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Daniel Myers · Inside Magic Online
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Change In Staff

As many of you know, there have been changes to the team over the past few months. The most recent and most visible is that Linda Cox is moving on to a different brand here at Wizards of the Coast. She's done a lot for *Magic Online* over the last few years and has taken more than one hit for the team. We all wish her well on her new endeavor.

Our new brand manager, Justin, is an old hand at *Magic Online*. He's been a big fan of the game for a while and was a regular during beta. Justin's very enthusiastic about *Magic Online* and is taking a hard look at what needs to be done to get this game back to normal. You'll be hearing from him directly in the near future.

Compensation

I don't have any new information about beta compensation this week. When I do have information I'll get it posted to the Announcements folder. The plan to award prizes to players who won them in beta is still in place. The only administrative issue I know we're concerned with is making sure everyone who is supposed to get boosters does, which requires both data checking and testing.

The Viridian Zealot avatars went out last week. If you were in a *Darksteel* league that crashed and you haven't gotten your avatar yet, please contact Customer Service (techsupport@wizards.com).

I know many of you are concerned about general compensation and so are we. In particular, we feel the same way as the community does: players should get product for the hassle, not for the number of accounts they own. We've been working out a plan to try and eliminate accounts that aren't "active".

What we'd like to do is award product to accounts that both logged in *and* played games for a period around the initial crashes. In addition, we'd include any accounts that purchased product during that period of time. Many players bought product to play in *Darksteel* release events and never got a chance to. In general, purchasing product shows intent to play or trade using that account, not just logging on in hopes of a crash.

We think this covers most of you who were inconvenienced by the crashes: both tournament and casual players. Hopefully it will also eliminate most of the "mule" accounts folks log on with to try and get extra product. We do, however, also need to make sure we can sort out this information accurately. After accidentally dropping product all over the place a few weeks ago, we're going to take some time to make sure.

Leagues

The other issue we run up against is figuring out what appropriate compensation is for all this. Our original thought was, after things got straightened out, we'd try running the *Darksteel*

release events again. The obvious product to give out in that case seemed to be enough to join either a single league or draft. Everyone would have their choice of using the product to play in either type of event or just open it up and go play in the **Casual Play** rooms.

Testing came and went and it looked like we'd be putting up leagues right afterwards. Then we ran into the bugs that afternoon that made us take another look at that plan. Some folks argued on Friday that we should put leagues up anyway—we'd already been bitten, right? Others--including me--argued that most of the dev team had been up all night trying to fix the missing cards bug. The programmers were short on sleep, which isn't a good thing if leagues went sour on us for some reason.

Even though we chose not to put leagues up that weekend, we had a major crash the Saturday before Easter Sunday. Fortunately, the dev team had most of Friday and Saturday to recover. Still, it took seven hours to find and fix that bug. Fortunately, we could say for sure it wasn't an unknown league bug that caused it, since they weren't up and running.

After two major bugs, the team decided to hold off on restarting leagues until ***Magic Online*** was up and stable for a while. Now we've had over a week without major problems. Hopefully that means I'll have a solid ETA on them soon, but I don't right now.

I know you're frustrated with the lack of anything coming from me lately. The thing is, as many of you have pointed out, I don't have anything new to tell you. It was a poor judgment call on my part to not at least take a minute to post that much. However, given the number of times I've retracted statements in the last month, it seemed silence and some more time to evaluate was better than mistakes.

Hopefully I'll have updates on leagues and compensation this week. If I don't have anything new, you'll hear it from me.



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