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Cosmic Encounter

So now lets see if there are several worthy aliens (or features) in this latest (very productive) discussion to move into BETA. How about we take three and get each into pre BETA shape. I will use a generic term as an alien name place holder.... The Store....It gets regular supplies of random new goods buy keeping 3 cards from deck per player in its warehouse refreshed at the end of each game turn. Commerce is ships pay for card one for one. Store hold ships in warehouse. Player may buy ship back if store likes the card offer. Store is always opened. Store can not use warehouse cards.....The Auction.....can auction off top of deck sight unseen or top of discard beginning of each turn.. players pay with ships which sit on Auction Sheet. And count toward Auction Defense. Ships return to owners before start of Auctions turn...The Potent...gets set of magic spell cards that can combine into spells, customized to croak different aliens :)

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People Who Liked This



Jefferson Krogh

Information Systems Manager at Kennerley-Spratling



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Discussion



Bill Martinson Making aliens with such an obvious 'currency' component without understanding that currency system first is problematic. By creating a de facto money system using ships, we are essentially cutting off future options *and* making the aliens more complex than they need to be: we're probably going to fill up a significant portion of these alien sheets with duplicate explanations about how ships are spent and refunded and where they go and whether they can be 'rescued' or given back in a deal and when a ship counts as a ship and when it doesn't count as a ship ... when all of that could be replaced with three simple words if we knew what the currency system was: "spend [coins] to" or "one [coin] each".

So either (a) we are making a decision now that there will never be a currency system, or (b) this is all cart before the horse. Let's be forward-thinking.

February 1 at 2:14pm · Like



Jefferson Krogh Of the three, "Auction" grabs me the most. I say let the ships on that sheet count for both offense and defense! Also, allow Auction to return ships as part of a deal.

February 1 at 2:14pm · Like



Jefferson Krogh I hear you, Bill. These would be much easier to do if we just had Lucre. I guess we have to assume we're not getting it, thus the need for specific aliens to do these kinds of things. I think Auction could be made fairly pithy; not too sure about Store.

"Potent" will entirely depend on somebody clever making a small deck of clever cards. That won't be me, at least not today!

February 1 at 2:17pm · Like



Bill Martinson So first, then, there should be a discussion about Lucre. If there is a veto stamp, let's hear it said so we know where we stand. If not, let's discuss the pros and cons of using such a system to keep these powers *simple*!

February 1 at 2:19pm · Like · [2](#)

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Christopher Aurel Oliveira I agree wholeheartedly with Bill. We will only be making increased work and more problems for ourselves if we ignore the need for Lucre. Personally, I have not seen Lucre done well, but with a good group-think it can be managed. Also I'd like to note that within the Lucre discussion some foundation for the interactiveness of Moons with it should be touched upon without actually getting into a Moons discussion. I almost want to say I don't like the term "Lucre" for space money, and would prefer a little more "Cosmic" sounding name like "Credits", "Space Bucks", or "Eons", but I can see why people want to keep a known name the same.

February 1 at 3:33pm · Like



Aaron Fenwick Agreed, we really do need to know if Lucre is in or out before any "economy" aliens or features can be toyed with...

February 1 at 5:32pm · Like · [1](#)



Jack Reda I for one vote to see lucre included in the fan set if it isn't going to materialize in any form prior to that.

February 1 at 6:28pm · Like · [2](#)



Jefferson Krogh I used to dislike Lucre in previous editions, but I've convinced myself that there's something there that's too valuable to abandon. Just because previous efforts have been unsatisfactory doesn't mean another approach can't work. So I'm with Jack.

Getting back to the original post: I don't mind developing the Auction without Lucre, in the meantime. If we don't get Lucre, then it'd have to be written without it anyway. If we do get Lucre, it'll be easy to convert. Either way, I think it's an idea worth pursuing.

February 1 at 6:44pm · Like · [1](#)



Peter Olotka On the Lucre question, it is my understanding that it is not in FFGs plans. We are fine with that. And I see no inherent problem with aliens using various currency devices, since we are plying in an infinite universe of possibilities.

February 1 at 9:16pm · Like · [1](#)

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Jefferson Krogh Thanks, Peter! It's good to know that. I'll give some thought to "Auction" tomorrow. Gaming tonight, hopefully including Cosmic!

February 1 at 9:40pm · Like



Christopher Aurel Oliveira Even if FFG's original plans didn't involve it is this not the "fan" expansion? If we all want a system of money put into the game why would FFG deny us?

February 2 at 1:34am · Like



Peter Olotka I think not, but Lucre was not all that popular and a number of Lucre aliens have been (and will be) repurposed in FFG. So I think we should look at new ways to add economic flavor.

February 2 at 7:31am · Like



Bill Martinson For something that reportedly wasn't very popular I've seen quite a lot of discussion about it on message boards over the past few years. It's probably safe to say that a money system would get more use than, say, the tech variant.

This is a pity. Each "economic flavor" alien is going to have a lot of text devoted to defining how its own unique currency works and answering the kinds of questions I started to list above. Inevitably, we will get bored with the basics and start making each one work slightly differently from the next, requiring an economics lesson at the beginning of the game to make sure nobody assumes alien X's seashell-bartering works like alien Y's cigarette-exchange economy they saw in the previous game.

And here I've been led to believe that the Cosmos is a big place with room for everything. Just not money. ;-)

February 2 at 7:54am · Like



Stephen Sloboda The inherent problems with Lucre are 1) where it comes from and 2) what's it for? Those, I think are the problems players had with the original concept. You don't earn Lucre, you're just given it. And all it's used for is to buy

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ships can cards. So why not just start with more cards and ships and be given the option to get an extra ship or card every turn instead of accumulating Lucre?

Plus, it throws the foundation of Cosmic out of whack. Getting extra ships and cards diminishes the effect of some alien powers and the need for alliances. Other alien powers become overbearingly powerful, again diminishing interaction between allies.

What I wanted to do with commerce in the game is not to necessarily give a bigger stick to everyone, but rather use trade or business as an incentive to play Negotiates instead of Attacks. A way to encourage cooperation and diplomacy, but still maintain a competitive atmosphere.

The Store alien power idea was started with this goal in mind. I wanted people to have a reason to negotiate with this alien rather than attack it.

February 2 at 10:01am · Like · [1](#)



Jefferson Krogh Without Lucre, we can conceive aliens based on a single transaction, rather than a complete game economy. We already have several aliens like this. Kamikaze trades ships with the Warp for pluses in combat. Merchant mortgages cards for pluses in combat. "Auction" would be different in that the transaction is with another player, rather than the game itself. But it can be done, I think. Bill is absolutely right that we don't want to re-create systems as rules-dense as Lucre on a single alien sheet. But we can set our sights accordingly, and make it work.

February 2 at 11:38am · Like · [1](#)



Jack Reda The asteroid lucre system has been a hit here (as well as the lucre reward deck, a separate concept). You have to capture the asteroid, and it also dictates the amount of lucre you earn, as well as what you can spend it on). What I like about it is that players don't have to use it, but as soon as one player uses an encounter to get one, and starts having an economy he can use, others feel compelled to join in.

February 2 at 11:52am · Like · [1](#)



Sam Connolly Things like Kamikaze's ships-for-cards power work fine as long as that one alien is just using that one transaction itself, but we have suggestions for people having aliens give everyone credit cards and the like. There's a line somewhere between "This alien lets this player trade X for Y" and "This alien introduces a universal abstract currency that all players use". On one side of that line, Lucre is unneeded; on the other, the alien is basically brute-force introducing Lucre anyhow, so we should just make Lucre to streamline the whole thing.

February 2 at 4:25pm · Like · [1](#)

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Jefferson Krogh Credit cards? Whuh?

February 2 at 7:33pm · Like



Peter Olotka I think that we can make individual aliens that use game components (ships/cards/planets) in an economy. I like the idea of keeping them individual aliens rather than the LUCRE approach. Since STORE seems easier than AUCTION, if it's OK, I will do a new post of a starter STORE to see if we can get it to BETA..OK? The we will do the same fro AUCTION. I would like players to read the Nate Owens repost over in the fan expansion set design group on my page. Bill Eberle and I think that Nate does a good job of distilling the appeal of Cosmic and that it's a good foundation for thinking about new cosmic features. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/223613207709096/permalink/264414856962264/>



Cosmic Encounter Fan Expansion Set Design

We post about the process of designing new content for the Fan Expansion set, bu...See More

February 3 at 1:05pm · Like ·



Bill Martinson So if I'm following this correctly, it sounds like we may be saying something along these lines:

There will be a series of self-contained "commerce" aliens that have their own money system which differs from the old Lucre system in at least four important ways:

1. It only comes into play when one or more players have alien powers that make it so.
2. It uses ships as the unit of currency instead of Lucre chits. (I might call this the "Assessor tax-code model", just for fun.)
3. There are no global entitlements like starting the game with 4, buying cards, or adding to your encounter total. Whatever somebody can actually *do* with this ship-money is defined by each alien sheet.
4. It will not be possible to "give money" to other players who are not playing a commerce alien, since this will conflict with FFG's model of never having an alien that sends tokens or ships onto *other players'* sheets. Some aliens do put tokens or captured ships onto their *own* sheet for various purposes, but it is (for obvious reasons) always a "pull" effect and never a "push" effect. FFG never allows two sets of tokens or two sets of ships in the same place for different purposes. When a "push" effect is required, FFG creates custom tokens: for example, Grudge has its own grudge tokens instead of using normal cosmic tokens, in order to avoid the cross-purposes problem.

If this is reasonably close, then I will post again a bit later with some philosophical thoughts and a suggestion for how to do

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this in a simple way that keeps it as intuitive as possible, while helping the various "commerce" aliens not get in each other's way.

February 3 at 6:07pm · Like



Peter Olotka That seems in the ball park, bill...I think that other items can be used in commerce as well as cards.

Saturday at 11:21am · Like



Stephen Sloboda Well, while thinking of ways to keep track of "commerce" items, I was thinking about the chips that are used for Warrior or Tick-Tock. What if the Store sold baubles that other aliens could use to add to their counters?

Saturday at 12:10pm · Like



Stephen Sloboda STORE - Sells Baubles

Game Setup: Put 3 tokens on this card as your bauble stock.

As a main player negotiating a deal you may offer any number of your baubles as part of the deal in addition to cards and colonies. Other players may also trade baubles in a deal in the same way.

At the start of your turn, use this power to replenish your stock to 3 if there are fewer than 3 tokens.

Rules on Baubles: Players with alien powers that use tokens may add their baubles to their card to enhance their power. Those tokens become permanent and cannot be traded.

Other players may use baubles after encounter cards are revealed to turn their card into a negotiate.

Saturday at 12:42pm · Like



Jack Reda An alien that sells player tokens that let them use their alien's super effect would be fun.

Saturday at 1:47pm · Like · [1](#)

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Peter Olotka Bling!

Saturday at 5:01pm · Like



Stephen Sloboda Except on second thought, there really aren't that many that use tokens!

Saturday at 5:07pm · Like · [1](#)



Bill Martinson Right ... not only would this affect only a very few aliens, among those few, some would actually be harmed by extra tokens (e.g., Tick-Tock), and some would find them useless if you make them "permanent" (e.g., Fury).

Trying to send tokens or ships or cards to other players' alien sheets will always be a problem, which is why FFG never does it. We need to look for solutions that do not send components to other players' sheets, unless those components are something new created just for this purpose.

Saturday at 6:09pm · Like



Stephen Sloboda The idea came to me because I wanted to try to use the old tokens for the baubles without causing confusion with other abilities the alien might have. Scratch that.

However, since so few aliens have a cumulative effect from the acquisition of tokens, maybe that's what baubles should do; give them some sort of ability based on the number of counters they have.

Saturday at 8:58pm · Like



Sam Connolly If we want to use the old tokens as currency, just include eight small mats with the game, to be used by putting cosmic tokens on them. That way, we can use all the Cosmic tokens we already have (which is good since that means we won't need to print loads more tokens) without mixing them up with the tokens used for aliens' powers (since these tokens would be on the player's mat instead of on the alien's sheet).

Alternatively, since nothing thus far places Cosmic tokens on planets, have players store their currency as Cosmic tokens on

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planets in their home system. We can only ever have one effect that puts Cosmic tokens on planets, so we may as well make it a big one like a currency system. Plus, this would make the Wild Leviathan decision a little more interesting, give the Locust a small amount of bite, and so on.

Sunday at 1:40am · Like · [1](#)



Peter Olotka Storing on planets is unique. It could allow invaders to get the spoils

Sunday at 10:48am · Like



Bill Martinson Placing tokens on planets is something that can only ever be done once ... meaning only one alien or card or other game effect can ever do this without crossing the uniqueness line. Naturally, this effect should be chosen very, very carefully to maximize the benefit. In other words, since we can only do it once, it should be the best darned use of this that we can come up with.

Sunday at 11:53pm · Like · [1](#)



Bill Martinson Here's an idea for an alien that uses cards as money:

REGULATOR - Taxes the Wealthy, Helps the Poor

You have the power of Redistribution. After alliances are formed in any encounter, you /*may use*/ this power. Declare that all players who currently have fewer cards in their hands than you are "poor," and all who have more than you are "wealthy." Tax any or all wealthy players, one at a time and in any order, by taking one card at random from each taxed player's hand (inspecting the taxes as you collect them). When collecting two or more tax cards, you may choose one to keep as your administrative fee. Distribute the net taxes to one or more poor players however you deem best. If there are no poor, distribute the net taxes to the discard pile.

(As Any Player) (Optional) (Alliance)

Yesterday at 12:01am · Like



Sam Connolly Agreed, the one effect that puts Cosmic tokens on planets should be chosen very carefully. But notably, it needs to be something that requires large numbers of tokens - anything else can just come with its own tokens like the Saboteur. There can't be many effects that will require such numbers of generic tokens; the only two that immediately spring to mind are some sort of Lucre system and, um, the Wabbit. And while I don't dislike the Wabbit, I also wouldn't

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mind not seeing it return given that Symbiote already plays a very similar role.

That being said, putting Lucre tokens on planets doesn't strike me as a great idea. If we're putting them on planets, then it makes sense for the invaders to get the spoils for conquering the planet. But which invader in an alliance gets them? Well, the actual Offense, presumably. But now the Offense is getting more for winning than its allies, which is a very significant fundamental change in how the game flows. And if landing on the planet doesn't let you steal the Lucre, then it's nothing more than a gimmick and they don't belong on planets in the first place.

Yesterday at 3:13am · Like



Bill Martinson Probably worth noting that "very significant fundamental change in how the game flows" means different things to different people. For some of us it is a caution sign, while for others it's "hello, sailor!" ;-)

Yesterday at 7:56am · Like



Peter Olotka Significant fundamental change is the life blood of Cosmic.

18 hours ago · Like · [1](#)



Bill Martinson But the game plays fundamentally the same as it did in 1977. I don't think we all interpret that phrase in the same way.

17 hours ago · Like



Peter Olotka We will post up The EMPORIUM (working title) this morning to begin it's pre BETA design

3 hours ago · Like