

PWNED!

what did
he say?!

learn the
lingo of
mmorpgs





First off... thank you! The response to the first issue was tremendous. I've been lurking around the many Guild Wars forums, reading what the community thought of the January issue. I'm glad everyone enjoyed it. I hope to continue, and improve, the quality of this magazine. That brings me to the topic of this issue.

I was at work, showing off the January issue. One of the guys found a pull quote particularly amusing. "We've eliminated frustrating elements such as spawn camping, kill stealing, endless traveling and treadmill gaming." While he knew the quote was significant, he had no idea what that meant.

If you're a MMORPG veteran, that quote will make you think one of two things. Either you'll be filled with joy or you'll become very cynical. For a newcomer to this genre, a big question mark will pop into their head.

"What is that supposed to mean?"

Many gamers haven't experienced the torment of your typical MMORPG. It pains me to imagine how many days of my life were wasted, running the mundane tasks of MMORPGs. Traveling, meditating, sitting, waiting for a port or killing the same monster for the thousandth time... it was a boring way to pass the time.

Newcomers to this type of gaming may not be familiar with the creative linguistics. Just like every trade has its own terminology, so do online role-playing games.

That was when I realized what the focus of this issue should be - a glossary of MMORPG words and sayings. This won't be just technical definitions, but it will also be somewhat speculative. The definitions will have a projection of how such words might apply to Guild Wars.

Oh yah... and the colorful slangs won't be overlooked either. Just because some popular MMORPG words have a negative connotation, that does not mean they should be overlooked. Knowledge is power. This publication aims to arm you with that power.

Before I get started, maybe I should explain the cover. If you don't know what "pwned" means, it is a derogatory term. "Pwned" is often used just after you've defeated your enemy. Well, not just defeated, but destroyed. If you've just won 27-0, you "OWNED". However, in a scramble to get that insult out, players would often hit the "P" key instead of the "O" key.

Also, the cover uses one of the new screenshots. The January 2004 collection of in-game images was AMAZING! When I started this publication, I had no idea how well Guild Wars would grow. So far, it looks like I've made a good decision. With graphics like that, and no monthly fee, it looks like Guild Wars is gearing up to "pwn" the competition.

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GUILD WARS

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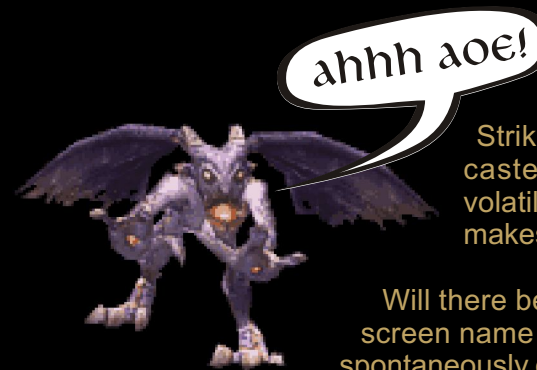
"GuildMaster Photics" is a Guild Wars Fansite Electronic Magazine, by Michael Garofalo.

AGGRO – The term used to describe a computer-controlled character, which has become "aggressive". Context: "Don't aggro the MOBs, you Noob!" Typically, controlling aggro is key in MMORPGs. Not only do you want to make sure your party isn't attacked by too many monsters at once, but you also want to control who in your party is being attacked. (See also - Meat Shield)

Will there be aggro in Guild Wars? Most definitely! While what exactly triggers the Guild Wars Artificial Intelligence is not fully disclosed, it seems pretty obvious that monsters WILL attack you. Some might even run away. Take a look at the green dude to the right. He's waving that pointy club in your general direction. He has been aggroed, as he is in attack mode.

ALT – Abbreviation for an "alternate" character, which is played by the same person. Context: "I don't feel like playing my Paladin today. I'm going to play my Wizard alt." Most MMORPGs allow multiple characters from one account. Generally, only one character can be played at a time. An alt allows players to experience different character classes/races. (See also - BOT)

Will Guild Wars allow you to have alts? My guess is that there will be some serious restrictions on alts. For one, with no monthly fees, reducing or eliminating alts is a way to keep costs down. Also, word is Guild Wars won't be broken up into "shard" servers. With one colossal place to play, unique names could run out pretty quickly. Restricting alts could be a solution to that problem as well. However, simply eliminating alts could discourage many players from playing.



AOE – Area of Effect. This acronym describes an attack that can harm or hinder multiple enemies, which are in the vicinity of the main target. "I pwned 10 goblins with my Uber Elite Death Strike AOE spell." Spells of this nature are either a bane or a boon for casters, as they are harder to control. Effecting a wide area, with a volatile spell, tends to have dangerous repercussions. Although, it often makes for a pretty light show.

Will there be AOE spells in Guild Wars? I like to think so... as "Photics" is the screen name I use for fire-based caster classes. I have visions of my enemies spontaneously combusting.

BOT – Short for "robot" 1) ABOT is an alternate character on a secondary account, with the sole purpose of boosting the power of a primary character. Context: "No buffs for me, my BOT already has my assassin's stats capped." BOTs are often frowned upon, as they are sometimes confused for regular characters. Also, having a BOT is considered an unfair advantage to players without BOTs. A second computer (and a second account) is generally required to have a BOT. This is also known as "Dual-Boxing".

Will there be BOTs in Guild Wars? By allowing BOTs, or at least not actively prohibiting them, additional copies of Guild Wars could be sold to the same person. BOTs will test the values of ArenaNet. Which is more valuable - to sell more games or to encourage honorable gameplay? Most other MMORPGs have in-game commands, which actually make managing a BOT easier.

2) A BOT is also a program that automates mundane tasks - such as leveling or crafting. Context: "I downloaded this BOT program. I let it run overnight and now my underwater basket weaving skill is rated as Master." While a secondary account falls in a gray area, BOT programs generally do not. Every major MMORPG vigilantly fights against 3rd party software. Being caught using such programs will often result in an account deactivation.

Will there be cheat programs for Guild Wars? One would hope not, but there seems to be a never-ending battle between cheaters and anti-cheating technology.

BUFF – An effect that temporarily improves a character's ability. (Antonym "Debuff") Context: "Now that my strength is buffed, I can carry 10 stacks of boulders in my backpack." Buffs typically adjust attributes - Strength, Dexterity, Stamina, etc. They can also directly effect offensive speed and power. The types of buffs vary amongst the different MMORPGs.



Will there be buffs in Guild Wars? It would be hard to imagine Guild Wars without them. The official site already gave a glimpse of some professions and skills - <http://www.guildwars.com/professions/>. The profession page clearly shows that many of the skills can alter player abilities - for friends and foe alike.

CC – Abbreviation for "Crowd Control". It involves a series of techniques, used to battle multiple enemies - but in a manageable fashion. Context: "OK, we have fighters and healers, who's on CC?" Aggro-management is often referred to CC or Crowd Control. Typically, this is accomplished with "Mesmerize" or "Root" spells. This takes skill - and a good group of players - to pull off effectively, as the hard work of many can be upset by one incompetent individual.

Will there be Crowd Control spells in Guild Wars? Let's hope it's not to the extent it has been in other MMORPGs. In another MMORPG game, I could keep an enemy player immobilized forever. All I needed to use was a simple combination of Root and Mesmerize spells. That's right FOREVER! Where's the fun in that? While it was amusing to me at first, this form of entertaining grew weary quickly - I imagine it was even less entertaining for the immobilized individuals.

DEV – Abbreviation for "Developer". Context: "Hey DEVs... why aren't I in beta yet?!? You miserable lazy lackeys!!! Love your greatest fan - L3wt d00d!" Developers, while the creators of the game, often become a source of tremendous contempt from players.

Will there be developers in Guild Wars? Nah... I heard the game was going to be delivered by storks. Just kidding. ☺ You can stop by the ArenaNet site (<http://www.arena.net/about/team.html>) to learn more about the people behind this game. While currently idolized by the community, will the love for Guild Wars developers continue in the future? I've seen it before. Fans will kiss-up to developers, just to get a shot at closed Beta. But once the game is released, all of a sudden the developers become public enemy #1. I've often said, "If you've lived a bad life, you will die and come back as a MMORPG developer."



DOT – Damage Over Time. This Acronym typically refers to offensive attacks, which do not hit for full damage until a certain amount of time has passed. Context: "Ack... help me... I'm dying... that Shaman hit me with a DOT spell. Arrrgghhh... aahhhhh!" DOTs are often associated with the following types of attacks - Poison, Disease, Bleed Damage, Burn Damage, etc. DOTs are typically "mana" efficient attacks. However, due to a slower effect, DOTs require a degree of strategy. (See also - Tick)

Will there be DOTs in Guild Wars? If there are, you had better hope there's some cancel magic or cure poison/disease spells as well. Ever kill 23 enemies at once in an MMORPG? AOE DOTs are known to do that. I've been known to do that ☺

GIMP – Derogatory term used to describe a character that has inappropriately allocated stats and/or skill points. Context: "My character is a gimp. I should have trained in crossbows, instead of paper swords." (See also - Paladin)

Can you ruin your character in Guild Wars? These days, MMORPGs are more flexible with character creation. Generally, they give you a chance to change your mind - at least to some degree. In any case, be sure to watch for future issues of "Guildmaster Photics". I'm sure I'll have lots of commentary about character creation, once the details are finalized that is. "Uber templates... get your Uber templates here!"

KITE – An attack method that involves using speed control techniques, in order to stay out of the attack range of an enemy. Context: "I had to kite that ogre half way across the zone, but he didn't hit me once." Generally a more prolonged attack, kiting is a favorite of soloers. As long as you can stay ahead of your enemy, you can slowly kill monsters that would normally destroy you.



Will Guild Wars permit kiting? It would depend on several factors. Can you improve your speed? Can you stay out of harms distance from your enemy? Does ArenaNet want soloers to fight monsters of significantly higher levels? Kiting is just one type of the many creative fighting styles, that players use to gain experience faster. What happens if soloers can level faster than a normal group of players? How will this problem be resolved in Guild Wars? Should it be resolved at all? It's too soon for me to tell. Just know that some little leveling trick almost always gets past beta.

KOS – Acronym for "Kill on Sight". This often refers to computer-controlled characters that will instantly attack, typically due to negative faction. Context: "I wanted to buy milk and cookies in that town, but the guards are KOS to me."

Will there be faction in Guild Wars? Some games take faction to ridiculous levels. Obviously spending days of your life, to build up your standing with 'The Treehuggers of the North', is not a terribly exciting thing to do. However, no faction at all would be equally tragic. Your actions in the world should have repercussions.





This screenshot is a good example of KOS. Those two green dudes look like they're ready to attack anyone who walks by.

LEECH – A derogatory term for a player that mooches exp and loot from higher-level players. Context: "Someone kick Mr. Wizard from the group. That leech hasn't casted a single spell, in the last 30 minutes." Leeching can sometimes be encouraged. When a low level character is allowed to leech exp from a high-level group, that character won't be low-level for long.

More important than leeching... will Guild Wars allow power-leveling? As a guild leader, this is something I hate. Players often join guilds with the expectation of being power-leveled up. However, power leveling can allow friends - of different levels - to stay together. Guild Wars handles leveling a little different. You can only use a certain amount of skills at one time. So eventually, leveling up just gives you more options - not exponentially more power. This could render power-leveling less important, while allowing friends to group.

MEAT SHIELD - A belittling way to describe characters with high hit points - Paladin, Warrior, etc. Context: "Room for one more in group, Meat Shields or Healers welcome." The fighter classes tend to have thick skin, as do their players. I haven't seen anyone become visibly upset by being called a Meat Shield. However, I'd still advise against it. If you're a robe wearing caster, he only has to miss the "Taunt" button once to ruin your day. (See also - Tank)

Will there be Meat Shields in Guild Wars? A Role-Playing game is not complete without your stereotypical fighter. It is already apparent that there will be Warriors. The finalized Guild Wars class list is currently classified information. The two classes I would like to see are common to MMORPGs - Paladin and Wizard. I play as a Paladin for when I want to be the Hero. I play as a Wizard for when I want to blow stuff up.

MMORPG – Acronym for "Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game". Context: "You should be sick of hearing the acronym MMORPG by now." ☺

NOOB – A derogatory term used to describe a new and unskilled player. Context: "Don't aggro the MOBs, you Noob!" While not an exclusive term to MMORPGs, the insult "noob" is thrown around quite often.

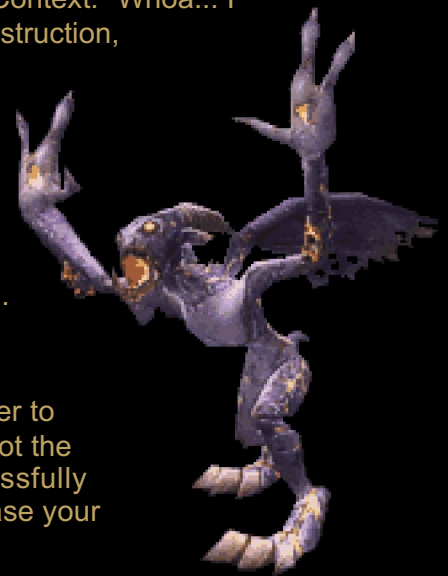


Will there be noobs in Guild Wars? OFCOURSE! On release day, just about everyone will be a noob. Although... two week old players might feel superior to brand new players. "Ha ha... noob. I am level 3. You are level 1." Oh yah... the above screenshot is a photics.com exclusive - courtesy of ArenaNet. Looks tough, doesn't he? I wouldn't recommend calling him a noob. ☺

NPC – Non-Player Character. This is an in-game character that is controlled by the server. Context: "To get a quest, talk to that NPC over there." While only controlled by the server, NPCs have significant ramifications to the game. They can be enemies, friends, or just a collection of polygons that do nothing special at all.

NUKE – An explosive attack, typically associated with magical attacks. Context: "Whoa... I nuked that Large Rat for 1500 damage!" Similar to the weapon of mass destruction, a "Nuke" spell is known for ridiculous amounts of damage.

Will there be nukes in Guild Wars? While the real world might be better off without them, Guild Wars would not. When a wizard casts a nuke, the ground should quake. The midnight sky should glow a bright orange and everyone within a 5 mile radius should know a wizard is in the area. If there isn't a warning about epileptic seizures on the box, then someone didn't do their job right. Video boards should melt in my presence... muwahahahahaha.... errr... ok... next word.



PULL – The art of drawing the attention of one or more enemies, in order to ambush them back at your camp. Context: "Next time pull ONE zombie, not the whole graveyard." The art of the pull takes skill and cunning. By successfully separating one (or even a few) enemies from the pack, you greatly increase your chances of victory.

Will you need to pull monsters one at a time in Guild Wars? Probably... as sometimes it's just better to divide and conquer. Save the fair fighting for the arcades. However, will you have to do it over and over again - in the exact same spot? The word is no! "Camping" is not part of the game. Guild Wars gameplay just doesn't work that way.

TANK – The nickname for fighter classes which can absorb large amount of damage. Context: "Room for one more in group, Tanks or healers welcome." Tanks & Healers are typically part of a balanced group.

TICK – A predetermined amount of time between actions. Context: "My new AOE DOT spell does 100 points of damage per tick, for 10 ticks." By multiplying the damage per round, by the number of ticks, you can figure out the approximate damage of a DOT spell. While very geeky sounding, the math is useful information in combat.

Will Ticks be in Guild Wars? Will they be Giant Ticks? Will they drop gold coins? I imagine there will be lots of wacky looking bugs to fight. But as far as ticks, in reference to the passage of time, math will be in the game - in one form or another. If ArenaNet does it right, I'll be too busy to do the calculations.

TRAIN – A mass of enemies chasing a character. Context: "TRAIN! TRAIN TO ZONE! MOVE IT OR LOSE IT!" If you hear someone yell train, you should probably get out of the way. Someone is desperately trying to escape an army of death. The big problem with trains is that they can be started intentionally, leading a pack of monsters against an unsuspecting player. More often than not, there's not even a warning. Even unintentionally, trains can be very dangerous.

Newer MMORPG generally don't have hordes of monsters running amok. Improved AI tends to eliminate player-made trains. Will there be trains in Guild Wars? I'm thinking probably not. Stay alert, just incase.

TWINK – A low-level character that has been given high-level gear. Context: "That level 1 twink has a level 50 sword." Twinking a character is a great way to give a boost to an alt. Friends bestowing high level gear on their friends is also common. Twink has different connotations. Sometimes twinking is a contemptible action. Other times, you can find players boasting about it.

Will there be twinking in Guild Wars? How rampant twinking is going to be will depend on several factors. Do items have level caps? Are alts permitted? Do items decay?

UBER – The slang description of an extremely powerful item, weapon or character. Context: "Yo dude! That sword looks uber. Can I see the stats?" In never-ending quest for higher stats, more impressive gear must be found. However, uber can also be used to describe a highly skilled player or guild.

The quest for greatness... uberness... will definitely be present in Guild Wars. However, I think it will use a different word - Elite. The fansite program already set the tone, with the "Elite" fansite status. This will naturally spill over into combat, as guilds battle to be the best. Hopefully, there's cool loot too!

WOOT – A term of celebration, often used after looting a substantial item. Context: "WOOT! I just got a shiny sword off a dead ogre." When I first heard the word woot, I had no idea what it meant. I thought it was a monster that lived in the ground. Eventually, I figured out it was an expression of happiness.

Will the word "Woot" be used in Guild Wars? I will probably be caught saying it, simply out of habit. Will there be crazy loot greed in Guild Wars - a blight so common with other MMORPGs? I don't know, but I know there's lots to be happy about in Guild Wars. WOOT! ☺



next issue - march 1, 2004