and top-secret projects that I can't discuss at this time. I'm also the one who is tasked with singing karaoke songs that other people pick out for themselves and then chicken out when they come up, and I'm an adequate dancer.

**Age:** 35

**Family:** wife, Catherine Hauck. No children yet, although when we do they will all play games.

**Education:** Northwestern University, 1990, Bachelor of Music, Bassoon Performance

**Began working at Wizards:** Late September 1995

**Previous job:** Manager and Sound Technician for Music Rental Services business. I've worked backstage with—in no particular order—Pearl Jam, Nirvana, Oasis, Sonic Youth, Porno for Pyros, Cypress Hill, the Beastie Boys, Mudhoney, the Ramones, Radiohead, The Rentals (some of Weezer), Sublime, Cake, Helmet, L7, Sheryl Crow, The Reverend Horton Heat, The Presidents of the United States of America, Clint Black, and Mel Torme—and I'm sure I've forgotten many.

**How you got your job here:** I came to a point at my former job where my business skills outgrew the business and the only way I could get promoted was if someone died. I decided that I wanted to continue growing and work for a company that created products or services that I myself would enjoy. As an interim project, I quit my job and sent my resume to the temp agency in town that placed people at Nintendo, since I love games. In my résumé I highlighted in the "Other Interests" area the fact that I enjoyed playing games as a hobby. The temp agency called me back and rudely chastised me on my unprofessional résumé, specifically citing the game-playing in my hobbies. After denying that they had anything to do with Nintendo, they hung up. So I sent my résumé to the other temp agency in Seattle, forgetting to take the game-playing off of my hobbies. This agency happened to be the one filling all of the positions at Wizards of the Coast and they were very happy with my résumé, especially the game-playing part!

**Magic accomplishments prior to working here:** I successfully withstood the powerful attraction that **Magic** has over male gamers until I actually started working here and got it for free. Oh, how I wanted it though, my preciousssssss...

**Expansions or projects you've worked on:**

- **Monthly Retailer Study:** A monthly study to gage the health of our **Magic** business at core hobby stores, which we still run today.
- **Arena League:** I was on the original development and launch team for this program that still exists.
- **Brand Management:** In 1997 I moved over to our Brand group and worked on bringing a bunch of games to market like **RoboRally** *Radioactive* expansion, **Guillotine**, **Filthy Rich**, **Twitch**, **Pivot**, **Go Wild!**, **Alpha-Blitz**, and **What Were You Thinking?!?**
- **Magic:** In October 1998 I moved over to the **Magic** Brand team. My first task was to write all of those letters from Peter Adkison regarding the backlash towards the *Sixth Edition* rules changes. That was when fans said that we were the coming of the Fourth Reich, and they hoped we would die in our sleep. Since then, I've been working, leading, and/or mentoring on **Magic** Brand aspects. In particular, I'm to blame for the *Eighth Edition* card face redesign (for which I was compared to the leader of the Third Reich, and told that the best I could hope for was to die in my sleep...), the *Nemesis* "Screw someone this Valentine's Day" ad, the return of *Serra Angel* in *Seventh Edition*, black-bordered Core Set foils, and the "factory recall" on *Memory Jar* and other banned cards in 2000. I'm sure there are other things that are my fault too like world hunger, global warming and Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky. There, I've come clean on everything.



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- **Magic Online:** Oh, did I also mention that I'm to blame for the pricing structure and redemption model for **MTGO**?
- **Duel Masters:** Launched in May 2002, currently the #1 selling TCG in Japan.

**Favorite part of your job:** I love our products and the people who play them. It is so much better working on **Magic**, which I truly enjoy, than, say, toilet paper, which I also enjoy but for very different reasons... Although sometimes it's a pain having to explain to everyone I know over the age of 35 what the heck **Magic** is, it is certainly made up by the fact that I talk to so many passionate fans and parents of passionate fans who share my enthusiasm for **Magic**. You don't get that with toilet paper!

**Least favorite part of your job:** Paperwork. I'd rather break my arm than get sand in my eye. I'd rather get sand in my eye than do administrative paper work.

**Thing you've worked on that you're most proud of:** **Magic Online**. Although we had a hiccup with version 2.0 (actually it was more like when you hiccup and burp at the same time and they're going in opposite directions, which if you've never experienced, *REALLY* hurts) I've been very happy with how **Magic Online** overall has worked out. It was truly our first project where we went from theoretical concept, through research and strategy, to production and followed the plan the whole way. As a result, we have a successful game extension that is bringing people into the paper **Magic** game. Some day I'd like to write a case study on the whole process, when our legal department allows me to.

**Other games you currently enjoy playing:** I'm so busy that the games I play are old school. *Civ III*, *Settlers*, *RoboRally*, *Advanced Civilization*. The only new game that I've been playing is the beta version of **Magic Battlegrounds** by Atari. It rocks, and I can kick Richard's butt.

**Favorite Magic card:** **Masticore**. Yes, it's broken. But it was just so fun to play it in our internal *Urza's Destiny* league. You would get into a creature stalemate and slap down **Masticore**, at which point, your opponent either yelped in physical pain or got so quiet that off in the distant you could here a dog bark, like in an old black and white Ingmar Bergman or Alfred Hitchcock film. Yep, we just don't make 'em like we used to... which I'm very thankful for!

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