

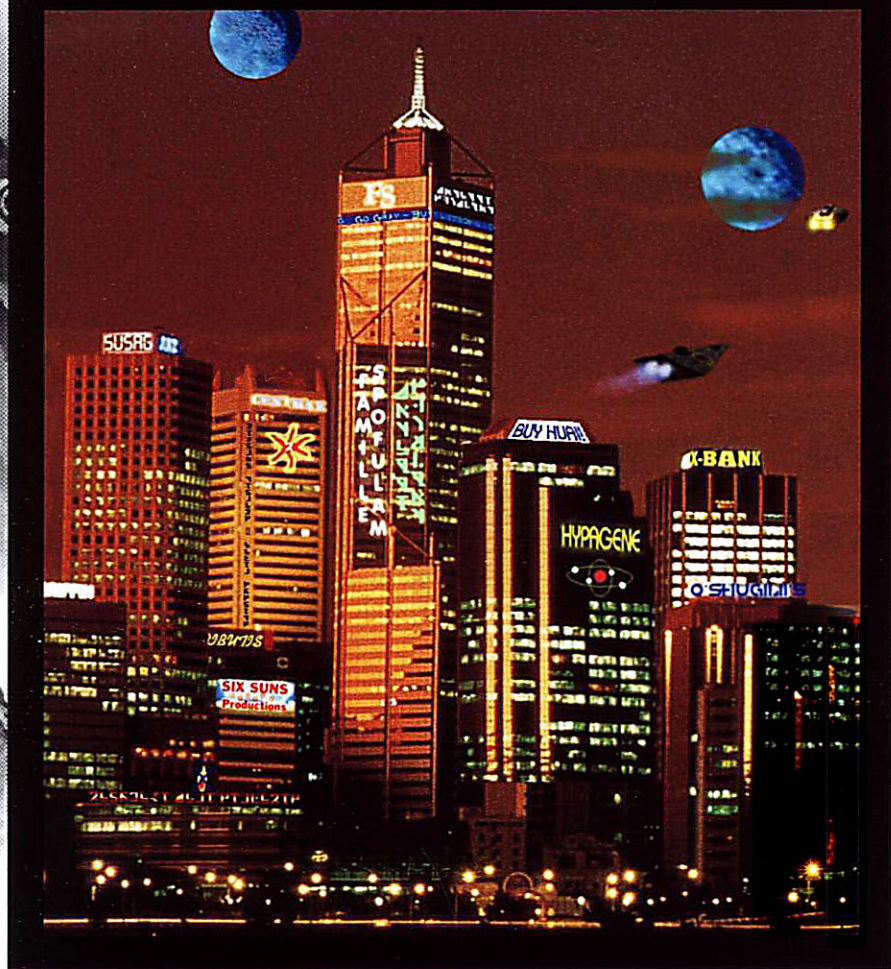
A supplement for

Traveller



Suitable for use with *all* Traveller rule sets

101 CORPORATIONS



101 CORPORATIONS

A supplement for

Traveller[®]

"Famille Spofulam Service Centre. Ditzie speaking. How can I help?"

...

"Ah, so you have a problem with one of our products? If it failed in service, I'm sure you noticed the warranty stipulations, I... oh really?"

...

"Embedded in the wall of the Regina Police Building? Really?"

...

"No, I've no idea how one of our Model 28 racing forklifts could get embedded in the third floor wall of the..."

...

"No, I'd never have guessed the chief's office was on the third floor, I'd have thought it would have been higher up the... sorry."

...

"But I still don't see how? Oh, the MegaBoing. Yes, that's our best-selling Grav Pogo Stick. But I don't see...?"

...

"Well, I don't think our instruction leaflets *explicitly* say that it's not a good idea to strap four MegaBoings to a racing forklift, but..."

...

"Err, apologies officer, crackle, hiss, you seem to be breaking up, crackle..."

- FS Service Centre, 203-1112

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101 CORPORATIONS

or

"Money makes the world(s) go round – from the smallest company to the largest Imperial megacorporation, everyone wants your hard-earned cash."

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...adventures...

...and useful information.

...and exciting space combat system.

Introduction

What's in this book and how to use it

"Trade is the lifeblood of the Imperium." – Clean I.

Introduction

101 Corporations provides a broad range of public and private companies with which to populate your *Traveller* universe.

No longer will your characters need to buy equipment from, work for, or invest in, faceless, nameless businesses – you need only pick the appropriate firm from this supplement.

In addition, one or more adventure ideas are given with each company, for use as side-plots, red herrings or expansion into full adventures.

Format

The corporations are divided into categories according to the products or services they supply.

Description

Data about the corporation which is generally available, i.e. it may already be known to the PCs, or it can be found in the appropriate library database, obtained from locals, employees, etc.

GM's Notes

Additional information for the games master (GM), some of which may be uncovered by research, some of which may be so secret it is known only to the corporation's chief executive.

Plots

One or more plots, for use as background 'colour', subplots or red herrings within an existing adventure, or for expansion into full adventures.

Index

The corporations are all indexed at the back of this book to facilitate fast selection during a game.

The Universal Corporate Profile

Originally developed by the Imperial Ship Builders Association (ISBA), the Universal Corporate Profile (UCP) is a method of describing companies and other corporate entities.

Originally the UCP comprised a string of hexadecimal digits similar to the Universal World Profile (UWP) published by the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service (IISS); when the Imperial Securities Department of the Ministry of Trade adopted it they found a need to make the information more directly accessible and recast it in a more legible form. The UCP is now the *de facto* standard for information transfer between business directories across the Imperium.

Most digits in the UCP are on a 0–7 scale which can be translated (using Table 1) into BITS task difficulty levels for any rule set (see Table 2).

TABLE 1: TRANSLATING UCP TO TASK DIFFICULTY

Digit	Difficulty
0	(automatic success)
1	Easy
2	Average
3	Difficult
4	Formidable
5	Staggering
6	Hopeless
7	Impossible

The UCP is described on the following pages and the full Imperial Securities form 23 is given on p.6. A compact representation is used in this supplement, as shown in the example overleaf:

TABLE 2: TASK DIFFICULTIES

BITS Task Difficulty	T4 Task Difficulty	T4.1 Task Difficulty	GT Target Modifier	TNE Task Difficulty	MT Task Difficulty	CT Target Modifier
Easy	Easy (Auto)	Easy (1D)	+6	Easy	Simple	-4
Average	Average (2D)	Average (2D)	+3	Average	Routine	-2
Difficult	Difficult (2.5D)	Difficult (2.5D)	0	Difficult	Difficult	0
Formidable	Formidable (3D)	Formidable (3D)	-3	Formidable	Difficult	+2
Staggering	Impossible (4D)	Staggering (4D)	-6	Impossible	Formidable	+4
Hopeless	(5D)	Hopeless (5D)	-9	Impossible	Impossible	+6
Impossible	(6D)	Impossible (6D)	-12	Impossible	Impossible	+8

First Bank of Rhylanor

Rhylanor/2716 Spinward

Im 3353 44 Pub F n 1765 65
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

This information is arranged as follows:

1. Name

Though a corporation may have several names, as well as subsidiaries, it should have one legally recognised named body to which all operations are ultimately subservient.

2. Headquarters

A corporation's headquarters (HQ) is defined as the mainworld from which it is governed. It is denoted by the world name, sector or subsector hex position and sector name. For example, a Regina corporation would have the code *Regina/1910 Spinward Marches*. This is omitted for most of the corporations in this book, making them suitable for placement on almost any world.

3. Allegiance

The ISS survey two-letter allegiance code is used to represent the most appropriate of the following data: the company's major nation of registry, the first nation in which the company registered, the current location of its HQ, or the largest nation the company is registered with, e.g.

Im Imperium
Fa Federation of Arden
Da Darrian Confederation
Hv Hive Federation
Na Non-aligned World
So Solomani Confederation
Va Vargr
Zh Zhodani Consulate

4. Corporate Scope

Four digits, numbered 4.1 to 4.4 respectively:

4.1 Number of Employees

This digit functions as an exponent of ten. For example, "2" represents any number of employees between 100 and 999 (see p.6).

4.2 Range

This shows the geographical spread of the company's operations. Ratings of 6 (Imperial) or 7 (Trans-Imperial) indicate megacorporations.

4.3 Revenue

This represents the corporation's gross annual revenue as a percentage of the Gross Regional

Product (GRP) – i.e. the total monetary value of goods and services produced and sold annually of all businesses in its operating area.

The digit functions as an exponent of ten which, when divided by 10,000,000 (10^7), represents the percentage of total revenue in the area. For instance, a *global* company with a revenue factor of "6" generates between 0.1% and 1% of the Gross *World* Product (see p.6).

Rules to calculate GRP for worlds are given in Traveller products such as 'classic' Traveller's *Striker*, T4's *Pocket Empires* or GURPS *Traveller: Far Trader*. Alternatively, calculate the GRP as:

GRP = Regional population × Base Production Value (BPV) × Relative Production Factor (RPF).

For TL 0-4, BPV = (TL + 1) × Cr200

For TL 5+, BPV = (TL - 4) × Cr2,000

RPF varies from about 0.5 for a very poor, non-industrial world up to 2.0 for a super-rich, resource-laden, industrial system.

4.4 Risk

This represents the probability of the company losing money for investors, and is rated from 0 (risk-free) to 7 (extreme, bad losses expected). Note that riskier companies may result in higher returns but there are no guarantees. Non-profit organisations are given the special code N, since no return on investment is expected. This factor represents the task difficulty for determining any profit or loss should PCs invest in the company.

5. External Relations

Two digits, numbered 5.1 and 5.2 respectively:

5.1 Influence

This represents the corporation's influence on politics within its region, from 0 (no influence) to 7 (total control). It represents the task difficulty for individuals or groups attempting to act against the company's wishes within its operating area.

5.2 Public Image

This represents the company's public image, from 0 (public enemy number one) to 7 (the people's favourite). A successful roll against this task difficulty indicates there will be some kind of negative publicity (protests, strikes or sabotage) inside, or sometimes outside, its operating area.

6. Nature

This is the manner in which the corporation is owned. Possibilities are listed on Form 23 (p.6).

7. Industrial Classification

This defines the areas in which the corporation is active. Since a corporation may have more than

one main operation it may have multiple codes; in this case each entry is suffixed with a digit from 1 to 9 representing the proportion (in tens of percentage points) of company revenue received from that particular activity. The eleven areas are listed on ISD Form 23 (see p.6).

8. Corporate Style

Four digits, numbered 8.1 to 8.4 respectively:

8.1 Research and Development (R&D)

This measures the company's interest in research, from 0 (no R&D) to 7 (the company exists purely for research). It governs the percentage of revenue that the corporation is willing to invest in R&D, so a large operation with little interest in R&D may still have a bigger research budget than a small concern which is devoted to investigating novel discoveries. This indicates the task difficulty for another entity to beat the company to a new discovery in its field.

8.2 Tradition

This measures the resistance of the company to changes in the corporate style, from 0 (no tradition) to 7 (completely hidebound). If used as a task roll to change an aspect of the company's operations, this should be adjusted by the relative power within the company of the individual or faction attempting the change (see 8.3 below).

8.3 Centralisation

This measures how power is concentrated within the company, from 0 (everyone has equal influence) to 7 (the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) may make major decisions without consulting anyone). A typical large public corporation will be rated "4" to "6", i.e. the board of directors decides policy but department heads make the day-to-day decisions required to carry it out. It can also be used to measure the administrative rank of people within the company – those with the most power have rank matching the company rating, others correspondingly less. The difference between an individual's rank and the company's rating may be used as a modifier on Tradition rolls (see above).

8.4 Unity

This measures the unity of opinion within the decision-making elements of the company. It ranges from 0 (everyone has their own idea of where the corporation should be going) to 7 (a single united vision). This can be used as a task roll for the corporation to make a major decision.

9. Labour Rights

Two digits, numbered 9.1 and 9.2 respectively:

9.1 Paranoia

This measures the degree of paranoia within the company, from 0 (totally open) to 7 (genuinely paranoid). Employees roll against this task difficulty to keep secrets from the company. At high paranoia levels, office communications are routinely monitored, personnel are subjected to psychological analysis and drug testing. In the extreme, security go through personal effects and conduct covert surveillance of staff outside work.

9.2 Employee Relations

This measures how the company regards / is regarded by its employees, from 0 (actively antagonistic / very poor) to 7 (totally paternalistic / vitally concerned with its employees' well being).

Examples

The following examples demonstrate how the UCP should be interpreted.

First Bank of Rhylanor

Rhylanor/2716 Spinward

Im◀3353●54▶PubW●Fin◀1765●65▶

The First Bank of Rhylanor is a publicly listed Imperial company with a wide shareholder base, governed from Rhylanor, employing thousands of people and generating virtually all its income from financial activity. It operates over less than a subsector but is very influential there, while being regarded fairly neutrally by the public. It has very large revenue and is a safe investment. The bank has little interest in research; it is extremely traditional, with highly centralised management and rarely modifies its corporate style. There are frequent and intrusive security checks on its employees but the staff are well looked after.

Sunarimi Bay Collective

Im◀2035●24▶Mut●Ag7-Manu1-Ret1-Svc1◀2101●04▶

The Sunarimi Bay Collective is a co-operative society whose activities are limited to a single area on an Imperial world. Hundreds of people work for the collective, generating income mostly from agriculture (70%) but also from manufacturing, retailing and service provision (10% each). It has fairly limited influence locally but is moderately well-regarded (it has some strong supporters but also some vigorous opponents). It generates modest revenue and is not a very safe investment. It spends a little on R&D; it is not particularly traditional, trusts its employees and distributes power very widely. Disagreements over where to take the company next are common. It does its best to look after its workforce but cannot afford many benefits.

UNIVERSAL CORPORATE PROFILE

UNIVERSAL CORPORATE PROFILE

1. Name:	Date of Preparation:
-----------------	-----------------------------

2. Headquarters:	3. Allegiance (enter two-letter code)
-------------------------	--

4. SCOPE

4.1 Employees <input type="checkbox"/>	4.2 Range <input type="checkbox"/>	4.3 Revenue (% GRP) <input type="checkbox"/>	4.4 Risk <input type="checkbox"/>
0. 1-9	0. Local	0. Insignificant (<10 ⁻⁶)	0. None
1. 10-99	1. Global	1. Tiny (10 ⁻⁶⁺)	1. Tiny
2. 100-999	2. Interplanetary	2. Small (10 ⁻⁵⁺)	2. Small
3. 1,000-9,999	3. Interstellar	3. Low Average (10 ⁻⁴⁺)	3. Low Average
4. 10,000-99,999	4. Subsectors	4. High Average (0.001-0.009)	4. High Average
5. 100,000-999,999	5. Sectors	5. Large (0.01-0.09)	5. Large
6. 1-9 Million	6. Imperial	6. Huge (0.1-0.9)	6. Huge
7. 10-99 Million	7. Trans-Imperial	7. Immense (1-9)	7. Extreme
8. 100-999 Million		8. Monopolistic (10-99)	N. Not for Profit
9. 1 Billion or more			

5. EXTERNAL RELATIONS	6. NATURE _____
5.1 Influence <input type="checkbox"/>	5.2 Public Image <input type="checkbox"/>
0. None	0. Hated
1. Very Minor	1. Strongly Disliked
2. Minor	2. Disliked
3. Significant	3. Mildly Disliked
4. Major	4. Ignored
5. Very Major	5. Popular
6. Dominant	6. Very Popular
7. Total Control	7. Worshipped

Div	Division	PubS	Publicly Listed Company
Emp	Employee Trust		(PLC) (single dominant shareholder)
Fam	Family Business		
Gov	Corporate Government	PubL	PLC (limited shareholder base)
LL	Private Limited Liability		
Mut	Mutual Company/ Friendly Society	PubW	PLC (wide shareholder base)
NL	Private Non Limited	StSp	State Sponsored
	Liability	StO	State Owned Enterprise
Part	Partnership	Sole	Sole Proprietorship
Priv	Private Trust	Sub	Wholly-Owned Subsidiary

7. INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION (enter one digit to indicate tens of percentages)

___ Agriculture	___ Transportation, Communications, Utilities	___ Service
___ Mining	___ Wholesale trade	___ Public Administrative
___ Construction	___ Retail trade	___ Unclassifiable
___ Manufacturing	___ Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	

8. CORPORATE STYLE

8.1 R&D <input type="checkbox"/>	8.2 Tradition <input type="checkbox"/>	8.3 Centralisation <input type="checkbox"/>	8.4 Unity <input type="checkbox"/>
0. None	0. No Tradition	0. Equal Influence	0. No Consensus
1. Very Little	1. A Few Customs	1. Very Broad	1. Very Little
2. Little	2. Loose Guidelines	2. Broad	2. Little
3. Low Average	3. Tight Guidelines	3. Broad Average	3. Low Average
4. High Average	4. Standardised Rules	4. Narrow Average	4. High Average
5. High	5. Rigid Rules	5. Narrow	5. High
6. Very High	6. Very Rigid Rules	6. Very Narrow	6. Very High
7. Devoted to R&D	7. Totally Hidebound	7. All Power at Centre	7. Single Vision

9. LABOUR RIGHTS	10. NOTES
9.1 Paranoia <input type="checkbox"/>	
0. Totally Open	
1. Token Checks	<i>In sections 4,5,8 and 9, denote special situations with "?".</i>
2. Minor Checks	
3. Standard Checks	
4. High Security	
5. Very High Security	
6. Intrusive Security	
7. Genuinely Paranoid	
9.2 Employee Relations <input type="checkbox"/>	
0. Actively Opposed	
1. Totally Uncaring	
2. Very Minor Benefits	
3. Minor Benefits	
4. Significant Benefits	
5. Major Benefits	
6. Very Major Benefits	
7. Paternalistic	

“Government is a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human wants.” – E. Burke

1. Citywide Fire Services

Im◀101N◀02▶StSp◀Pub◀0226◀21▶

Description

CFS is a well-equipped, taxpayer-funded fire-fighting service. It is constantly trying to recruit high quality volunteers into its ranks and also advertises for donations to supplement its funds. It has stations throughout the locality and provides full time fire cover at the starport.

GM's Notes

CFS was once a well-funded, well-equipped organisation, funded solely from local taxes back when safety was a top priority for the local government. Times change; repeated cutbacks over more than a decade mean the service is struggling to keep going. Equipment bought in better times is aging and as items wear out they are being replaced by inferior substitutes.

A significant proportion of funding now comes from voluntary contributors, including local businesses – the recent “sponsor a fire-fighter” appeal has been very successful, allowing the service to defer the closure of two stations. The largest single source of private income is the starport authority (SPA) which demands an on-site team for instant response. This is expensive to provide, but the SPA contribution pays enough to subsidise the rest of the service.

Apart from equipment, staffing is the main problem caused by the reduced government funding. The CFS used to have a small pool of volunteers to step in at busy times, but now these helpers form the bulk of the workforce. Though unpaid, their equipment, training and maintaining them at readiness still cost money; the lack of permanent staff is affecting performance.

Morale is low. The fire-fighters have kept the service running with sheer determination but it has become obvious that the government is using their efforts as evidence that the CFS can operate on an even smaller budget. The public is beginning to lose faith in a service that, increasingly frequently, turns up too late or with insufficient equipment or people to function effectively. The fire-fighters feel that it is only a matter of time before a tragedy occurs.

Plots

1: The PCs are hired to collect a very valuable document from a government building. When they get there they find the building in flames and the CFS packing up to leave. The fire-fighters explain that all the occupants are now safe and they have another call to attend. If the PCs make a fuss, the frustrated captain will say “I don't see why we should prioritise them when they don't care about us.” The PCs may offer to help, bribe or threaten the CFS group to help them get into the building and retrieve their vital document.

2: Two burly men approach the PCs and look over their ship. “Very nice,” says one. “It would be *such* a shame if it was destroyed in a fire. Lucky for you we're here to offer you some (cough) protection...” These are collectors for CFS, who've been watching too many gangster vids...

3: As 1 or 2 above, plus the PCs learn about the impending station closures and a very recent death due to equipment failures which has been covered up by the government. The authorities will ‘discourage’ PCs from publicising this data.

2. The Company

Im◀6280◀74▶Gov◀Pub◀4435◀56▶

Description

Listed in the ISD register as T'lark State Corporation, everyone refers to this government as “The Company”. It runs the world as a socialist state; although technically every resident is an employee they are referred to simply as “citizens”.

The Company works tirelessly to maintain the health, well-being and economic prosperity of all its citizens, making this world the ideal place to live. Trust The Company; The Company is your friend; The Company's products are the best; be proud of your membership of The Company.

GM's Notes

This world's corporate status is a convenience to allow a minimally-capitalist, centrally-planned economy to flourish within the Imperium. They believe their dream of a socialist paradise is hindered by the Imperial stance on free trade.

Though forced to compete with foreign imports, citizens are proud of their society and work hard



to prove that their way is best, and their products are as good or better than offworlder 'rubbish'.

Other corporations are allowed to set up on the world, but have a hard time of it; locals who work for them must leave The Company and lose their citizenship; employees from other worlds lack the basic rights of citizens. Given the local dislike of outsider goods, external enterprises are rarely financially viable. However, one import welcomed by the citizens is entertainment – many of them see the rest of space as an exotic place, good to read or hear about “although you wouldn't want to go there”. Some young citizens *do* emigrate, fired by the potential excitement of life elsewhere.

Plots

1: As part of a recent surge of citizens leaving the planet, a man approaches the PCs, seeking passage for a large group of emigrants. When they come aboard, they appear excited, but during jump the PCs find out their passengers' view of the Imperium is based on the soap operas and adventure holos they've seen. It may be difficult to break the truth to them...

2: As 1, but the passengers have paid the patron extortionate amounts for the flight as they have little knowledge of offworld finances.

3: As 1 or 2, and the passengers have paid the patron for housing and jobs at their destination. The patron has lied and will disappear with their money at the destination. The forlorn citizens (and police) will no doubt hold the PCs responsible...

3. Environmental Regulatory Commission

Im◀3233●33▶St0●Pub◀4422●43▶

Description

The ERC is charged with the licensing and management of all projects in this system which may have a significant environmental impact. It has far-reaching powers to investigate and, if necessary, suspend a company's operations pending legal proceedings.

GM's Notes

With industrial pollution threatening to alter their atmosphere code to "tainted", this world is now very concerned about the environment. They have invested the ERC with enough resources and legal authority to be a truly effective body. Companies, government departments and even individuals have to submit proposals and buy licenses for any activities with "a significant environmental impact" (a catch-all phrase which is

interpreted very broadly). The ERC has popular support, but industries pay heavily to meet the environmental regulations. A tiny minority, which includes some of the most powerful entities in the system, are openly hostile, actively manoeuvring to limit the ERC's powers and claiming the ERC contravenes Imperial free trade rules. Unless they win, this looks like backfiring as ERC enthusiasts have boycotted the companies and their products.

One of the arguments raging within the ERC (and the population at large) is the status of barren planets elsewhere in the system. Should these be preserved in their natural state or exploited to reduce pressure on the mainworld? So far, the ERC has compromised by issuing only short-term licenses (although the most extreme environmentalists see this as total surrender).

Plots

1: Arriving in-system with a cargo of industrial equipment, the PCs discover that their goods do not meet the latest ERC legislation – the cargo is effectively worthless. One company covertly offers to buy the goods, if the PCs do them “a little favour”, carrying supplies to a secret mining operation on a nearby gas giant moon. The PCs arrive just as the ERC is delivering an order to cease operations... the miners respond violently.

4. Global Beanstalk Consortium

Im◀1136●31▶PubW●Util4-Fin1-Pub5◀0444●42▶

Description

This company was formed with one goal: to build a “beanstalk”, or space elevator, carrying visitors and cargo between the highport and the planet's surface. They succeeded and rides on the beanstalk are comfortable, safe and afford spectacular views of the planet and passing ships.

GM's Notes

GBC is the butt of much local humour. The project went vastly over-budget and, despite high ticket prices, the company is having difficulty servicing its debt. Rumours of technical problems are rife, but their safety record is spotless.

Plots

1: The PCs are travelling on the beanstalk when the power suddenly fails. Emergency brakes bring the car to a halt 2,000 km above the ground. Unknown to the GBC steward and panicky passengers aboard the car, an irate debtor has sabotaged the beanstalk to provide leverage in negotiating rapid payment of the debt by GBC.

5. Happy Enli's Redistributions

Im◀3142●50▶StSp●Pub◀0465●64▶

Description

HER helps you calculate what you need to pay the government in taxes and will even transfer it from your account for you. Paying your dues was never so easy as it is now, thanks to Happy Enli's.

GM's Notes

HER won the bidding war when the government privatised its tax collection. HER has demonstrated its effectiveness over the last decade but is now quite unpopular with taxpayers because of its high-handed approach and brutal response to anyone who has problems paying up. The company is invested with extensive powers (including statutory right of entry to homes and offices) and does not hesitate to exercise them.

HER's contract is coming up for renewal or reassignment. It has often been suggested that HER is run by a bunch of criminals, but this is dismissed as popular paranoia. Very few people know that it genuinely does have connections with organised crime on the planet; this, in turn, strongly influences the actions of the government. To date, any attempts to expose these connections have always been violently quashed.

Plots

1: HER agents raid the PCs' ship to collect due "transient taxes". The burly men will do their best to antagonise the party and will look very pleased if they resist. The starport authorities reluctantly admit that a change in local law means staying dirtside more than 24 hours allows HER to tax travellers and cargo as if they were natives.

2: The PCs find two dead reporters hidden in their cargo. The police detain the PCs briefly, then release them and encourage them to leave planet quickly. The reporters were on the verge of uncovering the connections between HER, the government and the crime syndicate; the police have orders to hush up the deaths. If the PCs investigate further, the bodies will vanish and the party will suffer a potentially fatal "accident".

6. Imperial Securities

Department

Capital/2118 Core

Im◀462N●65▶StO●Pub◀1456●54▶

Description

Established by Imperial Edict 38 as a part of what is now the Ministry of Trade, ISD's mission is

to preserve the integrity of the Imperial securities, commodities and financial markets. It is also charged with assisting member worlds in the management of their internal securities markets.

ISD has two key divisions: Registration reviews applications for the Limited Imperial Charter (LIC), then receives and disseminates the prescribed financial reports of chartered corporations; Market Regulation monitors interstellar securities markets and intervenes in cases of fraud or manipulation.

GM's Notes

It was well remembered in the early Third Imperium that the Long Night had been triggered in large measure by the collapse of the Rule of Man's financial systems; ISD was founded to prevent a reoccurrence. It is a largely autonomous department within its parent ministry; its Director reports directly to the Minister of Trade.

To inspire corporate confidence, ISD has always been one of the least secretive departments of the Imperial bureaucracy. It actively investigates violations of the Imperial securities laws and has broad investigative powers, working closely with the Ministry of Justice in prosecuting cases that are not settled at the administrative level. The ISD has a small staff of subject matter experts, scattered across the Imperium, with a moderate headquarters on Capital. Registration fees provide part of its funding but most comes from the Ministry budget.

Plots

1: ISD is investigating Schunemann und Sohn, AG, LIC (SuSAG) for securities fraud. SuSAG is accused of falsifying test data on a new drug and including the false results in reports filed with ISD to improve its stock price. The local ISD agent engages the PCs as deputies to help serve an administrative subpoena on the SuSAG Pharmaceutical Division laboratory where the tests were conducted. The team must accompany the ISD agent to the laboratory, arriving unannounced just before the administrative staff goes home for the day. The PCs must help copy the computer databases and take away any physical evidence, such as drug or tissue samples, and printed or written records. Pay is Cr1,000 per PC per day.

2: As 1, but SuSAG has wind of the ISD subpoena and needs to destroy the laboratory evidence before the raid. Posing as an employee of a rival company, a SuSAG operative engages the PCs to destroy all samples stored in the laboratory for a flat payment of Cr20,000. The PCs are warned not to injure anyone or they will

be exposed to local law enforcement authorities. In reality, SuSAG will destroy the computer files via a faked hacker attack. The lab's night watch staff are not aware of the scheme, and will respond rapidly to any intrusion into the lab.

7. Intelligence Management Services

Im◀3434●40▶St0●Pub◀6663●63▶

Description

Concerned about national security? IMS provides training, equipment and (if necessary) personnel for any government's intelligence needs. This company has decades of experience in all aspects of data-gathering and analysis, as well as leak elimination and infiltration.

GM's Notes

A dictatorship on a balkanised world set up IMS in order to earn money from the expertise built up through years of running its secret police and spy network. The venture has been very successful; there is always a demand for intelligence, even within the Imperium.

IMS will deal with anyone who can pay its exorbitant fees; it does not vet prospective clients based on ideology. This, combined with the fact that it does lucrative business training, equipping and hiring out specialists in counter-insurgency and interrogation has made the company very unpopular with sophont rights groups.

One of the company's strictest rules is that it does not give out information about its clients – it recognises that this would immediately destroy its market. Even so, no government trusts IMS to keep information from its parent dictatorship; consequently most customers are from worlds some distance away, who feel that they will not be harmed by limited leaks of information.

A closely-kept secret is that a significant proportion of IMS clients are corporations, whose intelligence and security needs are often similar to (and may conflict with!) those of governments.

Most IMS equipment is imported from Spy-TEK as the latter supplies far higher quality kit than can be produced locally. IMS sells or leases this on at a significant mark-up to its clients. However, the company's real selling point is the experience of its staff – from relatively mundane bodyguard services to highly covert intelligence operations.

Management of IMS is in flux at the moment – the old head of operations was recently assassinated and various senior executives are currently jockeying for position.

Plots

1: Arriving on a high-law level world, the PCs are detained in a soundproof room and shown evidence of previous misdemeanours. They are given a choice: act as spies for the government during their stay or be deported. In reality this is an IMS training programme; the agents holding them are being tested. The PCs will be asked to pick up messages from dead letter drops and other suspicious acts, though the encrypted texts are actually harmless and nothing the PCs do is illegal. At the end of their stay, the PCs will be debriefed by the IMS trainees, then let go, with a warning not to discuss this with anyone else.

2: As 1, but this is a real IMS operation – the PCs act as go-betweens for stolen intelligence documents. If discovered by the local authorities, the PCs will be tried as spies.

8. Madkashgerg & Chin

Im◀1122●35▶Part●Svc3-Pub7◀4356●66▶

Description

When you have to appear on "Trial By The People", you need the best representation you can buy. M&C have provided the highest rated legal counsel for three seasons running; don't trust your opportunity for justice to anything less.

On this world, it is claimed that "justice is in the hands of the people": trials are broadcast live and the audience votes on the result; the show's host then passes sentence. Currently led by senior partners Harika Gaarrasa and Vassily Sudeiko, M&C is one of a small group of companies that has taken the process to new heights of showmanship, including full holo reconstructions of the crime starring famous performers.

GM's Notes

The company does a lot of work that is paid for by the government. Much of this is prosecution on behalf of the state but a growing proportion is legal aid work, helping those who cannot pay for their own defence team. High-profile cases are taken on by the company's top people but less popular cases are used as practice cases (or "trial trials" as M&C call them) for newer employees.

Though supplemented by advertising revenue, M&C's fees for government work have rocketed recently, yet the number of commissions keeps growing. Cynics point out that this coincides with the elevation of Sudeiko's wife to the premiership.

Plots

1: One (or more) of the PCs is arrested and charged with a crime. M&C are assigned their

case but as it is "uninteresting" they give it to one of their least experienced teams. Another showy firm is handling the prosecution; it is obvious that the PCs will lose unless they can attract the interest of someone higher up in M&C.

2: As witnesses to a crime, the PCs are paid to appear in a holo-reconstruction of the event. When the show goes out, they find their evidence has been badly misrepresented; friends of the wrongly-convicted party then come after them...

9. Rahman Economic Institute

Im◀2433●45▶LL●Svc3-Pub7◀6544●35▶

Description

The REI is a centre for economic excellence – it employs some of the best financial minds in the Imperium. It can provide advisors, trainers, administrators and co-ordinators for economic projects of any scale, under any conditions.

GM's Notes

Originally a school of economics, in recent years the REI has moved more and more into the administration of large economic programmes, primarily for local governments. It is impartial regarding economic ideology and will work on any project, from a fully state-planned economy to free-market capitalism. REI-run projects have had both notable successes and disastrous failures; for the latter, REI have avoided publicity or fought strenuous legal battles to deflect the blame.

Plots

1: An REI contract on a balkanised world is threatened by the actions of a neighbouring state, who have imposed a trade blockade. The REI needs the project to succeed and are offering a reward for anyone who can break the blockade.

10. Third Set Incarcerations

Im◀3426●32▶WOS●Pub◀0552●71▶

Description

TSI are experienced in managing prisons, detention centres and rehabilitation programmes on many worlds. They provide an economical and secure service flexible enough to meet almost any local criminal confinement requirements.

GM's Notes

TSI is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Lindarport Security. When LS bought the company three years ago it found that most of the individual prisons were being run effectively but that the high-level finance and administration were a

shambles. It has spent the intervening time restructuring the operation and has begun the messy task of 'cleaning up' the few prisons where 'incompetent' management is apparent.

TSI matches their prison management style effectively to local conditions by using a locally-recruited workforce with offworld personnel in key positions. TSI's operations range from electronic tagging and monitoring of convicts allowed back into society, to prisoner transport and maximum-security buildings on hostile outer-system moons. Where legal, TSI puts prisoners to work on unskilled tasks to earn the company extra income.

Security has always been the company's top priority and even the worst-run operations have an excellent record on escape prevention. Prisoner rights are less of a concern and this has brought public criticism; Lindarport are investigating ways of improving the company's image in this area.

The new management plans to spend another year or two consolidating before aggressively expanding the company. The sales group are investigating potential new customers and preparing a big advertising campaign, but Lindarport are wary of pushing too hard until TSI has finished its "housecleaning" operations.

Plots

1: The PCs are arrested (justifiably or not) and placed in a TSI-run prison. Unfortunately it's one of the worst, with gang warfare between prisoner factions. The guards are completely ineffective at keeping order and some covertly or overtly support the gangs. As newcomers with no status, the PCs are the targets of every frustrated prisoner looking for somebody to push around...

2: TSI hires the PCs to test security at a prison, by trying to break out a convict planted by TSI. There will be no legal repercussions if they succeed, provided no other prisoners escape.

3: As 2, but the TSI 'rep' is acting for the prison governor, who has a poor administrative record and believes Lindarport will fire him for incompetence. The break out will be subdued with maximum force to provide him with good publicity.

4: As 2, but the governor has been embezzling funds for years and fears discovery by the LS investigators. He plans to make good his escape during the confusion of the break out.

5: As 2, but the TSI 'rep' is actually from a crime gang who wish to 'spring' their incarcerated colleague. To reinforce his story, he will supply the PCs with low power laser 'stun' guns "so that no one gets hurt by accident". On the day of the escape, a coded radio signal increases the laser power to lethal levels.

"All taxes must, at last, fall upon agriculture" – Edward Gibbon.

1. AI-G

Im◀4443●26▶PubW●Ag8-Who12◀0334●22▶

Description

AI-G provides raw materials for a wide variety of synthetic foodstuffs; they can also build and staff the processing facilities. Algal farming the AI-G way is cheap, energy-efficient, and an important contributor to air and water recycling. AI-G concentrate on the cultivation of their product, contracting out for processing equipment when necessary. Many of their plants produce a surplus, which drives their wholesale trade.

GM's Notes

It is nearly impossible to grow food in traditional ways on most starships, space habitats and hostile worlds. AI-G uses geneered algae to produce proteins for synth-meats as well as carbohydrates for synth-veg and synth-fruit. Few people realise that some high-cuisine foodstuffs are also AI-G products sold under alternative trading names such as *Allierian Finest*.

Plots

1: A passenger books two jumps on the PCs' ship but after the intermediate stop-over, he fails to turn up for the onwards journey. Enquiries reveal that he has not been seen since shortly after arrival. As the PCs' ship makes to leave, it is impounded by port security. Human remains have been found in the local AI-G plant and DNA tests link these with the missing passenger. The victim was killed in a bar brawl by a worker at the plant, who tried to hide the evidence... however, until this is discovered, the PCs are prime suspects.

2: The PCs obtain a shipment of surplus AI-G foodstuffs at rock-bottom prices. There is an explosion in the hold during jump – the cargo area is plastered with algae. After the PCs 'clean up' (especially if using high pressure water sprays or similar) they find algal deposits forming in air vents, water outlets, etc. The shipment contained raw, super-fast growing algae in addition to the inactivated, processed food. The algae continued to grow, gases built up and caused the explosion. Traces of the algae were subsequently spread by the crew or in fine water mists (from spraying).

2. Far Horizons Landscapers

Im◀1322●25▶LL●Ag◀5525●44▶

Description

Whatever your dreams for your land, FHL will help you fulfil them. They offer an exclusive, individually tailored service; you take part in the creative transformation of your surroundings.

GM's Notes

FHL is *the* landscaping company for the elite; it works on an "if you need to ask the price you can't afford it" basis. They provide planning expertise and supervise operations, but subcontract most of the actual work and any specialist requirements.


The company uses sophisticated visualisation software to show clients how the completed project will look. No expense is spared to meet the client's exact requirements, including artificial climate maintenance, importing offworld flora and fauna, and geneering them to behave "correctly". The company has developed a close relationship with Hypagene (p.13) to satisfy these needs.

FHL was founded 25 years ago by a group of landscape gardeners and a lone 'angel' financier. They struggled to break even for a decade but as their reputation spread, they were employed by increasingly top-quality landscapers, further building their reputation to its current heights.

Samir Benatar, the current CEO, is one of the founders. In recent years he has found it hard to cope with his changing role in the growing company and has been frustrated by his inability to get involved on the ground. An added thorn in his side is the arrogance of his rising new star 'scape designer, Guiseppe Njenja.

Plots

1: A wealthy noble inherits a garden world, unpopulated save for a small staff on the family estate, and hires FHL to transform it to fit his grandiose vision. This is the largest project the company has ever undertaken and they require an army of extra helpers including: security to fend off environmental protesters; free traders to transport flora, fauna and equipment; scientists, engineers, labourers and basic service providers to keep everyone else happy. However, when



their excavations uncover the ruins of a previously unknown civilisation, Samir has to decide whether to conceal the find, exploit it, or call in the IISS...

2: The PCs are hired to find a buried treasure (or equivalent), using directions from an ancient map. However, the burial site has been completely transformed by an FHL operation for an immigrant noble. Interrogating locals who worked for FHL on the project will identify where key landmarks *used* to be, which allows the burial site to be located – in the middle of the main lawn!

3. Golden Harvest Labour Associates

Im◀1034◀35▶Part◀Ag◀0423◀35▶

Description

Demand for farm labourers on this world varies according to season and location but peaks dramatically at harvest times. GHLA benefits farmers by selecting suitable workers and handling their payment. It benefits labourers by providing a single place to look for work, transport to and from the farms and a standard contract (including formal grievance procedures).

GM's Notes

GHLA was formed on a low-tech world by Brigg Sugaya, son of a farmer, and Nandelle Buhl, a business graduate fresh out of college. Brigg had the practical experience and contacts; Nandelle had the knowledge required to set up the business and make appropriate financial plans. She also had the idea of advertising for workers at the starport and in startown, where many people without money or prospects gathered hoping to make it offworld.

They started small, organising labour for Brigg's family and neighbouring farms, but have grown to become the largest labour company on this world. As they expanded into areas spanning the equator, the differing seasons evened out demand. There is now a core group of labourers who are effectively employed by the company; most fluctuations in demand can be met by the starport irregulars and only at peak times does the company struggle to meet its contracts.

Brigg and Nandelle try hard to satisfy both their customers and labourers, but managing more than 100 full-time staff (mostly involved in recruitment) has taken its toll. The couple have been linked romantically for some years and are thinking about starting a family; however, they find it hard to delegate guidance of the firm, so have deferred their personal plans for the moment.

Plots

1: While down on their luck, the PCs hire on as labourers. While digging a field they discover a small artefact, possibly of Ancient origin. Technically it belongs to the farmer; will they hand it over or try to smuggle it off the land?

2: As above, but the "artefact" is a fake buried by the farmer to test the honesty of the labourers.

3: Brigg hires the PCs to investigate a senior manager whom they're considering promoting to run GHLA while Brigg and Nandelle start a family. They want some background checks to ensure the manager is really as good as he seems. The PCs are completing their investigation when by chance they find out some labourers are getting special payments to work on a special farm – it's growing illegal drugs under the manager's control.

4. Hypagene

Im◀5552◀5?▶PubW◀Ag7-Manu2-Non1
◀7444◀63▶

Description

Hypagene are specialists in the genetic engineering (GE) of lifeforms to meet the needs of their customers, whether the requirements be ecological, economic or simply aesthetic.

GM's Notes

GE is a controversial subject in the Imperium and all GE companies have to follow very strict guidelines. Hypagene's public operations are very visibly "by the book", but their success has turned them into a huge company, which has made them prime targets of the anti-GE lobby anyway.

The company divides its products into two categories: "Bespoke" covers high-price creations, precisely tailored to the customer's specifications, for which it is justly famous; "Mass Market" items are existing designs that need no further research or development, including a range of high-yield crops and cattle animals, air-scrubbing lifeforms and popular pets such as the boosted-IQ Peeker Monkey or the Baladragon. Of course, today's Bespoke may be tomorrow's Mass Market unless the customer pays an additional exclusivity fee.

Hypagene's operations are divided into three market-based divisions. The Ecology Division (ED) handles all projects that improve or preserve the environment, from long-term terraforming to designing diseases targeting a specific local pest. The company always points at ED's successes to counter criticisms from eco-protectors and is very careful to ensure ED gets only positive publicity. However, ED only provides 14% of the company turnover – the economic heart of the business is

the Commercial Division (CD), bringing in 63% of revenues. CD focuses on agricultural products, including licensing and selling seeds and eggs to farmers. In addition, pets and decorative plants help keep the company in the public eye.

The Private Division brings in the final 23% of sales from private individuals and organisations who wish to remain anonymous, such as nobles with unusual 'hobbies' or 'pleasure' ships. The designs (which have to be published for Hypagene to retain its license) skirt the limits of the guidelines, but this is partly a blind. The products are real but the prices and quantities are inflated to hide the fact that a third of PD's income comes from "black" projects for the Imperial military. The Imperial auditors know about this and aid the cover-up. Ironically, Hypagene uses this loose auditing to hide from the Imperium their work for other military organisations...

Plots

1: Arriving at an agricultural world with a cargo of Hypagene seeds, the PCs' ship is surrounded by anti-geneering protesters who try to stop the seeds being offloaded. Any conflict with the PCs will be captured by the local media...

2: As 1 but the imported seed is not licensed on this world (this may be an oversight by Hypagene or a deliberate attempt by a local farmer to flout import laws in the hopes of out-producing his competitors). Customs officers impound the ship and crew while the seeds are destroyed and the ship is sterilised.

3: As 1, but the PCs are carrying geneered pets. These critters were a pain to feed and care for during jump, but now they're out of food and must be offloaded soon or they'll starve.

4: As 1, but the pets are carrying a geneered plague designed by terrorists (or an aggressive neighbour world) to wipe out the local livestock. If Customs bio-sniffers detect the plague, the crew will be quarantined and the ship sterilised or taken into space and destroyed. Otherwise the plague will decimate cattle and ruin the planet's economy; the PCs will be tried as terrorists.

5. Kawa-paber-a-aba Fur and Hide Supplies

Im◀3143●20▶LL●Ag8-Manu1-Ret1
◀0553●42▶

Description

Specialists in kalaig products, KFHS rears its animals in humane conditions and delivers high-quality fur and hide to manufacturers. They also

supply other animal hides, and their own range of exclusive, hand-crafted, fur and leather products which they sell direct to retailers and consumers.

GM's Notes

This Bwap-run company initially failed to realise that farming kalaig – furry creatures with rather human-like faces – was going to be a rather emotive issue. They are now very careful about their image and run an extremely clean operation, but are still the target of many animal rights campaigners. The Bwap business mentality has also made it unpopular with some furriers.

Plots

1: The PCs are hired as guards and/or investigators at a KFHS ranch where a number of immature animals have gone missing. The PCs discover animal rights campaigners breaking in at night and taking the creatures to a nearby forest.

2: As 1, but KFHS has implanted tracers in some of the kalaig – the PCs have to track the stolen creatures and recover them.

3: As 1 or 2, but the thief is a local furrier who's trying to build up his own kalaig farm.

6. Ocean People

Im◀204N●25▶Gov●Ag7-Svc3◀2644●05▶

Description

Looking for the ultimate hunting thrill? Join the Ocean People on a traditional expedition as they seek out the rarest deepwater creatures. If you prefer something more relaxing, why not taste the unique OP dishes in the luxury of one of their cruise vessels, or dress yourself in authentic piscihide garments and try your hand at some of the many crafts kept alive by this exciting culture!

GM's Notes

The original "ocean people" were a utopian experiment on a fertile water world – a herder-hunter-gatherer society that exploited (rather than rejected) the benefits of high technology. The experiment was moderately successful; the community traded surplus food and sea-based products for the equipment it needed.

Seeing other such experiments swallowed up by interstellar society and corporations, they determined to preserve their culture and values. The community, once acting as many independent fishers and traders, consolidated itself into a single Imperial company, bringing benefits from increased administrative efficiency, political clout and trade leverage. To supplement their exports, the community has incorporated the



needs of tourists into their everyday life. The most radical change has been the addition of cruise vessels to the community fleets. Staffed partly by islanders, these are luxury floating resorts.

A growing population and a profitable export market for sea produce is putting pressure on ocean resources but OP is careful not to over-exploit the sea. However, their leaders are worried about the future and are looking into technological and political ways to lessen the impact.

Although it offers little in the way of financial reward, OP is a community and looks after its people well, providing food, shelter and company even for those who are too young or old to be productive. The people often have to deal with naive offworlders, who want to join the "tribe" but have little idea of the contribution every member has to make; only a very small number are accepted, usually those with a sensible attitude and specific skills the company currently lacks.

Plots

1: A bedraggled, smelly old man has been hanging around the starport for years, claiming the ocean people are hiding secret treasures. Everyone ignores him until one of the PCs sees him using a tiny hand-carved fishbone to heat up some soup – instantaneously. If they can obtain the item they find it is a nanotech heater of unknown origin. He can, indeed, lead them to an underwater Ancient site where he found this artefact, but he's nearly insane and the site is deep and hazardous to explore.

2: As 1, but high-ranking locals already know of the Ancient site and intend to exploit it. They will go to any lengths to ensure no one plunders the site or gives away its location.

3: As a publicity stunt, an environmental protest group gets an OP elder to publicly deride the over-fishing of the seas caused by offworld demand. A number of people at the starport (possibly including the PCs) get sick eating seafood. A small eco-terror cell, separate from the original protest group, is trying to scare off tourists and stop the export market.

7. Saurian Farmers' Co-operative

Saurus/1320 Spinward Marches
 Im◀1324●15▶Mut●Ag8-Who11-Svc1
 ◀1223●22▶

Description

The SFC co-ordinates the sale of agricultural produce grown on Saurus in the lucrative Vilis

market and acts as a collective purchasing agent for manufactured goods from Vilis. As of 1105, approximately 30% of Saurian farm production is marketed through the SFC. As a sideline the company also arranges the sale of both indigenous Saurian artwork and hunting permits for the megasaurs that inhabit Saurus' swamps.

GM's Notes

SFC was formed on Saurus in 1074 to improve the bargaining position of the world's farmers in their dealings with buyers on Vilis. In 1089, it sponsored the incorporation of Sweet-Carroll Lines (p.54) to reduce the cost of shipping its goods to Vilis. While the co-operative is a major shareholder in S-CL, in the peak harvest seasons, requirements sometimes exceed S-CL's shipping capacity and rapid shipment of certain perishable cargos can bring profitable spur-of-the-moment contracts for free traders.

The co-operative has been highly successful, attracting the attention of outside interests. SFC's membership rules allow anyone to join but limits their individual investment to 6%.

Current ownership (as of 1100): Farming members 86%, Hortalez et Cie 6%, Imperial Family 5%, Sweet-Carroll Lines 3%.

Plots

1: An art collector hires the party to purchase selected pieces of the "powerfully primitive art of the Saurians". He reckons dealing direct with the Saurian craftspeople should keep the price down. The SFC dominate trade in Saurian artworks and feel obligated to ensure the natives get fair prices. They will view the PCs as unscrupulous offworlders out to exploit the natives and will disrupt their dealings at every opportunity.

2: As 1, but the collector wants the PCs to buy the artworks secretly and smuggle them offworld to avoid the SFC and any taxes. To complicate matters, the artworks are large and fragile.

8. Siylrilihya'a Veterinary Services

As◀1422●14▶Part●Ag◀4634●54▶

Description

SVS maintains Hierate traditions of care for their beasts by tending to the needs of Aslan livestock located far from the Hierate, where the animals suffer unfamiliar environments, foodstuffs and diseases. With no clan affiliation of their own the vets can treat herds for Aslan of any clan and even non-Aslan who own Hierate fauna.

GM's Notes

SVS is a partnership run by unmarried female Aslan in Imperial space. They have good contacts within both the Imperium and Hierate, allowing them access to the best possible vaccines, specialist feeds and veterinary information; however, in the final analysis it is the skill of the partners that determines their success or otherwise. So far failures have been few.

Plots

1: A number of large prey animals in an Aslan region of an Imperial world begin dying from a mystery illness. When SVS are called in they find the infection is spreading rapidly and though they quickly synthesise quantities of a suitable vaccine, it is difficult to administer the drug to the 400-kilo beasts which run free over a huge wilderness area. The Aslan put out a polite appeal for non-Aslan manpower; if the PCs provide useful aid the clan will owe them a debt of honour.

9. Sunarimi Bay Collective

Im◀2035●24▶Mut●Ag7-Manu1-Ret1-Svc1
◀2101●04▶

Description

SBC is a community project producing seafood from the unique bay ecosystem, creating desirable craftworks from the colourful local corals, shells and fish scales and providing guided tours of the scenic bay, diving excursions and extensive scientific submarine trips.

GM's Notes

The SBC is a very lucrative attempt by local people to benefit from the tourist trade. The bay is the most beautiful on the continent, with a very rare combination of beautiful sea creatures which also happen to make some of the finest dishes on the planet. However, several large tourism companies and a mass-food-processing group are trying to take over the operation.

Plots

1: The PCs are hired by an unknown patron (one of the larger concerns noted above) to go "cause some trouble" in the bay. The more tourists scared away, the more the PCs get paid.

2: The PCs are visiting the bay when they are threatened by some thugs (hired as in 1 above).

3: The bay's submarine goes missing – the PCs are hired to use their ship's sensors to help locate the sub and effect a rescue before their air runs out. When it's discovered the sub has been sabotaged, the PCs are asked to investigate...

10. Ultimate Kian Stables

Im◀2424●16▶Priv●Ag◀5214●25▶

Description

UKS supplies some of the finest kian from their homeworld, Prilissa; company-bred beasts have even won the Kian Cup against pure homeworld stock. UKS deals in racing animals, the heavier strains beloved of low-tech farmers everywhere, the sure-footed mountain varieties and general-purpose pack animals. If you can find a better bloodline elsewhere UKS will obtain a breeding pair and fill your order from the offspring at no extra charge.

GM's Notes

Kian are two-legged mammals resembling the Terran ostrich. There are several breeds; the beasts are hardy and are used on many low-tech worlds in the Spinward Marches filling similar roles to Terran horses, mules and oxen.

UKS' sales rely on the pedigree of its stock so it goes to great lengths to make sure this is kept fresh and up to date. Its primary source of new genetic material is a small office on Prilissa which tracks the fashions and the condition of various bloodlines, purchasing animals as appropriate.

The company was set up by a wealthy kian racing fancier to indulge her hobby; before she died she arranged for her estate to finance a private trust to keep the company running along the lines she had established. As a result, UKS has several unusual conditions, most noticeably that every employee is paid the same hourly rate whether they are cleaning stables or managing the business plan – the more profitable the company, the higher the rate. Everyone is encouraged to take responsibility for the well-being of UKS as well as that of the animals (a certain proportion of the profits is always put aside to pay for the care of elderly or injured kian).

UKS now serves a whole subsector and though its growth has slowed, analysts are baffled by the success of a company which such unusual practices. With such small financial rewards, any manager joining the company either loves the animals or *really* fancies a challenge!

Plots

1: UKS are bringing in two pairs of "show kian" to fulfil their customer promise; when their ship suffers a drive malfunction, the PCs are hired to ship the beasts and their handlers for the final jump. The kian are heavily over-bred, pampered monsters and the handlers annoy the PCs with bizarre demands for their charges' comfort.

11. Uminarga Lumber

Im◀3333●33▶Mut●Ag6-Manu4◀1424●23▶

Description

UL is a major supplier of timber, providing many woods but specialising in hellboria. UL plantations are carefully managed to minimise disruption to the surrounding environment.

GM's Notes

The hellboria tree has a pale blue striated grain pattern which alters slowly over time, even once the tree is dead. This makes the wood very attractive and it is used in a wide variety of designer products. As the tree ages it hardens; five-year growth produces wood used for the racquet handles of star zipwire players while twenty-year trees are turned into luxury furniture.

UL is one of the largest producers of hellboria wood, with extensive plantations on three worlds. Because the tree takes a relatively long time to mature (and except on its homeworld requires above average care and attention) the company charges a high price for the timber; demand still exceeds supply. Huge tracts of more common, low-maintenance trees provide additional income.

UL lumberjacks form a close-knit community. They take pride in their work and many live permanently on the plantations, staying with the company throughout their working lives. Some have little contact with the rest of the world.

Aided by their environmental science group, the company has good relations with forestry management and even most environmentalists. Company chief executive officer Caroline Uminarga has recently stepped down to return to life as a lumberjack; her successor is finance director Januk Cther.

Plots

1: To satisfy a rush order from a neighbouring system the PCs are hired to collect the hellboria wood directly from a plantation. When they arrive there is no sign of the loggers but the wood is stacked ready for collection. During loading, the somewhat xenophobic UL workers return and accuse the PCs of trying to steal the wood.

2: As 1, but the loggers were killed by a vicious beast which begins hunting the PCs...

3: As 1, but the loggers are tied up nearby and a group of thieves who intended to remove the wood on trucks will now try to hijack the PCs' ship.

4: When the PCs' ship arrives on this world, a Customs biosweep of the decks finds eggs of the Kendry Worm – a wood-boring beetle. To protect the hellboria woods, the ship is impounded.

12. Xenobotanicals of Pequan

Pequan/1210 Spinward

Na◀2033●34▶Emp●Ag6-Who13-Ret1

◀3353●44▶

Description

XoP imports, grows, and exports exotic and delicate plants. Whatever your horticultural needs, XoP will do their best to fulfil them.

GM's Notes

Four parsecs from the Imperial and Zhodani borders, Pequan is a convenient place to grow and test crops which are illegal on other worlds. XoP is a small company, but owns vast tracts of wilderness on the sparsely populated planet. It maintains camouflaged reinforced plasticrete slabs at various sites, strong enough to support a 1000-dton starship (for transporting goods without the Pequan authority's knowledge). One site has a few outbuildings which house the traffic control and an unrefined fuel bunker, but starship visits are rare. Each site cultivates a different type of plant (roll 1d6 for each attribute below):

Plant Type	Origins/Needs
1. Carnivorous	1. Local
2. Narcotic	2. Offworld
3. Anagathic	3. Local but needs special environment
4. Succulent (water-storing)	4. Offworld, needs special environment
5. Fruiting	5. Genus/origin unknown
6. Poisonous	6. Bio-engineered

Some plants may have special properties:

1. Blocks selective-hearing ability
2. Contains undetected bacterial cultures
3. Is really the larval stage of a fast, nasty alien
4. Has leaves/fronds/stalks that heal wounds
5. Ingestion temporarily modifies Str/Dex/End/Int
6. Causes motion-only vision

Plots

1: While moving through jungle, some PCs contract a rash from touching a native ground-cover plant. The rash gradually becomes life-threatening. Local medics cannot fully counteract the irritant and suggest the group travel to Pequan to consult the xenobotanists there. The Pequan researchers can heal the PC(s) but ask for a sample of the plant in return (it looks useful).

2: As 1, but this is on Pequan; the PCs have stumbled into a XoP plantation of semi-poisonous plants intended for covert assassinations. If asked for help, XoP will heal the PCs but will try to cover up any connection between them and the site.

"...How very little, since things were made, Things have altered in the building trade." – Ruyard Kipling.

1. The Demolishers

Im◀1315●24▶LL●Con◀1344●23▶

Description

Nothing lasts forever; sometimes when the time comes to take things down, specialist help is needed. The Demolishers are experts in the safe dismantling of structures in space, leaving the system free of potentially dangerous debris.

GM's Notes

The Demolishers were the brainchild of Kur Trebek, whose father ran a successful dirtside demolition company. Kur had always dreamed of working in space; this was his ticket to the stars.

The Demolishers sift debris through a factory ship and reuse, resell or recycle as much as possible. Depending on location, quantity and local regulations, the remainder is launched into a star or planetary atmosphere (where it will burn up) or dumped on a barren body. As a last resort they it is incinerated by a factory ship to reduce the bulk and shipped out of system.

Most of the company's business is still in its home system. They have taken on several very successful one-shot contracts in nearby systems and this persuaded Trebek to set up branches on these worlds; however, none of these have yet managed to do more than break even.

Plots

1: The PCs emerge from jump some distance from their intended destination and receive a radio signal warning of impending danger: the company is gathering debris to be incinerated in a controlled explosion; the detonation can be cancelled, but the rubbish is heading straight for the PCs' ship from several directions...

2: The PCs are asked to collect a package concealed on a derelict space station, due to be demolished by this company. Not only is the station out of bounds to all traffic but the parcel contains highly illegal material hidden by a criminal just before being caught and imprisoned. If the PCs are caught, they're in serious trouble.

3: As 2, but the PCs don't know the station's due to be demolished and the charges are already aboard the station and counting down...

2. Diviners Well-Drilling

Im◀2424●03▶Part●Mine3-Cons5-Svc2
◀5364●42▶

Description

Short of water or other important fluid resources? DWD combines high-tech solutions with proven techniques to solve the principal problem with living on a low-hydrographic world.

GM's Notes

DWD was founded by Nei Xao, a diviner from a desert world, with a remarkable, unexplained talent for finding water. DWD is very good at finding the best well sites, thanks to the abilities of its founder and her hand-picked team. However, after losing contracts due to client scepticism, they now play down the means used.

DWD also provides and installs the equipment necessary to get at the liquid resources, but here it performs less well. DWD uses cheap third-party equipment with only moderately proficient techs and barely adequate after-sales support. In their specialist market, the divination service cannot survive alone and, much to Xao's disgust, an ever-growing proportion of their revenue comes from the hardware and maintenance contracts.

Plots

1: A desert community belonging to the Universal Synod of Reason (see *101 Religions*) employs DWD but also hires the PCs to determine whether the prospectors are using proper scientific techniques or mystical 'divining'. When the PCs uncover the latter, the Synod orders the imprisonment of the DWD staff...

2: A poorly-maintained DWD facility, extracting subterranean water for a colony on an otherwise barren world, suddenly fails. Though the colony's water tanks will last several weeks, panic ensues – the PCs get caught up in this and if they have a starship, it will be mobbed by colonists demanding their water supplies or trying to get offworld.

3: As 2, but the failure is causing water to flood the colony – ironically, there's too much water!

4: As 2 or 3, but the PCs are hired to bring in DWD repair staff. Given the colonists' anger, they'll probably have to provide security too!

3. Gambini Brothers

Im◀1214●06▶Fam●Cons◀1111●04▶

Description

The Gambinis are experts in holomeshing and can handle any type of interior building or decorating work (plastering, tiling, carpentry, etc.). They are now available for work off-planet!

GM's Notes

The Gambinis have worked the building trade for generations, mostly on private residential contracts. Over the past 20 years they have started working on larger projects. Eneri Gambini was the first member of the family to experiment with non-traditional materials, using holomesh on ceilings, walls and even floors to good effect.

Holomesh can present almost any image but has an unpleasant, gritty texture; Eneri combined it with other decorative materials to counter this problem. This reduced the image quality but since he was using it to present shifting patterns rather than holovids or communications this was not particularly noticeable. Eneri's sister Yoshiko is an expert on traditional mosaics, while their younger brother Max concentrates on plastering and painting. Together they form the core team; grandma Claire and papa Claude handle finance and administration. Other friends and family members are also involved, but it is the skill and imagination of the three siblings that is driving the company on to bigger things.

They have recently completed redecorating the main passenger concourse of the highport and the port is pleased with the results. The Gambinis hope this will bring in more offworld custom.

Plots

1: The PCs are hired to collect an important datachip from beneath a floor panel in the highport (where the patron hid it). When they locate the panel, they find that area of floor has been covered with an immense decorative mosaic. Has the chip been covered up too, or did the decorators find it?

4. Habitats 4 All

Im◀324N●44▶StSp●Cons◀4346●43▶

Description

H4A is the government-sponsored and licensed provider of habitats for all hostile environs in this system. Colonists may purchase their new homes extremely cheaply, safe in the knowledge that there has never been a fatality caused by an H4A habitat failure.

GM's Notes

Overcrowding on the mainworld has caused the government to encourage colonisation of other planets, moons and belts in the system. To support this, H4A was formed in partnership with private industry. At first, political commentators anticipated cost and corner-cutting by the commercial partners but the regulatory authority has kept close control; after much manoeuvring, the businesses involved now see it as a loss leader, with opportunities to recoup that loss in other ways from their captive colonial markets – through supplying supplementary equipment, furniture, protective clothing and survival courses.

The company uses tried and tested habitat designs, concentrating on surface domes and subterranean chambers. Much attention is paid to marketing the colonisation effort, striking a careful balance between the spartan look required to attract people with dreams of pioneering and the comfort needed to get them to actually sign up.

The government's opponents love to point out how little difference the colonisation has made to overcrowding on the mainworld and how much the programme has cost; so far popular sentiment is still swayed by the romance of the 'high frontier'.

Plots

1: The PCs are hired to take H4A habitats to a colony on a gas giant moon. A short while after the habitats are set up, they fail, causing many deaths. The PCs will be hunted down by the government. In reality, the habitats were sabotaged prior to loading, by a group of religious fanatics who wish to dissuade people from living on the moon because they regard it as a holy site.

5. Infrastructure, LIC

Im◀5452●34▶Publ●Cons8-Uti12
◀2454●33▶

Description

ISL is an established firm, with a proven track record in large public works projects. They undertake all types of heavy construction – highways, bridges, tunnels, piping, power and communications infrastructure – all tailored to the individual needs of the local community.

GM's Notes

ISL know their own limits; they subcontract specialist work to other firms (such as SubAqua Plumbers, p.20) where appropriate. They prefer to employ local construction workers where possible, restricting their own people to key positions. Their quotations tend to be higher than most of their

rivals, but their reputation keeps the contracts coming in. Because of their reliability they are regular contractors on projects administered by the Rahman Economic Institute (p.11).

Plots

1: A straightforward highway contract has been going particularly badly, due to a combination of natural disasters and the political instability of the employing government. ISL wants to get out as quickly as it can, but feels it must first finish the project to preserve its reputation. This is currently impossible because a strike by local transport workers has prevented materials reaching the construction sites; ISL charters the PCs to bring the materials directly to the sites by ground, air or space, bypassing the local blockade. The transport workers will not appreciate such acts...

6. McKendrie Orbital

Im◀5532●25▶PubW●Cons◀3544●43▶

Description

MKO has been constructing satellites, space stations and orbital platforms, both civilian and military, since the Interstellar Wars. They offer a full design service and all the equipment and skilled manpower required for the largest projects.

GM's Notes

MKO's claims of longevity are exaggerated; there was a famous Solomani construction firm of that name which flourished during the Second Imperium but it vanished early in the Long Night. As the Sylean Federation expanded, a group of primarily Solomani workers took on the name; the company has expanded with the Third Imperium.

Despite modern technology, automation and robotic aids, space construction still requires long hours of hard physical labour; many construction workers conform to the stereotypical tough, rough-and-tumble labourer. MKO plays this up when it needs to put a human face to the business.

The company rarely gets contracts for Imperial highports and senior management suspect that there are political reasons – perhaps nepotism within the Starport Authority (SPA). MKO are considering building up their expertise in drives, to begin taking on work on larger in-system transports and perhaps, in the future, starships.

Plots

1: Another company outside MKO's area of operations has set up a space construction company, also called McKendrie Orbital (for similar reasons). The latter refuse to alter their

name and MKO believe they are now grabbing customers by using the MKO reputation. They hire the PCs to resolve the problem – by diplomacy, bribery or whatever means necessary.

2: MKO is close to winning a contract to upgrade an Imperial highport in a system where they have done a lot of other work. Then there is a serious failure at an orbital factory; preliminary investigations by the SPA report "suspected use of inferior construction materials". The SPA investigation will not be completed before the contract needs to be signed, meaning MKO will almost certainly lose out. The PCs are hired to check out the accident and the investigators. Sure enough, a competitor is behind the problems and they have 'friends' inside the SPA.

7. SubAqua Plumbers

Im◀3435●24▶LL●Cons5-Ut174-Svc1
◀4234●23▶

Description

Piping, Pumping and Purification are three mainstays of life underwater. A long-established firm of good repute, SubAqua Plumbers provide integrated solutions covering all these areas.

GM's Notes

SAP's founder, waterworld citizen Gani Sharama, quit his job at the air-recycling plant in his home dome to become a freelance plumber but soon recognised how interconnected the fluid processing systems were in an undersea city.

Taking a holistic view, he built up a team with experience in all aspects of subaqua work. The group analysed potential problems caused by independently managing the different processes, setting themselves up as a "rapid response team" to deal with failures as they arose. Regular 'plumbing' jobs barely kept the company afloat but their skills, plus an innovative proposal, won them the contract for fluid processing in a new city extension despite competition from much larger firms. Since then SAP has gone from strength to strength on Gani's homeworld but is now struggling to handle the organisational changes required as the company goes multiglobal.

Plots

1: An underwater domed city partially floods and kills many people; blame falls upon SAP, who installed key systems. SAP are suspicious that they were not asked to service the systems for the last few years. They hire the PCs to prove that the city cut costs by using 'cowboy' engineers whose poor quality work caused the catastrophic failure.

Finance, Insurance & Real Estate

Money makes the worlds go round...

"Money is indeed the most important thing in the world; and all sound and successful personal and national morality should have this fact for its basis." – George Bernard Shaw.

1. First Bank of Rhylanor

Rhylanor/2716 Spinward

Im◀3353●54▶PubW●Fin◀1765●65▶

Description

One of the longest-established banks in the region, the First Bank of Rhylanor is a safe and convenient place to keep your money, and a sound choice of partner for any form of financing.

GM's Notes

The FBR is an old, established institution, set in its ways and dependent on its reputation for reliability. So far this has worked; younger, more dynamic institutions have come and gone, temporarily stealing customers, but the FBR has always had enough loyal members to keep it profitable through the lean years. It has branches on several neighbouring worlds and good relations with correspondent banks on many more. Its interest rates and charges usually tend to be unfavourable compared to younger institutions but are more stable, making them a good choice when a depression is imminent.

Plots

1: Advert for 1st Bank of Rhylanor with huge guaranteed interest rates rapidly attract vast deposits from hopeful customers. First Bank are suspicious and investigation proves this is a front company misusing their bank's name to fool punters. The PCs are hired (along with many other bounty hunters) to track down the fraudsters who put out the adverts. The culprits are a local criminal gang using contacts within FBR.

2. Grey Guild

Im◀2156●52▶Mut●Fin3-Svc3-Non4

◀1662●74▶

Description

The Grey Guild are *everywhere*, linking together cells of thieves from thousands of worlds into an Imperium-wide network of crime, so secretive that even many of the members don't know its true extent nor who runs it...

GM's Notes

The Grey Guild is a conspiracy theorist's delight. Tales of a massive Imperium-wide criminal network have great popular appeal, and some relatively minor local organisations have decided to take advantage of these stories to boost their reputation. Allegedly, the Guild coordinates its criminal fraternity to maximise profits: members benefit from the guaranteed sale of stolen goods and strong support, both against non-Guild rivals and in conflicts with the law. In return, the Guild takes a large cut of any profits.

In theory, the Guild forms an Imperium-wide crime network; in reality internal politics and greed mean that on many planets it is non-existent or merely an ineffective group of minor criminals.

Plots

1: A pair of reporters approach the PCs to ask for protection. They claim to have evidence that the legend of the Grey Guild is true, and that the local government is involved. This data is false.

2: As 1, the Guild link is false, but the reporters *have* stumbled across dealings between key members of the government and local criminals.

3: As 1, but several members of the government really are current or previous members of the Grey Guild and will do anything to prevent this becoming common knowledge.

3. Hanuman & Sagaruu, Brokers

Im◀0225●23▶Part●Fin◀5355●23▶

Description

H&S provide brokerage of both cargo and stock. With an excellent record in both fields and the dynamism to tackle challenges that scare off older, more staid institutions, the company can serve the most demanding of customers.

GM's Notes

Yelena Hanuman and Ilikuh Sagaruu were roommates at business school – extremely talented students but with a reputation as hell-raisers. When they graduated, they found they were temperamentally unsuited to the menial positions available to them in an industry which,

on their homeworld, is male-dominated. Despite their different fields of expertise, they decided to set up business together.

Spurning traditional behaviour, they have thrown themselves into their work with an energy that shocks many of their rivals. They do not hesitate to use any advantage they can to stay in business in spite of establishment opposition. They live in a sideroom of their office, employ minimal staff and frequently turn on the charm to get what they need. Their biggest asset, however, remains their financial talent.

The partners have had some amazing successes but also some notable failures. They have been careful to make sure that customers understand the risks involved and although they are currently under investigation for malpractice (almost certainly initiated by one of their enemies) they have no doubt that they will be cleared.

Plots

1: A group of traditional financiers determined to break H&S has come up with a 'sting' which needs some dupes to initiate it. They prime the PCs with information about a new company about to float its stock, which is hugely undervalued and guaranteed to rise dramatically in value. The PCs are told that H&S will pay for this data. In reality, the company is a front and will disappear almost immediately, losing H&S huge amounts of money if they were fooled into investing in it. If the PCs don't catch on, they will be arrested for fraud.

2: H&S offer their services at a reduced rate as a special deal for new customers. The PCs have come into a little money; should they risk it with such a wild company? (You can extract money from the PCs and provide a good or bad return at a later date, as necessary to drive the campaign!)

4. NITS – New Islands Traveller Support

Tobia/3215 Deneb

Im◀152N◀14▶Priv◀Fin◀3222◀12▶

Description

The people of the Islands clusters are isolated within the Great Rift; travel outside the Islands is infrequent and too expensive for all but the wealthiest. NITS is a registered charity which helps the mass of would-be travellers by providing them with holos and other data on Known Space, including the NITS newsletter. Contributions are desperately needed: money, old holos and articles for the newsletter are all gratefully received and volunteers are always welcome.

GM's Notes

NITS' main office is on one of the two high population worlds close to the Deneb departure point for the Islands. The few staff are overworked; there are never enough volunteers to do everything. A second office has recently opened on the far side of the rift but there is almost no communication between the two. The only other paid workers are part-time distributors in the Islands who take the NITS cargo (carried by the occasional ships making the long trip) and deliver it to subscribers.

The charity appeals mostly to people who like to travel themselves. Many donors cannot afford to leave their own homeworld but sympathise with the Islanders' plight; regular contributors receive a copy of the NITS newsletter, which is full of articles about history, astrography, travel stories and interviews with mildly famous personalities. This is also distributed to Islands subscribers.

Many Imperial citizens do not see the point of NITS' activities, arguing that if it doesn't help people to travel it isn't really helping at all, and also that it is dangerous to incite such dreams in warlike barbarians such as the Islanders. However, the charity's subscribers are grateful for an opportunity to escape for a while into a wider universe, if only vicariously.

Plots

1: Due to an audit by the Imperial Charities Commission NITS needs to fetch some records from their Islands offices. No ships are scheduled and they hire the party for an emergency run.

2: On seeing a NITS advert, the PCs realise that they may be able to make a significant profit running passenger trips to and from the Islands.

5. Outsystem Estate

Im◀1234◀22▶LL◀Fin◀4334◀32▶

Description

Outsystem Estate offers a full service for those who wish to buy or sell real estate and other major products between the populated worlds of this star system. Robot drones allow prospective buyers to view a site, starship or other such item remotely from the comfort of their own world.

GM's Notes

This system is seeing heavy colonisation of its outer worlds and moons. Most of this territory is still technically owned by the mainworld government, but for several years it has been selling off large tracts to raise funds; re-selling this ground is now a significant market.

Plots

1: A customer suspects that the drones are showing too rosy a picture of the valley he intends to buy on a gas giant moon. He hires the PCs to take a trip out to the moon and investigate. When they arrive they find the correctly numbered drones placed around the wrong valley; clearly the images they are broadcasting do not match what they are pointing at. Outsystem has had to reuse the drones for another customer and are therefore transmitting pre-recorded signals to the patron; a quick check reveals the patron's site is nearby and is exactly what he was seeing remotely.

2: As 1, but the valley being sold is covered in military engineering vehicles. The area has an old underground munitions silo; the military are behind schedule decommissioning it, so have requested that OE show their client recorded scenes from the site until they have completed work. They will not appreciate anyone snooping around the site, and the munitions are hazardous.

3: As 2, but the military are installing a long-term deep cover system defence installation, so ground and space security will be very heavy.

6. Shaim Intellectual Property Lessors, LIC

Im ◀ 3251 ● 61 ▶ PubW ● Fin ◀ 5655 ● 34 ▶

Description

SIPLL are the official recorders of intellectual property (IP) ownership for this star system as well as a major holder of IP in their own right. If you wish to license IP they can arrange all necessary administration for a relatively small fee. The company also conducts investigations to establish the validity of new claims.

GM's Notes

Most people in this high-law, high-population system who have heard of SIPLL see it as a sprawling bureaucratic parasite on people's creativity. The IP laws of the Third Imperium, only slightly less restrictive than those of the Ziru Sirka, have stifled innovation everywhere; SIPLL follow them to the letter. The company has a great deal of influence with the government, which has protected their corporate interests against stiff resistance. SIPLL holds system-wide rights to more than half of the Imperial IP licensed for use on this world (meaning that, for a fixed annual fee to the actual holder, they administer and receive the royalties for use of the IP). They are ruthless about pursuing infringements, even for IP which is no longer regarded as valuable on other worlds.

Far less efficient is the company's handling of new developments; claims can be tied up for years while SIPLL search for precedents. Many people hold the company responsible for the decline of research and the arts here; their accusations are almost certainly correct.

Ownership: Naasirka 11%, Hortalez et Cie 8%, SuSAG 5%, other corporations 42%, Imperial family 5%, other nobles 23%, local citizens 8%.

Plots

1: The PCs buy a cheap cargo of holovids for speculative trade. Before they can leave they are approached by SIPLL investigators; the seller had not paid the required royalties on certain techniques used in their production. The PCs must pay the fees or get their seller (who has disappeared) to pay before they can leave.

2: As 1, but the artistic IP in the holovids precludes them from being taken off world. The PCs must try to re-sell them here (for a significant loss) or negotiate a waiver to take them off-world.

7. Siedler Insurance

Im ◀ 3445 ● 33 ▶ PubW ● Fin ◀ 2542 ● 54 ▶

Description

SI provides a wide variety of services including small vehicle, life, health and accident insurance. High-risk occupations and activities are catered for at very reasonable rates.

GM's Notes

SI began as a small concern on the Imperium frontier. It took a high-risk approach, insuring settlers and their equipment when colonising (or in some cases re-colonising) new worlds. Despite some notable payouts, the gamble paid off. SI soon began to absorb other insurance companies with differing specialities and as the frontier moved on it adopted a more conservative role.

Recently competition has been fierce and the company has had to reduce its premiums drastically to keep its customers. As a result it has had to streamline its operations and is currently managing the 'optimisation' of 40% of its workers. Its share price has suffered accordingly.

The current CEO, Musush Gemana, is a visionary who is unhappy with the current state of the company. She is actively looking to recreate the dynamism of its early days and has branched out into insuring active mercenary groups, despite opposition from the board of directors, who refer to the project as "Mad Musush's Scheme". Ms. Gemana sees this as a first step; if the venture is profitable she has much more ambitious plans!

Plots

1: SI agents approach the PCs regarding an insurance claim by a foe from one of their recent adventures! The agents want the PCs to confirm that they destroyed certain property and to clarify the circumstances in which this happened.

2: As 1, but the agents are really undercover law officials looking to trap the PCs into confessing their illegal activities.

3: PC mercenaries are preparing for a new mission and see an SI advertisement. They can barely afford the rates but it *would* provide them with security if the mission goes wrong.

8. The Tributis Arms Group

Im◀4545●34▶Emp●Manu4-Fin6◀0235●37▶

Description

Members of the Tributis Arms Group offer high quality military, paramilitary and civilian starships as well as vehicles and small-arms. Unlike most such companies, TAG is run for the benefit of its employees rather than shareholders.

GM's Notes

Originally a co-operative venture by several smaller arms manufacturers attempting to gain Imperial contracts during the Third Frontier War, TAG grew beyond all expectations. After the war, in a move that surprised everyone, the company became an employee trust with the former board of directors as trustees, reinforcing the company's belief in the value of its staff. The position of Tributis Employee Retention Magistrate was devised, responsible for crafting a life-enhancing corporate culture and dealing with troubled individuals. When possible, people who are not happy with their work are moved, at the group's expense, to a more rewarding area.

Primarily a holding company, TAG's policy is to buy knowledge rather than cultivate it internally. The group has often run up large debts to facilitate takeovers of smaller companies with skills it wants, a prime example being the absorption towards the war's end of several small shipyards in the Regina subsector. These gave Tributis the ability to expand into the private market when peace arrived, the profits being used to purchase more shipyards.

Tributis Naval Yards (TNY) has always been considered one of the stars of the company. Other sections include the Small Arms Division (SAD), Military and paramilitary Vehicles (TMV), the Rapid Strike Force (RSF, p.45), the Tributis Acquisitions Department (TAD), and the recently acquired Pinkerdoe Design Group (PDG).

Tributis takes over the top-level administration of its subsidiaries, restructuring where necessary to match the corporate vision, and assigns the purchase to one of its divisions. TAG has just started an aggressive campaign to expand into Corridor and the central Imperium.

Plots

1: TAG is interested in acquiring another small weapons manufacturer. However, they do not wish their interest to become common knowledge or the share value of the acquisition will rise, making it more expensive to buy. They hire the PCs (who should have some appropriate military background) to covertly evaluate this company.

2: As 1, but the company to be acquired is leaking press reports of a new explosive it has developed. The PCs are hired to steal information about the explosive, so TAG can determine if it is worth the extra cost of the company given its rapidly rising share price.

9. X-Bank

Im◀5544●54▶PubW●Fin◀1543●64▶

Description

When payments absolutely, positively have to be made between systems, X-Bank use the express-boat network to do so as quickly and efficiently as possible for a negligible fee. Various insurance and security options are available.

GM's Notes

X-Bank was set up by Zhiani Corpbank in Core sector shortly after the x-boat service was begun in 624. It minimised the costs of interstellar money transfer by using the new public network to carry the required information (heavily encrypted). They managed to undercut their competitors and as the x-boat network expanded, so did X-Bank, outgrowing its parent. It began forming agreements with other banks across the Imperium and to avoid bias it became an independent body. It is now the *de facto* standard for interstellar money transfers between non-correspondent banks.

Plots

1: Large payments appear mysteriously in a PC's bank account, always for the same amount and always sent via X-Bank from their previous port of call. X-Bank officials start investigating the PC for fraud... The cause is an X-Bank computer error, but it will take time to prove this!

2: As 1, but this is a hacker stealing funds.

3: As 1, but this is payment for a covert government operation which must remain secret.

"He therefore searches for means to spur them on to consumption, to give his wares new charms, to inspire them with new needs by constant chatter." – Karl Marx.

1. Amalgamated Air

Im ◀ 3434 ● 35 ▶ PubS ● Manu7 - Svc3
◀ 3554 ● 33 ▶

Description

AA provides a complete breathing solution for vacuum worlds and planetoids – air processing and generating equipment accompanied by fully-trained service staff on hand 24 hours a day.

GM's Notes

Following a recent corporate take-over, AA has become much more ruthless in its business affairs. It still offers the latest technology but rather than tailoring solutions to local conditions, it provides standardised systems, installed and supported by inadequately-trained staff. Charges have also gone up, but AA still rides the reputation it developed in earlier days.

Plots

1: Air recycling fails on a low-tech vacuum world. To avoid a panic, the local AA maintenance team claim they'll have it repaired within a few hours, but when it's still not working after two days, they eventually admit that they don't have the expertise or equipment required to fix it – that's when the panic really starts...

2. Antioch Arms

HRD/1623 Deneb

Im ◀ 6532 ● 34 ▶ WOS ● Manu8 - Ret2 ◀ 2544 ● 64 ▶

Description

Antioch Arms produces personal arms and armour for military and civil use, specialising in energy and gauss weapons. The Antioch HHG-15 Fusion Grenade is known to most Marines serving in the Marches for its high yield. Other weapons include the S/99 'Special', a 9mm gauss pistol produced by the company since the early days of the Imperium, a highly experimental rapid fire fusion rifle and marine hyperdense cutlasses.

GM's Notes

Antioch Arms was one of the earliest subsidiary companies to be spun off from X-TEK

(p.34) and it closely follows the corporate style of its parent, with management structure following military lines. The company has been known to perform 'black ops' but never against Imperial interests; because of Navy ties it has always avoided censure. Its competitors accuse Antioch of promoting instability on balkanised worlds to boost sales but nothing has ever been proved.

Plots

1: Antioch Arms hire the PCs at good rates as 'field testers' for a new weapon at a test area (blasted ruins in a wilderness area). Everything must be recorded but the PCs must not disclose any information concerning the weapon outside the R&D facility. The goal is quite simple: using only the test weapon, the party must seek and destroy various target drones. Obstacles include dummy targets, automated attack drones and even other weapon testers. There is a chance that the weapon will malfunction in some way. It could fail to fire accurately, jam, or even explode.

2: As 1, but for realism, the attack drones may have semi- or fully-offensive capability...

3: Antioch hires the PCs to do a weapons run to a world plagued by civil war. Antioch has a contract with the military, but against the wishes of the government. It has invested heavily in this weapons run, but it will deny any knowledge of the group if the government intervenes and arrests them for smuggling. If for some reason the PCs try to keep the weapons for themselves, Antioch will hire BureauX (p.34) to retrieve their goods.

3. AuricTech Shipyards, LIC

Trin/3235 Spinward

Im ◀ 5443 ● 2? ▶ PubW ● Manu7 - Svc3
◀ 3345 ● 44 ▶

Description

AuricTech produces military and commercial ships of all sizes. Their designs are often more capable (especially in terms of sensor ranges), more spacious (usually providing individual staterooms for all crewbeings) and far more expensive than ships from more conventional shipyards. Their catchphrase is "AuricTech: Gold-Plated [tm] solutions for copper-plated problems!"

GM's Notes

AuricTech was founded on Sylea in Imperial Year 6 by Marcus Weishaupt, a businessman of Solomani ancestry, to produce standard 100-ton scout/ couriers for the IISS. It soon progressed to in-house designs; the first commercial success was the C20-2 light transport – a 100-ton jump-2 ship packing in 20 passengers. The 1000-ton *Electra* series yachts (procured by the Imperial Navy as the *Isabel*-class VIP transport/C³1 ship) cemented the company's reputation. Early products ranged from *UA*-series 30-ton ship's boats to 160,000-ton *Agincourt* battleships.

As the Imperium expanded, AuricTech shifted its base of operations to the Spinward Marches. By 1100, the company was a major supplier of warships to the Imperial Navy and IISS, with shipyards at Mora, Trin, and Lunion. In 1101, AuricTech unveiled the *Montana* class battleship, a 500,000-ton technological *tour de force*. It is also a player in the civilian market, having recently been contracted by Thermopylae Lines to provide new designs of freighter and passenger liner.

AuricTech's public image is good; military personnel generally favour the performance and habitability of their ships, and the public view them as competent, quality builders. However, Imperial Navy budgeters believe they deliver insufficient "crunch for the Credit", so their warships have mostly been purchased in limited quantities, with the vessels serving as flagships for squadrons of more reasonably priced ships in order to make the best use of the superior AuricTech sensor arrays and spacious Combat Information Centres.

Few know that the shift to the Marches was due to most AuricTech stock being "donated" to the Imperium in 625 after the Civil Wars (the AT board backed an unsuccessful pretender to the Throne). In 626, controlling interest in AuricTech was sold to Ling-Standard Products. In 845, LSP sold most of its interest in the unprofitable Marches yards (and rights to the AuricTech name) to investors led by Baron Eneri haut Rearden. The current CEO is Dame Jenifer Rearden-Taggart.

Current ownership (as of 1100): Hortalez et Cie 24%, the Rearden Family 18%, Other Noble Families 14%, AuricTech employees 12%, Ling-Standard Products 7%, Imperial Family 5%, Thermopylae Lines 2%, Other 18%.

Detailed information on AuricTech designs can be obtained from aurictech@esweet.com.

Plots

1: The characters are assigned to field test a new AuricTech design (ship type depends on the PCs' skill set, service and campaign). Possible

complications include fussy budget analysts; arrogant senior officers; pressure from AuricTech to submit a positive report; bribes from other shipyards to submit a bad report; attempts by rival shipyards or governments to gain possession of the ship (or at least its technical specifications); and the inevitable bugs of a prototype.

2: The PCs are hired to deliver an *Electra III* 1000-ton yacht to its new owner, several parsecs away. Complications include engineering faults, pirates, rival shipyards and a very tight schedule.

4. Baron von Kringle Toys

HRD/1623 Deneb

Im◀5533◀36▶WOS●Manu7-Ret3◀3555●21▶

Description

Baron von Kringle is a toy and novelty maker specialising in gravitics. Their toys range from the ever popular gravboard and graviballs to the *Hulahoopajumparopapogoball* which combines all the classic children's toys from the last millennia in one convenient package. The toy of your choice is activated at the press of a button!

GM's Notes

Baron von Kringle is the name of the company, its CEO *and* its marketing image. A jolly, ruddy-cheeked, snowy-haired and white-bearded man, the baron has been in charge since the company was founded over 200 years ago (thanks to extensive use of anagathics). He loves to portray himself as the children's friend, making frequent publicity appearances in the lead-up to Holiday with a sack from which he distributes free toys.

Within the company, the baron is regarded as a hard taskmaster, obsessed with lowering costs and not at all concerned with the well-being of his workers. There is a huge turnover of staff in the lower ranks; young people join the "Kringle workshops" imagining something very different to the sweatshop conditions they find; almost all leave when their year's contract runs out.

The company relies heavily on its market research to decide what would make a successful toy, including product test placements and surveys in public places (including starports).

Plots

1: Von Kringle hires the group to deliver his latest toy, due to be out on the shelves by Holiday. The group must deliver the goods to the world specified two days before Holiday (to allow time for distribution across the world) or incur the wrath of unhappy children and the Baron. However, customs officials are on a work-to-rule.

2: As 1, plus a competitor wants to get a preview of the new Von Kringle toy, so tries to bribe or steal samples from the PCs.

5. Centrax Metrics & Hiver Motion Systems

Hv◀5532●56▶St0●Manu◀5203●04▶
◀2513●12▶WOS●Manu◀4212●24▶

Description

Hiver electronics are the best in known space; now Imperial citizens, governments and corporations can share this quality in the field of motion capture and processing. Applications include communications, ergonomics, health, entertainment and security.

GM's Notes

Hiver corporations have always been difficult to classify; many are listed as "state owned" by default, and there is debate over who exactly to count as the "employees". Centrax Metrics is a long-established Hiver nest community producing optical sensors, hardware and software used in the study of motion. Hiver Motion Systems is a new nest set up to distribute CM product in Imperial space, so closely affiliated with CM that it is a subsidiary in all but name.

HMS products are very expensive but are very popular with big-budget organisations. However, while Imperial competitors cannot match the HMS equipment for quality they still win many orders because of cost, patriotism or the "threat" of Hiver manipulation, fears they play up for all their worth.

CM's core business is input systems for Hiver language computers; optical sensors watching Hiver gestures and analysing them allows for virtually hands-free communication with speaking lifeforms. There is now a small market for HMS kit adapted for human sign language and communicating with the incurably deaf.

The ergonomic and population flow analysis systems are much more popular, especially with ship architects. By studying how people interact with prototype control systems, designs can be very finely tuned. Their holocharacter software is often purchased by the entertainment industry.

However, HMS is failing to make an impact in medicine, where Imperial systems already allow analysis of the way people move to be used for diagnosis; a few sports training centres claim HMS systems give their clients the competitive edge. HMS security systems that recognise people by their movements as well as their appearance have impressed would-be customers

but few can bring themselves to trust their security to a species famed for sneakiness.

Plots

1: A wild-eyed pilot with his arm in a cast and a bandage on his head accosts the PCs, claiming the Hivers are engineering the deterioration of Imperial starship bridge crew by sabotaging the designs using HMS products. He shows them some bridge plans with controls and bulkheads arranged in a very strange manner and points at the label "optimised using HMS Layout Manager". In fact, the architects messed up the plans without any manipulation, though they'll never admit it.

2: The PCs are delayed attempting to leave a world by a demonstration at the starport. The management used HMS population flow analysis to show the workers were extremely inefficient; the port demanded increased productivity at no extra pay. Naturally, the workers have turned nasty and accusations are flying in all directions.

6. Famille Spofulam

??◀????●??▶Fam●Manu?◀Non?◀????●??▶

Description

Famille Spofulam? Never heard of them. And even if I had, I would certainly not have bought any of their products. And *definitely* not their weapons. Anyway, I was on holiday at the time.

GM's Notes

It is sometimes said that a company defies classification; this is literally true for FS, due to a virus introduced into the ISD records system by persons unknown (though we have our suspicions). Inquiries to the expert system tend to produce answers like "Paranoia? Frankly, that depends on who's asking and what drugs Accounts have been taking lately."

FS products range from bizarre toys (such as the orbit-rated MegaBoing™ Grav Pogo Stick) through the bizarrely daring (such as the euphemistically-named smuggler's delight, the *Moonshine*-class Rapid Insertion / Extraction Starship) to the dangerously bizarre (pelvic-mounted high-energy weapons, anyone?). All display a complete disregard for common practice and are bigger, bolder, more expensive or more destructive than anything seen elsewhere.

Hard facts are... well, hard to come by. According to legend, the company was founded as a shipyard in -25. When Hereditary Patriarch Hengabar "Uncle Hengie" Spofulam took the helm he firmly positioned FS as a high-end niche player in a number of fields, including vehicles and

weaponry. He also formed a long-lasting strategic alliance with the Sayat Concourse and defined the organisational structure and culture that has carried FS through to the present day.

Little is known about the inner workings of 'the Famille', although the dark rumours of inbreeding with eugenic intent, rampant substance abuse, and child labour are so prevalent they may be at least partly true (and the High Energy and Starship Weapons Divisions are both led by children of dubious stability). An early Gridlore (p.30) advertising slogan "*At least our products aren't designed by drugged-out children*" was quickly suppressed by a massive legal action.

Of course, all of the above could be entirely false and merely a marketing ploy, or a competitor disinformation exercise.

Plots

1: Ditzie, the head of the High Energy Weapons Division, is looking for test subjects for their latest offering, the Elephant-Mounted Particle Accelerator Weapon. The PCs are volunteered. [Note: this is a good plot to use for the last adventure of a campaign. It's probably not a good plot to use on any other occasion.]

2: The PCs are involved in a high-speed chase during which their air/raft is disabled. The only other available transportation belongs to a group of children playing nearby – some FS fusion-powered gravboards (or a Megaboing pogo stick).

3: Three crates marked 'FS. Export Only. DFG' turn up on the cargo manifest. The crates contain 20 flat plastic refill packs of Hydrazine and Nitrogen Tetroxide ("Ditzie's Favourite Gloop"). These are incredibly dangerous chemicals, as anyone with any chemistry skill will know. Put together (for example, in the reaction chamber of the FS Jet Bike), their waste products are corrosive, carcinogenic and mutagenic. If Customs, or the local environmental authorities find this on board they will impound the ship!

4: As 3, but the DFG wasn't packed correctly...

5: The PCs discover a derelict FS-built yacht, with a spotless interior and no sign of its crew. Any PC left alone for more than a few minutes will discover the cleaning robots are doing double duty as security robots, capturing and then killing their victims by pouring Draino-13 into their ears.

5: The PCs are hired to transport a Racing Forklift team to the Makalli 500 with their FS Light Export Forklift (top speed 404 kph). Unfortunately the mechanics keep wanting to 'borrow' spare parts and tools; the PR rep (young, nubile, ambitious, dresses in red leathers) keeps scouting for more 'talent'. Then the driver (blonde, dashing,

and sober three hours out of twenty-four) busts both ankles falling out a third-floor window while drinking Scout Brew the night before the race. One of the PCs will have to stand in – it's worth a lot of money and the PR rep will be so persuasive.

7. Far Past Enterprises

Im◀0215●25▶So1e●Manu6-Svc3
◀5677●23▶

Description

FPE keeps alive the memory of history and cultures through games, re-enactments and plays. The company is the brainchild of pure-bred Vilani Mazun Shugilii, winner of 19 design awards and author of such classics as the *Ancient Days* rolegame and the *Ancestors' Wars* series.

GM's Notes

Mazun Shugilii was always fascinated by the past but felt that traditional classes were an ineffective way of teaching people. Instead he devised ways to make history entertaining, beginning with a historical wargame based around the Interstellar Wars period. Other releases followed, both wargames and rolegames, but although popular within their niche market, the company for which he worked folded. Determined to continue, he set up Far Past Enterprises.

FPE has performed extensive consulting work and Shugilii is much in demand by re-enactment societies. He is very good at organising events for maximum visitor enjoyment but wishes he could spend more time on actual game design. He has also written a few historical plays and a holo script, all of which have had a mixed reception.

FPE has secured backing from all the Vilani megacorporations, as well as Oberlindes Lines. Although these funds are a tiny amount from the donors' perspective, the money has kept the company going in hard times.

Plots

1: During a jump, a spotty youth with poor personal hygiene tries to interest his fellow passengers in a FPE roleplaying session based on a published adventure he has brought with him: *Murder in Jumpspace*. When nobody wants to play he decides to go ahead anyway, capturing one of the passengers and pretending she's been killed. The PCs (as crew or passengers) must deal with this over-enthusiastic gamer.

2: As 1, but his chosen victim is a police witness travelling under a cover identity. The undercover law enforcement agent accompanying the witness is likely to over-react...

3: The PCs emerge from jump to hear confusing messages coming over the communicator. It sounds as though a pitched battle is taking place for control of the space above the mainworld but there are far too few ships within sensor range to match the described events. Nevertheless, the locals seem to be losing. The party has stumbled into a re-enactment of a local battle, though they may not discover this before they get involved. Careful sensor analysis will reveal two yachts controlling fleets of small shuttles acting as 'battleships'.

8. Gilgaameshu Yards

Arden/1011 Spinward

Fa◀4431●15▶SS●Mine2-Cons1-Manu7
◀4545●53▶

Description

Gilgaameshu Yards is a profitable concern, using its mines and manufacturing operations to drive its modest public shipbuilding facilities. It employs a large number of local Arden workers, and provides on-the-job and off-site training to bring the workforce up to interstellar standards. Gilgaameshu has achieved the "Friend of Education" award for the tenth year in a row, for contributing time, equipment and cash to local schools to train the burgeoning populace of Arden in high technology. From belt mining and refining raw materials to finishing technologies such as fusion plants and starships, Gilgaameshu is one of the major players on the Arden Free Market, and one of Arden's best hopes for changing the world into a high-tech powerhouse.

GM's Notes

Gilgaameshu Yards is a profitable company for the Arden economy, and is a major force driving an increase in Arden's tech level. However, it is also a front for the secretive Arden Navy, which maintains an excellent TL-12 shipyard in a remote location under Gilgaameshu's name.

The Arden government, military, intelligence agencies, and military-contract companies own most of Gilgaameshu, in conjunction with a select group of very wealthy Arden citizens. Ownership is forbidden to 'outside' entities, though since ownership is via holding companies, it is difficult to track down exactly who the stockholders are.

Plots

1: While clearing out his estate an extremely wealthy patron, retired medical doctor Mr. Philiph Kazar discovered a mothballed Jump-4 luxury yacht that had been on lease from Gilgaameshu

Yards; he forgot to return it and wants the PCs to do so. Unfortunately Gilgaameshu has registered the ship as stolen; the doctor also used another identity to lease it since he was involved in some shady dealings at the time, so the Arden Navy is also interested. As soon as they arrive at a major port the PCs will become the target for repo agents, bounty hunters and the Arden Navy who may not believe their protestations of innocence...

9. GravametriX

HRD/1623 Deneb

Im◀6533●35▶WOS●Manu8-Ret2◀4534●54▶

Description

GravametriX produces fine gravitic vehicles for civilian and military use. Their air/rafts and speeders are well-known throughout the Domain for their efficiency and speed. Luxury grav vehicles are available for nobles and executives, as are grav sleds, tanks and APCs for the Imperial Armed Forces.

GM's Notes

Originally a purely military supplier, GravametriX was forced to broaden its market during a period of low investment in the armed forces. Initial offerings were overpriced, over-specified and too utilitarian to do well but the company soon rectified this. Their civilian vehicles are aimed firmly at the top end of the market; they have a reputation for making reliable, energy-efficient, high speed vehicles that are second to none. The marketing slogan, "no compromises", always makes military-orientated designers wince.

Plots

1: GravametriX hires the PCs as test pilots for a new design of grav vehicle, employing a new grav propulsion system. Due to an administrative blunder, when they arrive the PCs are given a top secret next-generation grav tank instead. However adept the PCs prove at handling the tank, the army officers on the trial realise something is wrong and arrest the PCs, thinking they may be spies. Provided their police and/or military records are clean, they are released with strong hints that they shouldn't talk about this.

2: A competitor's vehicle has a remarkably similar drive signature to GravametriX's. The PCs are hired to steal the design so that the company can check it for copyright infringement.

3: As 2, but BureauX agents are actually undertaking the investigation – they have hired the PCs to provide a distraction while they make their own entry into the rival company buildings.

10. Gridlore Technologies, LIC

Lunion/2134 Spinward

Im◀5444●24▶Fam●Cons1-Manu5-Who13-
Ret1◀6342●33▶

Description

Gridlore is a venerable family firm dating back to the Imperium's founding; it still focuses on its traditional concerns – starships and trade. The company is currently seeking partners willing to invest in expanding trade into the Outrim Void.

GM's Notes

Company founder Baron Arameth Gridlore was one of a few nobles who wanted to push the Third Imperium's boundaries beyond those of its predecessors as swiftly as possible. Heading out behind 'the Claw' he invested heavily in colonisation of the Spinward Marches, focusing on expanding trade and providing the starships necessary to do so. The enterprise prospered.

One of the Baron's principal concerns was that his family should retain control of the company. He set up rules for inheritance and over the centuries these have become increasingly elaborate. As a result, Gridlore remains firmly in the Gridlore family's hands, but management transitions can cause bloody internecine strife.

The Board of Directors meet in the corporate HQ, an orbital habitat high above Lunion. Each operating section is headed by a family member; each has considerable autonomy. The Overce Shipyards, also in Lunion orbit, have a reputation for excellence with customers seeking custom vessels; a more recent endeavour, ACQ Defence Systems, is an industry leader in personal arms manufacture. Many observers attribute ACQ's success to its aggressive marketing, focusing on the division's distinctive Terran penguin logo.

Under the current Chair of the Board Kellier Ovari-Gridlore (62), the firm has experienced a rebirth of purpose. A newly-formed division, Outrim Horizons, LIC, will begin exploration of the Outrim Void within two years with the purpose of expanding trade with the scattered Aslan and Human worlds in that region.

Ownership: Gridlore family 53%, Hortalez et Cie 10%, Instellarms 7%, Noble families 15%, Imperial household 5%, Other investors 10%.

Plots

1: Gridlore is looking for travellers with a wide variety of skills for their Outrim Void expedition: ex-scouts, merchants, diplomats, scientists, starship crew and security will all be needed. Also on board is a survivor of the Baraccai Technum

expedition which set out in 1107. The new mission is intended to last approximately two years. This can be used to lead into a long adventure!

2: Immediately after passing through Customs the PCs are stopped by bailiffs intent on confiscating their recently acquired ACQ sidearms. The officials represent a computer software firm who claim that the penguin image on the guns' butts is a violation of their trademark.

11. Huai Ornamentals, LIC

Im◀2344●25▶LL●Manu◀4224●22▶

Description

Zdeld Huai's amazing fauncultural creations keep his customers on the cutting edge of fashion. His animal-based clothing, wall and floor coverings, decorations and objets d'art always invite comment and admiration from observers.

GM's Notes

Zdeld Huai was a struggling young artist looking to make his name. Certain species of animal on his homeworld could shape themselves very flexibly to suit the environment in which they grew and he hit upon the idea of faunisculpture, stretching and extending the creatures' natural ability to produce 'living art'. His first exhibition was a resounding success, earning him instant wealth and recognition. Other artists copied him but he stayed one step ahead by moving into areas other than sculpture. The mimics quickly adapted, but his reputation was made.

As demand for his works grew, Zdeld decided to concentrate on design and took on assistants to perform the actual manipulation. The arrangement worked well and he set up Huai Ornamentals. Fellow artists accused him of selling out but he considered this to be petty jealousy.

HO went from strength to strength. As time passed and production grew, Zdeld handed over most of the design work to subordinates and withdrew from the day-to-day running of the operation. He is currently considering going public, or else selling his shares and retiring.

Zdeld is a great self-publicist, appearing regularly on talk shows and HO advertisements. He comes across as a passionate believer in his art, although privately he now cares far more about the wealth it has brought him.

Plots

1: The PCs are hired to quietly recover some 'artworks' removed by accident from an HO plant. It is explained that these are part of next season's line and must not be seen by competitors. The

truth is that HO has been experimenting with a "low-maintenance" line – manipulants that rarely need feeding or cleaning. All was going well until the earliest specimens reached maturity when their metabolic rate increased, sending them into a feeding frenzy. The creatures need to be recovered before they start to eat their owners...

2: A forensic check on a dead HO garment (possibly following the events above) reveals the Hypagene (p.13) trademark embedded in the junk DNA, indicating that the garment was bred from stock modified by the larger company. HO has always claimed that its works were created by traditional breeding so Hypagene's involvement would be embarrassing. Similarly, if Hypagene products are being used without their permission, this would mean a significant loss of intellectual property which could damage them commercially.

3: As 1 and 2, but this is a secret Hypagene project to breed HO artworks to selectively assassinate their owners. Hypagene will go to any lengths to conceal their involvement. There are also clues leading back to Imperial Intelligence...

12. Knappers

Im◀2043●46▶Mut●Manu◀2116●13▶

Description

Knappers design and manufacture a wide variety of low-tech goods from flint, obsidian and other traditional substances. All items are carefully hand-crafted in genuine lithic communities; high-technology manufacturing techniques are never used.

GM's Notes

Knappers rely on the desire of industrialised peoples for traditional goods and the image of the simple, peaceful, native lifestyle. Low-tech worlds rarely make significant money from selling their natural resources, but Knappers have found a successful and profitable niche. Many local communities are wholeheartedly involved in the business, performing all functions from quarrying stone to packing the finished product. The best-selling items are jewellery and bladed tools, but the crafters are always experimenting – *blenith* pottery is a recent addition to their product line.

Plots

1: Some Knappers want to make their lives easier by purchasing high-tech tools to perform jobs faster. The traders who buy their goods are worried that this will destroy the "simple people" image and have been trying to block these purchases. The PCs are hired by a Knapper

representative to bring high-tech stone-working tools (e.g. laser cutters) to the world, but when they arrive the traders, and the more traditional Knappers, try to stop the sale.

13. Maximus Interstellar Defence Industries

Terra/1827 Solomani Rim

Im◀8553●5?▶PubW●Manu6-Uti12-Svc2

◀4433●54▶

Description

MIDI is a huge firm with interests in many areas although its core business is aerospace, with specialised shipyards for military and civilian craft of all sizes. It maintains well-equipped private security at all its facilities, supplementing its own troops with local contract agencies.

GM's Notes

MIDI was a major beneficiary of the Solomani Rim War, declaring early for the Imperium and supporting it wholeheartedly. When Terra was taken, it moved its headquarters to the Solomani homeworld, receiving honours and concessions from the victors. The company began to expand, swallowing many smaller businesses who had backed the wrong side. As a result of its actions it became very popular with Imperials but hated by Confederation sympathisers.

Because its growth was so rapid, MIDI's management structure failed to keep up with the changes and the corporation stagnated. The current CEO, Baron David Colworth, instigated a major restructuring of the upper levels and MIDI has recovered well. Some problems remain, however, and there is bitter rivalry between Defence Division head Harlan Walker and Leann Downing, the new VP of Public Relations.

Subsidiaries include Ventronics Industries (starship sensors, communications and fire control systems); Ishyama Limited (laser and energy weapons systems); Gluttonous Maximus (luxury food production/distribution); Confederated Dynamics (atmospheric craft and grav vehicles); Confederated Electric (power generation and distribution); Integrated Data Systems (computers); and Pegasus Services (security).

For the past few years MIDI has been negotiating a merger with X-TEK, which would create a new megacorporation. One of the main sticking points has been a disagreement over security; X-TEK accuses MIDI of being too lax while Colworth believes the Deneb giant is obsessed with BureauX to the extent that

commercial interests take second place. There is also significant interest from the Imperium to ensure that any potential megacorp involves the right 'sort' of people doing the right 'sort' of thing.

Plots

1: Following a number of threats from Solomani separatists, MIDI hires the PCs as extra security at one of their plants. When the terrorists attack, the PCs observe a third group covertly observing the situation. These are BureauX agents sent by X-TEK to check MIDI's security procedures. They will assess the response to the terrorist threat and report back to X-TEK. If the PCs show undue interest in them, the agents will arrange some further incidents to determine just how intelligent and/or tenacious MIDI's security staff can be.

2: Harlan Walker is notoriously blunt; Leann Downing hires the PCs to delay him so that he misses meeting (and probably upsetting) some important clients, by any means necessary short of hurting him. If they are successful, she may be tempted to use them again, this time to delay Walker from a board meeting, so that she can promote herself and make him look incompetent.

14. Planet X Recordings

HRD/1623 Deneb

Im◀6534●34▶WOS●Manu7-Ret3◀0432●44▶

Description

Planet X Recordings is a relative newcomer to the X-TEK family. A major media producer specialising in holovids and musical recordings, their outlets offer all kinds of music from Vilani Opera to Classical Terran Rock & Roll. Planet X Recordings is currently producing the works of *Tir Na n'Og*, a Classical Terran Celtic Heavy Metal Rock group, on tour in the Spinward Marches.

GM's Notes

With *Hot n' Spicy* (see 101 *Travellers*) signed to a major competitor, Planet X Recordings have been struggling to compete in the teenage market and have been actively scouting for fresh talent. However, the company has a lead with older, more selective buyers and *Tir Na n'Og*'s latest album has been a huge success.

In the holovid field, Planet X are well known for high quality costume dramas and situation comedies but are seeking success in the field of documentaries. They have recently paid a large amount to persuade the renowned presenter Harlik Slicker to "defect" to their team to improve the popularity of their work.

Plots

1: *Tir Na n'Og*'s latest stage show is the most extravagant ever and the recording company is looking for new roadies. Duties include keeping the tour ship working, procurement of goods for the band, setting up the stage and, of course, keeping fans, reporters and anti-social elements away from the stars.

2: The PCs get a chance to try out in a Planet X studio. Whether they have talent or not the experienced production staff can make it sound good. The PCs are offered a contract straight away but the terms are extensive, restrictive and their royalty percentages are very low.

3: MegaDoc, previous employers of Harlik Slicker, hire the PCs to persuade him to return to them. If bribes don't work, the PCs are told to "make it difficult for him until he sees the light".

15. Spy-TEK

HRD/1623 Deneb

Im◀6533●34▶WOS●Manu7-Ret3◀1543●53▶

Description

Spy-TEK is best known for producing fine optics and sensing equipment for civilian use, including full electromagnetic spectrum (EMS) sensors, image enhancement and automatic visual identification systems. It also offers a complete line of home and starship security and anti-hijack systems. They also stock stun guns, stickyspray, Blur, and almost any other non-lethal anti-assailant weaponry available in the military and civilian marketplace.

GM's Notes

When forming BureauX, X-TEK (p.34) needed a wide variety of espionage and counter-espionage equipment. Although some could be bought from other companies it was judged that for security reasons it would be best to keep design and production in-house. A portion of X-TEK's R&D budget was diverted to pay for this.

Spy-TEK is a commercial enterprise set up to recoup some of that expense. It sells non-sensitive security equipment, along with older designs no longer used by the agency (which keeps the cutting-edge equipment for itself).

Plots

1: The PCs are involved in a minor car accident which cracks open the boot of the other vehicle and spills a large quantity of Spy-TEK stickyspray canisters. The two occupants of the car are very angry and try to stop anyone from getting hold of the canisters. However, some

spray is picked up by a gang of street children, who use it to cause havoc.

2: As 1, but the men have stolen a new acid spray from Spy-TEK for disabling heavy armour or vehicles. A child grabs a can and burns one of the thieves badly by spraying them. The thieves then draw weapons, fire warning shots and run for it. Spy-TEK will be very grateful to anyone (e.g. the PCs) who helps apprehend these thieves.

3: The PCs discover their Spy-TEK anti-hijack system is using their ship comms to send bursts of encrypted data whenever they are in a starport. Enquiries with Spy-TEK will reveal that this is a fault in the software; then that it's an anti-hijack feature to allow their ship's location to be traced once stolen. They may eventually learn that this software dumps their full databank to a BureauX receiver concealed in most ports, but this 'feature' should not have been enabled on their software. Spy-TEK cannot let this 'feature' become public knowledge under any circumstances.

16. Sylk

Im◀3442◀33▶PubW●Manu◀4434◀32▶

Description

Sylk is a quality clothing manufacturer, specialising in sleek, silky materials using the latest heat-, light- and sound-sensitive colourings and scents. They are well known because of their recent advertising campaigns featuring the hugely successful youth band *Hot & Spicy*.

GM's Notes

With the *Hot & Spicy* connection, Sylk has finally succeeded in making its products part of youth culture across the subsector. Teens are mocked if they do not wear the latest styles, applying heavy pressure on their parents to buy new Sylk garments long before the old ones wear out. Because of this marketing strategy the clothes are designed to look good with little effort expended on making them long-lasting. A two-year-old Sylk shirt will already be starting to stabilise, with patches of fixed colour here and there spoiling the effect of the responsive cloth.

Sylk's clothing is expensive but just within reach of ordinary families on the subsector's highest population worlds. Manufacturing takes place on the poorest planet, where workers are paid a pittance and subjected to long hours in poor conditions, which has led to a call by concerned citizens of other worlds to boycott the company. So far this has had little effect on sales.

While still popular, *Hot & Spicy* are no longer the phenomenal draw they were a couple of years

ago and Sylk are secretly looking for alternatives to keep their image as up-to-date as possible.

Plots

1: Sylk has been experimenting with emotion-sensitive clothing which changes colour and odour according to the wearer's mood (based on body heat, pulse, muscle tension and perspiration). They have conducted simulations and laboratory tests and recruit the PCs to try out the garments. The PCs will be pestered by teenagers wanting to know when they can buy the clothes, but showing their emotions openly may be a disadvantage...

2: As 1, but the clothing is faulty – it can turn transparent when they get angry, starts flashing if they are lying, and if they get scared, it releases pheromone-analogues that makes the clothing irresistible to certain local animals!

3: The PCs are offered a cargo of "new" Sylk clothing at a low price. The garments are actually 18 months old; a retailer over-ordered and failed to sell the excess. His contract requires him to destroy the out-of-date stock, but he preferred to forge new date certificates and sell the clothes.

17. Weller Associates

Im◀3544◀44▶PubL●Manu6-Who12-Svc2
◀4444◀53▶

Description

WA deal in all kinds of precious metals and all aspects of their processing, from refining to casting and delivery. As well as providing refined metals for local industry, WA work within local technology constraints to provide a sustainable solution for self-operated metal processing, including presses for minting currency.

GM's Notes

Weller Associates began as a simple metal processing company, but as they expanded they were able to market their relatively low-tech industrial operation as a key asset and virtue. WA target lower tech worlds and adapt their "locally sustainable" equipment to be at the cutting edge of the client's capabilities – giving the client a competitive edge but usually making it most cost efficient to retain WA for maintenance. Many customers ask for minting machines to be at a higher TL to make it difficult for local forgers.

Plots

1: WA minting equipment has been stolen and the world is flooded with counterfeit coins, indistinguishable from the real thing. WA's guarantee may force them to pay for upgrading

the government mint and the cost of the currency changeover if they cannot find the culprits. Bounty hunters and the like (i.e. PCs) are swarming around WA, hoping to become part of the official investigation and get part of the huge reward. The forgers have contacts in the government and police but are actually offworlders – tracking them down will be a very arduous but rewarding task.

18. X-TEK of Deneb, LIC

HRD/1623 *Deneb*

Im◄9562●54►PubW●Cons2-Manu6-Ret2

◄3532●64►

Description

X-TEK is a starship and aerospace manufacturing firm, specialising in weapons and propulsion systems. A major supplier of advanced fighting ships to the Imperial Navy, it is also involved in Naval R&D on projects such as black globes and turret-sized meson weaponry. X-TEK also accept contracts for civilian starships, including merchants, seekers, and yachts.

X-TEK facilities range from massive Naval and commercial shipyards to the smaller and more common Repair and Upgrade shops. They can be found at most TL13+ worlds with class A or B starports within the Domain of Deneb.

X-TEK's subsidiary companies range from smallarms manufacturing to media entertainment.

GM's Notes

As a major Naval contractor, X-TEK is one of the most secretive companies in the Imperium and while many rivals have attempted to dig up dirt on it nobody has yet succeeded. Corporate employees are no-nonsense, spit and polish, by-the-book types; though customer-facing staff are friendly and helpful, most X-TEK facilities have the air of a well-ordered police state. Restricted areas are common – in addition to more subtle protective measures, they are guarded by armoured security personnel carrying the latest in personal weapon technology.

Due to the sensitive nature of its research, X-TEK has developed an elite counter-espionage team known as BureauX. BureauX agents can be found at most X-TEK facilities and are often referred to as "Men in Black" due to their featureless black uniforms and combat armour.

The company's original CEO and founder was a man known only as Commander X. Awakened from low berth on a vessel of unknown origin in -5 he quickly made his mark as a remarkable Naval strategist, first in the Chanestin wars and later on piracy suppression and re-contact missions.

Elevated to Count in 19 he claimed an abandoned deep space supply station as his fief, converting it into a worldlet he called "Planet X". He formed X-TEK and provided ships for the Pacification Campaigns until his retirement in 70, when he boarded a ship and disappeared from the records.

In the antebellum period, business in Core Sector slumped but as war with the Zhodani approached, the company focused on its Spinward operations, eventually moving Planet X itself to Deneb during the First Frontier War. However, the Civil War split the company and disaster struck when Planet X was destroyed.

Under Deneb businessman Kruger Xavier, X-TEK was rebuilt after the war. Xavier won some important Naval contracts and set up a research facility on HRD, which became the new corporate HQ. The wars with the Zhodani (and Vargr corsair actions) helped the reborn company to prosper as a major weapons and warship manufacturer, but Xavier ensured that the company began to diversify to help it survive during times of peace.

Today X-TEK is enjoying renewed prosperity. The last Frontier War came as a boon to R&D as many new classified contracts were made with the Imperial Navy. It is rumoured that the company may have made a deal with Darrian interests to research pre-Maghiz technology. It has currently claimed a world in Jewell Subsector for use as a testing range and has spun-off an entertainment media company known as Planet X Recordings. (p.32). Other developments include a partnership with Maximus Interstellar Defense Industries (p.31) based in the Solomani Rim, in the hope of opening the door for the two companies to become Imperium-wide in scope and thus become a true megacorporation.

Ownership: X-TEK 60%; Imperial Navy 10%; Domain nobility 7%; Imperial Family 5%; other Imperial corporations 12% (MIDI 5%, GSBaG 3%, Instelarms 2%, General Shipyards 1%, SUSaG 1%); individual private stock owners 6%.

Plots

1: An injured woman begs the PCs to carry a message for "Imperial Intelligence" to a contact at the starport. Moments later, sinister black-dressed people arrive – the PCs have just enough time to escape. The woman is a spy for an anti-Imperial group (terrorists or foreign power), carrying secret details of black globe research from X-TEK. The BureauX "men in black" will be ruthless in their pursuit of the PCs to regain the data, believing the PCs to be part of the enemy spy ring – the true spies are waiting at the starport...

"Gold is for the mistress, silver for the maid, copper for the craftsman, cunning at his trade." – Ruyard Kipling.

1. Best Quarries, LIC

Im◀2333◀24▶LL◀Mine◀3433◀34▶

Description

BQL produce some of the finest marbles in the sector, guaranteed 100% natural. All order sizes accepted; discounts for bulk orders. Samples available for inspection.

GM's Notes

An outstanding source of easily-accessible top-quality marble was discovered during a routine survey of an undeveloped vacuum world 20 years ago. Formed to exploit this resource, BQL soon turned a good profit. Naturally, shipping solid marble across interstellar distances means their prices are high; however, competition is low because marble rarely forms on worlds without native multicellular life. BQL's biggest market is a nearby high population world. Previous building fashions used glassteel and crystalliron; now traditional materials are making a comeback.

The company has recently been expanding to meet increased demand; it now operates five large quarries, although the original is almost exhausted. There is concern that the quality of marble from the newest sites may not live up to customers' expectations. The head of on-site operations is currently "foreman" Corbin Stikas, an ex-army sergeant with a reputation for discipline and looking after his people.

Plots

1: A university wishing to investigate the mechanisms through which marble formed on this lifeless world has been refused access by BQL. The PCs are asked to smuggle in a crack geology team; unfortunately they find a BQL survey team in the vicinity, trying to solve the same question.

2: The PCs are hired to deliver BQL marble to a customer on a nearby world. The marble seems fine when loaded, but during offloading the marble simply crumbles. This is due to an atmospheric contaminant which corrodes the marble. However, the recipients will hold the PCs liable and they will not be allowed to leave planet until they have determined and proven the cause.

2. Coal Survivor

Im◀2036◀47▶Mut◀Mine◀4316◀32▶

Description

CS provides traditional fuels for the local community and for export. It is run by and for local people in defiance of pressure from offworld interests pushing modern energy sources.

GM's Notes

The coal industry has been dying a slow death on this world, with a continuous increase in imports of high-tech power generation equipment. A group of miners collaborated to save their livelihood by buying out their colliery and running it as a co-operative. Naturally, CS has been milking their image as "noble little people being crushed by big business" for all it is worth.

Although criticised strongly by environmental activists, CS is immensely popular with locals. The co-operative is surviving at the moment as local people and businesses want to be seen to support the popular cause. However, if interest fades, things may well get tough.

Plots

1: The PCs are pressured to take an export shipment of coal at half the standard freight rate, to support the CS "heroes". If they don't agree to do this, the locals will be very unhappy.

2: The PCs are approached by a CS member who believes a new safety inspector at the mine is acting suspiciously. In truth, the inspector has found some real safety issues at the mine and is building evidence before telling CS management.

3: As 2, but the inspector is a saboteur from an offworld energy plant manufacturer. A major safety incident would put CS out of business...

3. Imperial Sandcaster Supplies

Im◀4543◀42▶Publ◀Mine◀1445◀63▶

Description

"Don't trust your safety to anything less than the best!" It's key for a ship to have the right crystal mix in its sandcaster canisters, to block energy weapon fire effectively. ISS have supplied

this mix to local Imperial Navy depots for centuries – a sure sign of their reliability. Civilian canisters are filled with exactly the same material.

GM's Notes

Although the content of a sandcaster canister is commonly known as "sand", it is actually a specific mix of crystal types which requires careful treatment to produce. ISS have standardised their operations across the Imperium and rely heavily on automation. Most mining operations are set up on vacuum worlds with suitable mineral deposits. The material is processed, sorted and pressure-treated without direct sophont intervention (though the systems are supervised and samples checked at random). Once loaded into containers, it is sent into orbit using a mass driver, where ISS ships pick it up for distribution to ports and Naval bases.

These mining operations require significant initial capital investment but ISS has a large cash reserve for this. The resulting operating costs are low and allow them to undercut the competition. Product quality is rigorously enforced – ISS does not want to risk its valuable Naval contracts.

ISS has some major competitors but the only companies who have achieved long-term success in its region are small, single-system operations, solely supplying civilian ships. ISS has grown complacent about its market position; ironically its dominance has helped these small firms to drum up local sentiment in their favour.

Plots

1: A fault at an ISS plant allowed several shiploads of dangerously substandard sand to be carried out-system before the error was spotted and the problem rectified. The plant manager is in a panic and is hiring every ship's crew he can to jump after the cargo vessels in an attempt to warn them before the sand is sold. He will reward the PCs well if they can stop a particular shipment of sand reaching a nearby Imperial Navy base.

2: The PCs arrive in a system and receive a distress signal from a ship which has lost its manoeuvre capability; its decaying orbit will soon take it into the path of the ISS mass driver.

4. Michaels & Michaels, Skimmers

Im◀0206◀05▶Fam◀Mine◀2234◀32▶

Description

M&MS is a small family firm, skimming hydrogen from a gas giant. They mostly sell unrefined fuel to the local starport authority, but also sell direct to ships from gas giant orbit.

GM's Notes

M&MS is constantly on the edge of insolvency. The sale of unrefined hydrogen does little more than cover their costs, and the family's dream of setting up a large-scale refining operation seems unattainable. Their ships are in constant use just to meet the demand; all family members pull long shifts; they expect the same of their employees.

Plots

1: Members of an M&MS skimmer crew have fallen sick, and the company must meet its contractual obligations to avoid a financial crisis. They recruit the PCs as temporary crew. Gas giants are dangerous places – a rogue electrical storm damages the skimmer's drives and M&MS has skimped on emergency kit such as vacc suits!

5. Ocean Extractions, Inc

Im◀2043◀53▶PubS◀Mine◀5444◀42▶

Description

OEI's primary business is the cracking of sea water to produce hydrogen fuel for ships at the starport; they have a water processing plant situated nearby. A growing proportion of income, however, comes from the extraction of minerals from the sea water and the company also runs a small fleet of filter ships in the area.

GM's Notes

Whether through luck, shrewd foresight or inside information, industrialist Adkhar Mirgacre set up the OEI hydrogen-extraction plant just a few months before an upgrade to the starport was announced. With OEI providing refined fuel right at the edge of the proposed port expansion it made little sense not to use it; the company was granted the contract and has kept it ever since.

Trade at the port increased and the company expanded to keep pace but recently there have been signs that the growth is coming to an end. Once again OEI is well-positioned to prosper; ten years ago it began to mine the mineral-rich ocean with experimental deepwater filter vessels. These have been highly profitable and OEI growth has not been affected by the interstellar downturn.

Environmental protesters claim that the filtering process plays havoc with the ecology of creatures in the deep ocean, many of which rely on a precise balance of minerals in the water. Scientists are divided over the question and evidence can be found to support both sides.

The company recently went public to raise funds for expansion but the Mirgacre family still holds 80% of the shares. Following Adkhar's

retirement last year on his 120th birthday his grand-daughter Mirikei has taken over the running of the business; investors are watching closely to see if she can prolong OEI's golden run.

Plots

1: A protest group has been unsuccessful in infiltrating an OEI ship's crew, to get a closer look at the process and gather evidence that the company knows it is harming the deep ocean environment. They hire the PCs to get on board and get evidence, either as crew, or covertly. OEI have minimal security, but the ship's crew will react badly to anyone threatening their livelihoods.

2: A woman approaches the PCs, offering a cheaper source of fuel than can be obtained from the starport. She claims to represent OEI, cutting out the "middle man"; in fact she is from a fly-by-night operation whose fuel comes from tapping OEI pipes. Their distribution facilities are not kept clean and the fuel will have dangerous impurities, increasing the chance of a misjump.

6. Prospector's Gold

Im◀3525●26▶Emp●Mine7-Fin2-Svc1◀0322●54▶

Description

PG is run by independent belt prospectors, for independent belt prospectors. In return for a share of profits, PG will provide all the services a miner needs, including equipment, legal aid and loans in times of hardship.

GM's Notes

PG do plough all profits back into the fund but claims about its members' independence are exaggerated. Members have to sign a contract registering the area in which they are prospecting. Penalty clauses are included to dissuade members who might "coincidentally" decide to quit the company just before making a large strike. Many mining companies also prefer the simplified administration of buying claims through PG rather than dealing with individual prospectors. It is rumoured that 'troublesome' independent miners suffer an unusually high accident rate...

Operations in each belt are run independently: 1% of funding goes to cover administrative costs for the company as a whole, but the rest is used locally. Equipment is made available to members on low-cost loan or hire purchase schemes.

Plots

1: When the PCs emerge from jump they find that there has been a severe mining accident. PG

are requesting their members – and any visiting ships – to mount a rescue and recovery mission. However, PG will be very reluctant to pay up when the PCs bring home the rescued miners.

2: The PCs find a belter ship which suffered a catastrophic failure, killing its crew. The PCs should be able to claim significant salvage value, but when they do so, PG steps in and claims most of the onboard equipment was on loan from them, drastically cutting the ship's value.

7. Universal Belt Mines, LIC

Im ◀5542●52▶PubW●Mine◀6653●54▶

Description

UBM is one of the biggest Imperial companies specialising in belt mining. Advanced survey techniques, highly trained and motivated staff, the best equipment and good management have kept the company expanding consistently from year to year, making it a safe bet for investors.

GM's Notes

UBM has all the advantages and disadvantages of a very large company: economies of scale, a huge resource base, conservative inward-looking management and a reputation as "bad guys". It treats its employees well, but tends to have little understanding of local issues in the systems where it operates. UBM relies on independent prospectors less than most mining companies, instead using large, well-equipped survey teams. These are supported by automated, factory ships which convert metal-rich asteroids into pure, easily transportable ingots.

Plots

1: The local branch of Prospector's Gold claim that UBM are trying to eliminate the independents in a recently-surveyed belt. They allege that UBM are using dirty tactics, including tying up PG's legal staff and funds with a flood of minor actions, threatening prospectors and bribing the official claims monitors. PG ask the PCs to go undercover (as prospectors, or hire on as UBM crew) and try to find evidence so that they have some chance of fighting back against the giant.

2: As above, but UBM has suffered bomb attacks from what it believes are rogue beltlers. It fears these terrorists have infiltrated its organisation, so in addition to increased internal security, UBM recruits the PCs as independent investigators to identify the traitors. However, this may be a double-bluff, where the situation is as per 1 above, and the non-violent infiltrators are actually after evidence of UBM's wrong-doings.

"I don't know what I want, but I want it *now!*" – Vivian Stanshall (as Sir Henry of Rawlinson End).

1. Bank Janus

Im◀5542●24▶Emp●Svc◀7233●66▶

Description

Bank Janus specialises in the storage and dealing of electronic information, from currency transactions to company records. They tailor their systems to each customer's individual needs; personal attention and confidentiality is assured.

GM's Notes

Bank Janus' symbol is the silhouetted double-profile of an ancient Solomani god of gateways, looking into the past and future at the same time, overlaid with an old-fashioned mechanical key.

The bank deals purely in information. It maintains an immense network of investigators and inside contacts in corporations, public departments and the underworld. It monitors all public newsfeeds and published financial records, employing teams of analysts with the best available software to deduce further information. It pays a token amount for any new fact, thus encouraging people to submit odd details about neighbourhood activities, useless individually but collectively forming a detailed statistical picture.

On some worlds and for some types of data, BJ's operations are in a grey area of potential illegality. However, the bank's clientele (including every Imperial megacorporation and many governments), plus its carefully preserved reputation for neutrality, have so far kept it from direct prosecution.

BJ was the brainchild of an as yet unidentified noble in Cleon's original Moot. The noble saw the imbalance of power in the nascent Third Imperium caused by political and trade secrets and decided to create an equaliser. To assure impartiality, the banks was set up as a trust, the only beneficiaries of which were the company's employees; health care, pensions and other benefits are excellent.

The bank investigates all customers thoroughly and has been known to reject applications for data. Only Imperial citizens may use the service – a limitation imposed in the early days to keep the Emperor happy – but what they do with the data afterwards is up to them. Even the results of the

customer investigation may, of course, be sold to others but Bank Janus will never reveal its client list nor what questions have been asked.

BJ only charges a fee if it can provide the information requested. It has never been caught trying to mislead a client but may return (and charge for) undesired data, for example if the question was ambiguous. Repeat customers are more likely to be given helpful bonus facts than a first-timer. The cost of the service limits its clientele to the wealthy few – any "equalising" effect the bank might have only applies to the richest citizens and the larger corporations.

Plots

1: The PCs are hired to infiltrate a corporate HQ based on detailed plans and information which the patron claims was provided by Bank Janus. However, the data turns out to be dangerously flawed. Either the patron has set them up or BJ has provided erroneous data.

2: As 1, but BJ deliberately provided bad data – its neutrality was compromised to keep the target corporation (a major customer) happy.

3: As 1, but the patron's 'BJ source' was a front for fraudsters selling bad data for hard cash.

4: Landing on a poor world for the first time, the PCs are followed by crowds of people who ask strange questions, try to photograph them, fingerprint them or look in their bags. The people are trying to gather information to sell to Bank Janus to earn a few extra credits.

2. Culinary Temple on Vland

Vland/1717 Vland

Im◀4511●32▶StSp●Svc◀0767●73▶

Description

The CTV trains *Shugilli* (chefs) and *Khagilli* (waiters) in the sacred purification and preparation rites associated with the Vilani native religions which roughly equate chefs with high priests.

GM's Notes

CTV has three bureaux, each headed by a Grand Master; these masters form the Prime Temple Authority, which is the head of the judicial branch of the Temple. Matters of doctrine, faith,

practice, and recipe are settled by increasingly authoritative levels of jurisdiction. The Prime Temple Authority settles the highest matters concerning the Vilani Rite Temple.

The Shugilii art of food preparation is considered a defining cultural attribute of the Vilani. Many delicacies are considered by some to be utterly disgusting in their procurement and preparation; however, even dung (of the right kind and under the right circumstances) can be turned into a graceful garnish in the hands of a capable and creative Shugilii.

There are three major categories of trainee: the *Naabadaur* (Apprentice), who lives a monkish life of deprivation and meditation; the *Khagiili* (Waiter) who learns both diplomacy and food preparation at the feet of a master; the *Shugilii* (Chef-Priest) who is qualified to perform the rite of food preparation to serve at a Vilani Temple.

Plots

1: The PCs share a ship with Daashulinta "Dash" Kaardhaaraag, an Argu-class Shugilii who was unceremoniously evicted from the CTV over an embarrassing incident concerning the Duke of Ilesh and a plate of solar-vacuum-burned Groat gizzards. His disgrace means he can only find work as a steward, chef and medic onboard small liners. Dash is driven by the need to perform his culinary rituals and though he can whip up excellent food with whatever is available, his methods are unusual – he might jam the airlock to expose the food to "enough vacuum", or ask the gunner to shoot a side of Tree Kraken from short range "on minimal power" to get the optimal taste. And he doesn't usually think to ask permission...

3. EntreSys Casinos

Im◀3423●25►Fam●Svc◀0464●45►

Description

EntreSys rents out gambling equipment and personnel for shipboard entertainment, including slot machines, card and dice tables, gambling wheels, and expert game masters to keep the games fun, exciting and profitable to the house.

GM's Notes

ESC contracts generally guarantee a 10% yield to the ship's owner or corporation, making a profit for the liner as well as getting a higher rating in the travel guides. Smaller ships can hire either personnel or machines alone to reduce costs or volume. ESC personnel are experts in card or dice games and are usually trained in self-defence (gamblers can react badly to losing!)

Plots

1: The PCs are hired to play at the ESC tables on a liner and determine whether the table masters are skimming some of the profits. Very careful observation will reveal that this is the case.

2: As 1, but the ESC staff are innocent; it's the ship's purser that is doing the skimming.

4. Founder ShipWorks

Knabbib/2115 Core

Im◀5514●15►PubL●Man2-Who12-Ret2-Svc4◀5342●33►

Description

FSW has been building and repairing ships for over a millennium and has yards throughout the Imperium, concentrated in border areas such as the Solomani Rim and Spinward Marches. They service, repair and refit ships of all classes and sizes in their extensive yards. A FSW space dock (or one of its franchises) can be found in most major systems of the Imperium.


GM's Notes

FSW received its official licence in Imperial Year 0, hence its name. From its original head Tallii Reycal to current CEO Stepen Marxhela the company grew from a small floundering shipyard to a major force in starship manufacturing and repair. As the company grew, its focus moved to larger ships in the 320's then to warships during the Civil War. From 975, after buying up dozens of shipyards and dry-docks around the Imperium, the company switched its emphasis from manufacture to becoming renowned as a provider of repairs, parts and retrofits.

The company is anything but traditional, taking whatever measures necessary to stay in business. This flexibility has frequently saved FSW from disaster but it also creates great internal confusion. The current CEO's temper is being strained by Amadas Zillink, manufacturing division head of the Spinward Marches, who claims that her design teams are on the verge of a technological breakthrough that will put FSW back at the top of the starship-production field.

Plots

1: [Milieu 0] FSW intends to move its HQ from Capital to Zimiin (now known as Knabbib). They face opposition from the xenophobic citizens of Zimiin who feel the world cannot support the resulting population increase. The PCs are hired to spy on Zimiin opposition leaders and/or to provide security for the FSW executives while they are on the world negotiating the move.



2: Amadas Zillink's new technology is from a black ops expedition to the Darrian Confederation. Several highly technical covert operatives, aided by 'wet ops' agents with computer hacking skills have pulled together a wealth of useful technical data. The PCs are hired to help get them out of the Confederation – either to transport them or as part of a diversionary action.

5. House Justin

Na◀255N◀46▶Fam◀Svc8-Non2◀0217◀07▶

Description

Few have heard of House Justin, though many of the rich and famous are occasional customers on "The Lady's" pleasure liners. HJ provides a wide variety of services to enhance their clients' enjoyment of life, including activities that are illegal on some worlds (the liner therefore remains in orbit). The only complaint regularly received from customers is that HJ ships turn up too rarely!

GM's Notes

House Justin is an enigma; on the surface it appears to be a vice and drug ring but it is not driven by the profit motive. Instead it runs on the principal that joy shared is magnified and that pain shared is diminished, as taught by an ancient Terran philosopher. Of course, happiness doesn't pay the bills, so HJ has to charge for its services.

HJ's founder, Justin (last name unknown) is Terran and runs the operation with his wife, daughter and son-in-law. All of the family act independently (as do many of their extended family of employees), taking ships where they feel they will do the most good.

The House operates 15-20 vessels at any time, which seem to appear erratically anywhere in human space, including the Imperium, Solomani Sphere and Zhodani Consulate. Analysis of these sightings would reveal that even Jump-6 HJ ships could not be responsible for all these sightings (e.g. Justin's ship was once seen in the Marches only two weeks after visiting the Hinterworlds).

It is rumoured that HJ is associated with the restaurant chain, O'Shugilli's through some distant family connection, but details remain obscure.

Confusingly, although "The Lady" is usually thought to be Justin's wife, rumours that it is a musical instrument strikes a chord with conspiracy theorists. Only the highly strung worry about it.

Plots

1: At a low point in their adventuring, the PCs are stranded in space but are picked up by a HJ liner. The House staff are ready and willing to

listen to their woes and provide free passage to the nearest port. For a reduced fee (given their sorrows) the PCs can also indulge themselves...

2: The PCs are hired by an agent of the local government who claims a pleasure liner in orbit is breaching all sorts of laws and that all agents sent aboard so far have disappeared. Suspecting the security service is compromised, she is forced to rely on independents and wants the PCs to visit as customers and plant a special tracking device. In reality, the lost agents have decided that House Justin is on the side of the angels and are simply delaying reporting in until the ship leaves.

3: As 2 but the agent is really part of the local underworld which sees the liner as competition. The "tracker" is a cunningly-disguised bomb.

6. Imperial Ship Builders Association

Capital/2118 Core

Im◀250N◀35▶Priv◀Svc◀2420◀33▶

Description

The ISBA is an association of ship-builders which aims to benefit all its members by sharing information and resources and co-ordinating political lobbying. It also has a social function, including an annual dinner at which awards for innovation and design excellence are presented.

GM's Notes

Founder ShipWorks (p.39) and X-TEK (p.34) formed the ISBA in year 22 as a joint project to strengthen their position against Cleon's Zhunastu Corporation. Sir Josphanoe Cailfor, FSW's lead negotiator, became the first Project Co-ordinator. Over the following 600 years, the association grew to represent the interests of many diverse entities concerned with manufacturing starships. However, the organisation was destroyed by the Civil War in the 7th century as members found themselves supporting opposing sides in the war.

The ISBA has subsequently been resurrected several times in various parts of the Imperium but has remained a much smaller affair and has never regained its earlier strength.

The Project Co-ordinator is the elected head of the ISBA and serves for four years unless a vote of no confidence is passed. The association has always been a hotbed of barely concealed strife, from political struggles between members to disagreements with the Imperial government. If a contract for a faulty ship design is accepted, or a truly good design is shelved, it is frequently attributed to the machinations of the ISBA.

Plots

1: The Emperor is to make a surprise appearance at the ISBA dinner and awards ceremony, in the grand ballroom of Sylea's main orbital station. The PCs are hired by an anti-Imperial isolationist movement to infiltrate the high security event and assassinate the Emperor.

2: As 1, but the PCs are Imperial security staff. In addition to foiling the attack, they must find the traitor in the Emperor's personal staff who let the assassins know about this 'surprise' visit.

3: [Year 570] The Imperium is experimenting with the x-boat concept and ISBA companies are bidding to build jump-4 ships to carry messages. The contract is potentially worth trillions of credits and power-politics and corporate espionage abound. The PCs are hired as test pilots for a new x-boat design; agents from a competitor attempt to sabotage the x-boat during Imperial trials.

4: As 3, but the PCs are hired to hack into a competitor's computer systems and alter their design to cause fatal faults during its construction.

7. LifeTimers

Im◀0024●25▶Priv●Svc◀0434●45▶

Description

LifeTimers provide cryogenic facilities for those who wish to see the far future. Their facilities are powered by natural energy sources, minimising the danger of power system failures, to give ultimate security for every time traveller.

GM's Notes

Timers' clubs exist throughout known space. Members freeze themselves in extended-duration low berths for a fixed period of time then wake to see how the universe has changed. LifeTimers was one such group. They were more cautious than some, siting the facility on a sunny continent close to water to provide solar and hydroelectric power to make it self-sufficient. They set up a private trust to maintain the equipment, watch over their finances and handle emergencies.

15 years after the members were frozen a world depression caused a financial crisis for the trustees, who were forced to open the facility to other applicants (for a large fee); this has been very successful. Some of the new sleepers are Timers; there are also people waiting for science to solve their currently incurable illnesses; some are just looking to ride out the economic slump.

The trustees now have to spend time and money dealing with lawyers, accountants and advertisers, but the paying customers cover the running costs for the institution.

Plots

1: A woman believes her missing husband, who disappeared after withdrawing all the money from their joint account, has had himself frozen by LifeTimers. The company has denied this and blocked her from inspecting their facility. She will pay the PCs all her remaining money to break in and find him, plus a large bonus if they bring back sufficient evidence to allow her to reclaim the funds from the joint account.

2: The government plans to build a dam upstream from the LifeTimers facility, making their hydroelectric plant unviable. The solar collectors will still support the original Timers (they allowed a large safety margin) but not all the additional sleepers. LifeTimers hires the PCs to import and install a fusion generator. They wish this kept secret while they sort out a new strategy so that they can continue to advertise their independence from industrial power sources.

8. Lindarport Security

Im ◀3433●25▶LL●Svc◀0463●54▶

Description

Lindarport is a small but fast-growing multi-world security firm specialising in transporting or escorting high-value cargos and VIPs. Individual operators and bodyguard teams are available, as well as an excellent privacy protection service.

GM's Notes

Captain Simon Lindar was a harbour patrolman who was severely injured by a terrorist bomb. Preferring medical discharge to a desk job, he set up "Harlow, Janes and Lindar, Port Security Specialists" with two other ex-cops, to capitalise on their waterfront knowledge and police contacts.

The firm flourished as security consultants and alarm installers, until Harlow and Janes were killed by an armed gang who raided a warehouse while they were installing the alarm system. Lindar decided to carry on, and hired every suitable candidate he could afford, from ex-cops to retired mercenaries. He set up insurance for the staff and began taking on almost any security jobs from night watches to personal bodyguards. A few months later his police contacts paid off and his own security personnel captured his partners' killers as they raided another warehouse.

The company (now Lindarport Security) gained in reputation, expanding globally, then to other worlds, while moving upmarket into the executive protection market. Lindarport now supplies bodyguards, couriers and escorts for many media personalities and is renowned for its privacy

protection service, including anti-surveillance sweeps, setting up electronic countermeasures and site security consultancy.

Lindar is now in his 70's but still keeps tight control. He insists that all staff operate within the law (or be able to justify any lapse as essential for a client's survival); guards on high law worlds are experts in unarmed combat and high tech, non-lethal weaponry. Recently Lindar bought Third Set Incarcerations (p.11), believing it to be a bargain and a complementary service. He now regrets this decision and is working hard to sort out the financial burden this has placed on Lindarport.

Much to his second-in-command's disgust, Lindar currently shows no interest in retiring.

Plots

1: The PCs are hired to escort a courier with a briefcase of vital religious documents on a large liner. They are shadowed by two hefty musclemen who fade away when approached. The patron has hired a Lindarport team as "backup" – but while the PCs are focused on these shadows, a team of art thieves will try to steal the briefcase.

2: As 1, but the PCs are hired as a decoy. The real documents are transported by a separate Lindarport operative. The PCs are shadowed, but if confronted, the 'shadows' claim to be Lindarport operatives; of course, they are really the thieves.

9. Local Eyes

Im◀2434●24▶LL●Ret1-Svc9◀5535●24▶

Description

Whether setting up home, selling things or just looking for fun, Local Eyes helps by providing an insight into local customs, giving information to bridge gaps and avoid misunderstandings.

GM's Notes

Local Eyes was founded by retired scout Darin Hanratty, who was fascinated by the variety of cultures found within the Imperium. Sometimes unfairly portrayed as "the poor traveller's TAS", LE's declared aim is to provide services for visitors who wish to interact with local inhabitants.

LE is divided into Commercial (merchants), Residential (immigrants and long-stay personnel) and Leisure (tourists); all of these services are available from any Local Eyes office, but staffing varies depending on the world. Levels of service offered include Economy (brochures and data packs providing just the basics), Standard (classes, seminars and group tours) or Deluxe (individual service, including personal tuition, guides, interpreters, and so on).

Plots

1: A rival keeps getting the sweet deals while the PCs are mired in culture clashes, legal difficulties and dead-end leads. It turns out the rival is using Local Eyes services – can they really make that much of a difference?

10. Loxibac

Im◀2433●34▶PubL●Manu2-Svc8
◀7121●56▶

Description

At the forefront of medical research, Loxibac is a young, dynamic firm employing only the most highly-skilled scientists, to produce truly innovative medical solutions that benefit shareholders and Imperial citizens alike.

GM's Notes

Loxibac's founders gathered a team of highly reputable medical researchers and raised significant capital based simply on the company's prospects. This start was consolidated by the development of several innovative products including an inhibitor for some forms of cancer, a selective immunosuppressant to reduce the risk of transplant rejection and an effective cure for Vargr mange. The company has been expanding rapidly, its stock value is high and its competitors are watching Loxibac enviously.

Plots

1: Loxibac have developed a variant of Fast Drug, suitable for slowing a human metabolism by a factor of 30 but without the usual damaging side-effects. Human trials are about to begin and they need volunteer subjects, for reasonable pay. If the PCs volunteer they must sign a waiver absolving the company of any responsibility for health problems caused by the drug. Actual side effects are up to the GM to determine!

2: As 1, but the PCs are in prison and are offered the chance to effectively reduce their sentence by a factor of 30 using the drug. However, a prison is not a good place to be drugged and helpless for a long period of time.

11. Porter & Streetman Associates

Im◀1422●55▶LL●Ut11-Svc9◀0444●33▶

Description

When you have the very best antiques or art to sell, you need the very best auctioneers to sell it. You need Porter & Streetman Associates.

GM's Notes

P&SA are extremely exclusive auctioneers to the rich and famous. They handle only top quality merchandise and their auctions are by invitation only. Being invited is a potent status symbol – attending the auction tends to attract media attention and gossip. P&SA use only the best auctioneers and pay them handsomely to ensure loyalty. Fees are high but prices tend to be higher as well, so sellers usually make a larger profit than through other houses. The current owner is Lady Ariadne van der Gaag, great-granddaughter of one of the founders, Isaac Streetman.

Plots

1: A PC who is neither rich nor famous is hand-delivered an invitation to a P&SA auction on a neighbouring world. The well-groomed courier in P&SA livery claims "Porter and Streetman do not make mistakes, sir." A Count on the other world wished to invite a friend on this world but misspelt the name slightly such that it matched the PC's name. The PCs can play on the associated media attention and good-will until they arrive on the other world, but if they actually enter the auction, the Count will expose them as fraudsters.

12. Rapid Employ

Im◀3334●45▶PubS●Svc◀1545●23▶

Description

Rapid Employ brings together the people with skills in need of a job and the companies with vacancies in need of those skills. Sliding scales available depending on experience required.

GM's Notes

RE is a rapidly-expanding enterprise, with offices on many worlds. Originally a temping agency, it now focuses on worlds in recession, providing a redeployment service for permanent staff "optimised" out of their previous jobs, as well as advising the unemployed and new business ventures. It keeps extensive records of its clients and charges employers more for staff with a good, verifiable record. It actively recruits from starports and demob centres, and on a few worlds has reached the critical size where it effectively acts as a clearing house for all local employment.

Plots

1: An agent claiming to be from RE tells the PCs he can find them work, though the form-filling takes an entire afternoon. When they visit the RE office the next day to see the results, RE has no knowledge of their forms, or this agent. In truth

the man is a freelance market data collector – the PCs can catch up with him while he's persuading another group to fill in his forms.

13. Revenge! Unlimited

Im◀1324●03▶Part●Svc9-Non1◀2651●72▶

Description

Wronged? Can't find justice in the courts? Then Revenge! Unlimited may be solution. Please note: only strictly legal contracts undertaken.

GM's Notes

RIU steers close to the edge of legality, and despite claims to the contrary occasionally goes too far. They basically harass their victims on other people's behalf in exchange for large fees. Their methods vary depending on local laws, but can include slander, threats, sabotage or personal violence. RIU agents are given a lot of autonomy by the management, but their contracts are written to divert blame from the company if they are caught breaking the law.

Plots

1: A car accident leaves several RIU staff in hospital. The PCs are hired as temporary heavies to go threaten a local businessman for his unpleasant behaviour towards an RIU client.

2: As 1, but the target is a mobster and it's his heavies who put the original RIU team in hospital!

14. Rrodhogh's

Im◀4504●25▶LL●Svc◀5112●33▶

Description

The Vargr grooming house, Rrodhogh's, now caters for Humans, Aslan and other races as well. Rrodhogh's – the ultimate in fur and hair fashions.

GM's Notes

Kaenguekskan Rrodhogh, an Imperial Vargr from Antares sector, had a talent for bringing out the best in every customer's coat. Her salon soon attracted critical acclaim and with this came hordes of would-be apprentices. Making the most of her new-found leadership role, Kaenguekskan trained her disciples to her exacting standards then sent them out to open new branches.

Rrodhogh's spread gradually across the Imperium, the Julian Protectorate and parts of the Vargr Extents, with branches on many high-population worlds. As widely spread as many megacorporations, in reality the various branches are effectively autonomous subsidiaries, adapting their styles to local fashions but with a continued

emphasis on quality. Rrodhogh's reputation keeps most of its salon leaders from going independent.

Her son Oedzunur was the first to accept Human customers. The move was an instant success, especially with young nobles looking for a novel style. Expansion of the service to other races has had a more mixed reception.

Each salon has few staff and a small turnover but the sheer number of branches means that the company's total revenues are significant. The company is now run by one of Kaengueksan's many great-grandchildren but he lacks his ancestor's charisma and there are continuous disputes over control, both locally and regionally.

Plots

1: The PCs are passing a Rrodhogh's salon when a fight spills out into the street. A Vargr with multicoloured dyed fur falling out in chunks is fighting with his groomer while other customers and staff try to separate them. A disgruntled member of staff 'sabotaged' the shampoo.

2: A Rrodhogh's branch offers haircuts for Cr1 to non-Vargr willing to be served by trainees. The results are haphazard! The PCs are unexpectedly invited to a meeting where they need to impress their hosts (e.g. potential clients or employers). If they complain about Rrodhogh's they will be accused of racism – their hosts use the salon all the time (of course, not at the Cr1 rate).

15. Shivshush House of Health

Im◀1034●27▶Fam●Svc◀4306●24▶

Description

Health is important to everyone, but most people pay little attention to it until something goes wrong. SHoH restores balance to your life by helping you deal with potential problems through massage, osteopathy, dietary advice, counselling and other preventative techniques.

SHoH is a Virushi-led community but all are welcome regardless of race or background.

GM's Notes

About 75% of the staff at SHoH are Virushi, including all the masseurs; many humans find this intimidating. However, the Virushi are very skilled at what they do and almost all clients are very happy with their service. Shivshush's family run the facility as a community but only those who are willing and able to contribute are allowed to join.

Payment is on a formalised sliding scale based on the wealth of the client. The poorest are not turned away but are asked to contribute their labour. The centre barely earns enough to cover

its costs but Shivshush regards the accumulation of excess wealth as harmful.

SHoH does not subscribe to any particular faith but holds a definite philosophical position which shares aspects of many local religions. Staff and clients are expected to respect each other and to work at improving their mental and physical health while at the site. The community is well-regarded by local people; even those who do not participate think of them as "good neighbours". Many visit the centre for a few days every few months just to maintain their well-being.

Plots

1: The PCs are arrested for a misdemeanour. The judge views their behaviour as "antisocial" and lets them off with a light fine, provided they attend SHoH for a week. Unfortunately one of the other guests is a past adversary of the PCs...

2: A series of accidents at the SHoH end with a wealthy client nearly dying from an allergic reaction to a medicine administered in error. He sues the House for malpractice and the authorities may shut it down. Shivshush hires the PCs to investigate his theory that the "accidents" were sabotage by a group of religious extremists who disagree with the Virushi philosophy.

16. Six Suns Productions

Im◀0405●05▶Part●Svc◀3065●22▶

Description

Creators of such hit series as "Shop!" and "Shipbuilder!", Six Suns Productions provides high quality entertainment programmes for all.

GM's Notes

The brainchild of partners Angus Deering and Liadin Imkhimasi, SSP is a small production group specialising in docu-soaps – holo's following the everyday working lives of 'real' people.

Imkhimasi had trained in holo production and worked as an actress and as a technician but was frustrated in her desire to become a director. Deering had charm, money, industry contacts and a glorious voice which brought him a successful career in advertising voice-overs. Increasingly reliant on drink and drugs to overcome boredom, he was looking for a change and Liadin's enthusiasm inspired him to start SSP.

The company is tiny, requiring all staff to perform multiple tasks. Deering spent his savings on the best holoproduction equipment available. They specialised in docu-soaps because these lent themselves to small-team efforts (a larger team just gets in the way of those people being

filmed) and docu-dramas were relatively rare on their world. The company has created two series, both of which were so well-received by local viewers that they were bought by a subsector-wide network. The critics have not been so generous and the network has suffered financial difficulties of late. It has been delaying payment of money due to SSP, which has caused the smaller company cash-flow problems. SSP have had to cut back to five staff (the minimum needed to produce marketable holos) and are actively looking for a new network to buy future products.

Plots

1: Deering and Imkhimasi approach the PCs as potential stars of their next series ("Tramp!" or "Merc!", as appropriate). They offer royalties and the cost of the upcoming annual maintenance for the PCs' ship at the next port of call. On the first jump, SSP are mildly irritating, insisting on filming the PCs at inconvenient times and setting up their equipment in silly places. When the maintenance inspection goes badly, SSP film the PCs' frustration while they are stuck on-planet for an extra week. On the next jump, the ship suffers repeated faults and troubles. The PCs gradually realise that SSP may be engineering problems to make the show as interesting as possible...

17. Stellar Education Cooperative

Im◀4412●33▶Mut●Svc7-Pub3◀6217●54▶

Description

SEC provides top-quality education for children of all ages and abilities with the catchphrase "Improve your child's chances and help advance humaniti toward the next phase of its evolution."

GM's Notes

SEC was formed 200 years ago by rich businessman Thomas Devine. Devine was raised in the Church of the Stellar Divinity (see *101 Religions*) by devout parents but became disenchanted with the church and after much searching, found a religion he could believe in, based on the sharing of knowledge and experience. A key tenet of the faith was that humankind was destined to evolve to a higher plane of existence as beings of pure mental energy; an essential prerequisite for this evolution was that everyone be enlightened in order to raise the stellar consciousness. Devine's faith is an offshoot of the School of Shared Experience (see *101 Religions*) which was banned during the Psionic Suppressions.

To spread the word, Devine took on a small group of disciples, teaching them the faith, but the benefits were frustratingly slow and small. He decided to target children at school and found that his formidable commercial skills were better suited to creating and organising the SEC than to directly teaching people.

The SEC quickly expanded and is now directed by five of Devine's original students. Not all teachers at SEC facilities are members of the faith but there is always a religious component to the school day. Teaching uses all the most advanced methods, including hypnosis and chemical memory-stimulation where this is allowed. The schools have a reputation for academic excellence but some people have accused them of indoctrinating children; the SEC responds by pointing to the number of former students who do not belong to the faith. Adult education programmes have recently been started on some worlds.

There is a persistent rumour that Devine still lives, running the organisation in secret.

Plots

1: PCs looking for (or investigating) psionic institutes note some suspicious reports about an evening class on "self-actualisation" run in the local school. One trainer for the local SEC still secretly uses psionics for teaching. They will also use their powers to deal with anyone who uncovers their secret...

2: The PCs see a class of schoolchildren wandering round the starport. As the class passes nearby, one girl trips and falls into the nearest PC; before they can disentangle themselves and get up again she whispers that she is being held against her will and asks for the PC's protection. In reality, she just has an overly-dramatic dislike of school, but her story is somewhat embellished.

3: As 2, but the girl is a powerful latent psionic who rebelled against SEC's secret psi teaching methods (her untrained mind suffered great pain from the psionics). She is now being forcibly indoctrinated by the over-zealous teachers.

18. Tributis Rapid Strike Force

Im◀2525●13▶WOS●Svc◀0524●55▶

Description

The five-battalion Tributis RSF is a highly mobile mercenary company, available for strike, cadre, and Special Ops mission. They operate two detachments, one equipped at TL12, the other at TL15. "Tributis RSF: When you *absolutely* need it destroyed tomorrow."

GM's Notes

Following the Fourth Frontier War, the Tributis Arms Group (p.24) acquired the Rapid Strike Force mercenaries, a light armoured platoon specialising in high-speed strike missions. Tributis has greatly expanded their scope and the RSF is now dispersed over more than 20 subsectors; many surviving original members are still active in organising and training newer recruits.

The RSF has always kept its roots in mind and maintains a very high level of mobility. It has several crack commando units for orbital insertions and all its infantry are mechanised; even the guard units keep grav APCs handy "just in case". RSF battle tactics are centred on speed and mobility. "Shoot and scoot" is their motto.

Although the company mostly operates independently of TAG, they use their equipment in battle to test and perfect it. These actions are also used as demonstrations of TAG equipment for prospective clients. The security forces at all Tributis installations are trained by the RSF.

Plots

1: TAG is buying out a small mining concern that has developed a novel method for extracting deep space ore. The PCs are hired to provide site security for two weeks between the takeover announcement and the arrival of RSF troops and TAG Employee Retention Magistrate staff. There is a lot of ill will between the hard-driven workers and the owners (a married couple who are 'retiring' with the proceeds from the sale); Tributis is rightly concerned about possible sabotage.

A day after the announcement, the main fuel depot is destroyed, stranding everyone at the base. A message is found demanding proceeds from the sale be distributed to the employees. When the owners refuse, the computer and radio rooms are sabotaged, leaving only the emergency environmental systems functioning. Finally the ex-owners are targeted for assassination.

19. Yoyodyne Propulsion Systems

Terra/1827 Solomani Rim

Im◀2335●24▶Sub●Svc◀6263●66▶

Description

YPS was one of the first Terran jump drive manufacturers; in 1038 it was reborn as the brainchild of brilliant jump drive designer Jon Karper von Bikbutay, and since then has become one of the leading firms in the design of jump drive, manoeuvre drive, and power plants.

GM's Notes

Although details of the original Yoyodyne's history have been lost over the 3,000 years since it last operated, in 1038 parts of its original building remained standing in New Jersey's Dead Zone. Von Bikbutay was preparing to go into business and, seeing a holo on the archaeological excavation of that site, decided to name his new firm after the ancient predecessor. The new YSP headquarters are located in the New York Arcology, not far from the site of the old plant, but it has employees throughout the Sol system.

Yoyodyne was acquired by GSBAG, LIC, in 1100. Since then, approximately 90% of its design work has been devoted to GSBAG products, though Yoyodyne maintains virtually complete autonomy in its design methods.

GSBAG has long had the exclusive licence to provide vessels to the Imperial family and most such ships now in service use drives designed by Yoyodyne. Recently, an engineering intern found a flaw in an old jump drive design that appears to have been carried over to some current drives. In theory, this error could lead to fractures in the zuchai crystals causing sudden precipitation out of jump. The intern's detailed report passed only slowly up the management chain as each rank required investigation before passing it upwards. The report has not yet been passed to GSBAG as the cost of redesigning and replacing thousands of jump drives throughout the Imperium would bankrupt Yoyodyne and dramatically cut into GSBAG's corporate profits for several years.

Plots

1: YSP hires the PCs as independent consultants to inspect various drives and see whether the faults found by the intern are being exhibited. The party must keep an extremely low profile while obtaining legitimate access to vessels belonging to the Imperial family. They must also avoid notice by GSBAG until they have reported back to YSP. Finding a vessel assigned to a member of the Imperial family is itself a challenge. A Yoyodyne manager will supervise the team but will not join them for any inspections.

2: An Imperial family vessel precipitates out of jump space immediately after jump. No one is injured but the Imperial Navy begins a detailed inspection of the drives. The PCs are hired to ensure the Navy's report does not conclude the problem was due to a Yoyodyne design error.

3: As 2, but the intern hears of the incident and feels he should bring it to Imperial attention. The PCs are hired to silence him, by whatever means.

"Every one lives by selling something" – Robert Louis Stevenson.

1. Donald's Used Air/Raft Emporium

Im◀0026●15▶So1e●Ret◀0664●71▶

Description

When buying a used aircraft you want two things: a good price, and confidence in its condition. Donald's offers both.

GM's Notes

Since his partner ran off with most of the firm's money Donald Chibewa has been convinced that people are out to get him. He distrusts his employees, micromanages everything and won't listen to advice; as a result things have been going steadily downhill for the business, which is now barely breaking even.

Donald has a good eye for the value and condition of vehicles but less of a head for paperwork. He never deliberately cheats anyone, but he is a hard salesman. Many customers have come away convinced they have a bargain when they have paid over the odds.

Plots

1: Donald is offered a cheap fleet of vehicles from a hire company which is upgrading, but he can't raise enough money in time, so he's looking for backers. PCs with money to spare could find this a good long-term investment. However, Donald's paranoia leads him to be rather over-inquisitive – after an initial period of enthusiasm he will begin enquiring as to the PCs' jobs and the means by which they make their money.

2: As 1, but Donald begins to believe the PCs are going to run off with all his money (even if a large proportion of it is now *their* money). He will become increasingly secretive and he will be dismissive of any request for accounts or access to the money. If the PCs persist, he will hole up in his office with a shotgun and threaten to kill anyone who comes "to steal my business again".

2: As 1, but Donald wants to make money fast. He hires out some vehicles on special conditions: if the hirers can drum up 10 more customers within the week, they pay nothing for the hire, *and* receive commission on the sales. If not, he retains their deposit (usually 10% of the rental).

2. Enli & Elsa's General Store

Im◀0034●57▶Fam●Ret◀1167●03▶

Description

Enli and Elsa Ligarmuka run a small, friendly general store in a rural village a long way from the nearest starport. They offer most commonly-requested hardware and groceries, and will happily order special items for customers.

GM's Notes

Enli and Elsa arrived in the village over 20 years ago. They set up shop and were accepted by the somewhat xenophobic villagers surprisingly quickly – partly because they always seemed to be keeping one or two of any items a villager asked for in stock, "just in case".

Elsa is psionic, with a special talent that seems to be a limited form of precognition. She can look at lists and feel which items are going to be important. She gets great pleasure by exceeding her customers' expectations but, recognising she has a peculiar gift, she and her husband deliberately chose an out-of-the-way location and low-profile business to avoid undue attention.

Plots

1: While the PCs are in town, a bounty hunter arrives, claiming that Elsa is a fugitive from Imperial justice (she's merely on file as a suspected psi, but he'll make it sound more dramatic than this). Some villagers approach the PCs quietly and ask them to prevent the bounty hunter from harming their friendly store-keepers.

3. Ivan Evans, Electrical Wholesaler

Im◀1053●24▶So1e●Who1◀0363●72▶

Description

IEEW is a major importer of high-tech consumer electronics. If your customers want it and it can't be produced locally then IEEW is undoubtedly the best source.

GM's Notes

As a young man, Ivan saw an opportunity for profit when a free trader arrived with a hold full of

high-tech gizmos for quick sale. Swiftly arranging a loan through his mother (a businesswoman herself) he acquired the items and proceeded to sell them piecemeal to friends and local retailers with a modest mark-up. He used the profit to form his own company and to buy more goods.

IEEW has expanded from its humble beginnings. At 45, Ivan now directly employs more than 50 people and supplies electrical outlets across the continent with items that cannot be produced on-world ("I specialise in the unavailable", says Ivan). He has his own fleet of delivery vehicles to keep down costs and many good contacts on neighbouring higher-tech worlds. His mother's investment has been paid back many times over.

Though IEEW has grown dramatically, Ivan has decided not to register as a limited liability company, despite advice from many friends. Until recently a model employer, he has become increasingly paranoid about internal security since a group of delivery drivers attempted to make off with expensive electronic goods from a transcontinental shipment.

Ivan is a short, round human with blue-black skin, a ready laugh and a high lilting voice. He sees the company as an extension of himself and spends most of his waking hours working, although he has been spending more time at home since his mother's recent illness.

Plots

1: IEEW is sending a particularly large shipment cross-country and Ivan fears his delivery workers will steal it. He hires the PCs to accompany the goods and keep an eye on things; naturally this makes them extremely unpopular with the regular employees who are quite honest.

2: As 1, but the employees are not trustworthy and intend to make off with the goods, once they've "got rid of those snooping offworlders".

3: The PCs arrive with a cargo of new gadgets; Ivan has heard the pre-release publicity and believes they will be hot sellers. Unfortunately the marketing was a little premature and the devices do not live up to their specification. Ivan thinks he's been swindled and threatens to sue the PCs.

4. Kankir Shipping

Im◀3435●15▶Mut◀Uti14-Who16
◀1103●13▶

Description

Kankir Shipping is one of the fastest growing shipping companies in the sector. Its fleet of over 100 vessels of all sizes can support the full range

of options for interstellar haulage, from bulk goods to small luxury items, and offers flexible terms designed to meet the customers' needs.

GM's Notes

KS was formed by a group of independent traders looking for a way to compete with the larger lines. Organising themselves as a co-operative, the traders shared information, jointly planned routes and trans-shipped cargos for each other. Through a combination of skill and good luck, they have been successful, and as the company has grown it has taken on an increasing role in interstellar trade in the region, purchasing larger vessels for bulk haulage.

KS is still run along co-operative lines, but the original members wield far more power than those who joined later. Growth has begun to slow down; it appears a restructuring along more traditional corporate lines would be beneficial for further expansion but there is strong resistance from some members. A vote has been called at every one of the last five annual general meetings, and each time the motion for change has been defeated by an increasingly narrow margin.

Plots

1: Two KS captains try to recruit the PCs' ship; they believe if they can attract enough new members to swing the next vote, they will benefit from the large windfall. Naturally the PCs will come under pressure from these captains to vote for restructuring; they will then be pressured by the opponents, accused of being bribed, etc. If the vote succeeds, the PCs can take the windfall and go, or stay with KS (if they are still accepted).

5. Ma Barker's

Im◀3443●24▶PubS◀Ret◀0526●51▶

Description

A chain of Vargr fast-food restaurants serving traditional Vargr fare, but also catering for humans with a taste for spices. Ma Barkers are a familiar sight in many starports.

GM's Notes

There is no universal traditional Vargr cooking, but if there was, Ma Barker's wouldn't provide it. These restaurants are aimed directly at the human market and, in particular, at the just-landed spacers who have had a few too many drinks and who then dare each other to eat the hottest food (or most unusual meat). The Vargr who work in Ma Barkers tend to be very low status; even so, they quit with alarming frequency.

Plots

1: A charismatic Vargr, Knourra Uegusdouk, has organised protests against Ma Barker's for its "demeaning portrayal of a noble race". Some of his followers have decided to take things further and plan to break in and set light to the local establishment. The PCs may be caught up in the protests, witness the break in, or be hired to help with the protest or break in (if they are Vargr).

6. Noble Image

HRD/1623 Deneb

Im◀6534●35▶WOS●Manu4-Ret6◀3434●34▶

Description

Noble Image outlets are almost everywhere "Behind the Claw", with stores at the majority of the larger starports. They produce the finest in electronics and personal technology – everything from wristcomps to psi-helms to vision enhancement sunglasses. Noble Image also produces fine, handcrafted duelling rapiers and revolvers for "the noble who wishes to protect his honour with dignity and style".

GM's Notes

The company actually operates in two distinct markets. Ironically, the retail outlets at starports are targeted at "upwardly-mobile" consumers who are not themselves of the nobility but aspire to be like them; most genuinely noble customers use the exclusive, personal, home delivery service which the company provides for their benefit.

Much of the equipment sold by Noble Image is bought in, frequently from other subsidiaries of X-TEK, rather than manufactured by the company. Some of these lines are produced exclusively for Noble Image but many are simply re-branded versions of pre-existing product.

The distinctive styling on the handcrafted items comes from the use of Aslan labour. In particular, the duelling weapons benefit from an unusual blending of traditional Aslan carving with human motifs and as a result are instantly recognisable as Noble Image items. The company promotes each artist such that they develop a reputation, adding considerably to the value of their work.

Plots

1: The latest gadget from Noble Image is the FLN-1120 "Flynn" fencing trainer. This is simply a hovering spherical robot with a practice rapier attached to it. At the starport this robot is being demonstrated in front of the store. The PCs are welcomed to challenge the bot to a mock duel. Difficulty can be set by voice command and at the

higher levels the bot is quite devious. The PCs may be embarrassed by the bot's expertise!

2: As 1, but the bot malfunctions and begins wounding the combatant or even the bystanders.

3: A customer leaving a Noble Image store bumps into one of the PCs. He is quite abusive, insisting that it was the character's fault and challenging them to a duel to first blood with his new rapier. He is actually a skilled opponent who will probably win if the character fights and will gloat loudly about it afterwards; if the challenge is refused he will dog the PCs' footsteps, trying to provoke them. In either case he will be found dead in an alley the following morning. He was murdered by another noble he had offended, but many people saw the incident with the PCs...

7. O'Shugilii's

HRD/1623 Deneb

Im◀6533●35▶WOS●Ret◀0422●33▶

Description

O'Shugilii's is a chain of restaurants and public houses quite popular in the area "Behind the Claw". They combine the best of old Terra (in particular Ireland) with that of Classic Vland. The food includes basic fare found throughout the region as well as Vilani and Terran delicacies, including spicy fried Argu patties, Janx Pudding and ground Frezel gourds.

Its advertising typically reads: "O'Shugilii's! It's a great place to meet friends, co-workers and family. The atmosphere is always pleasant and the food excellent. While at your next starport, why not visit O'Shugilii's? Please note violence is not tolerated; weapons must be checked in at the door. If you want a fight, take it to startown."

GM's Notes

Like all within the X-TEK family of companies (p.34) O'Shugilii's is protected by the BureauX; *unlike* its siblings it also has unofficial outside connections and members of House Justin (p.40) are frequently seen chatting to the staff. The House's philosophy also seems to have rubbed off on the chain. Almost all outlets are as good as the advertising, with a great atmosphere and friendly people (both staff and customers). Many travellers have taken their troubles to O'Shugilii's and come away without them.

The Culinary Temple on Vland (p.38) has objected to the company's chosen name as "demeaning to true Shugilii" and orthodox Chef-Priests are forbidden from working for the chain. Very few other people pay much attention to this official pronouncement as the food is very good

(and the traditional Vilani dishes are genuinely cooked in the approved fashion).

Plots

1: The PCs are eating at an O'Shugilii's restaurant when a noted food critic comes in. A disturbance outside draws the door security guard outside, then another customer attempts to choke the critic. The attacker is a chef whose restaurant has recently gone out of business because of a scathing review from his victim. Only the PCs are near enough to do anything; if they interfere, the ex-chef will grab a steak knife and use the critic as a hostage.

2: While eating at an O'Shugilii's, the PCs notice a suspicious customer hovering between the tables; closer inspection reveals they are covertly dropping a fine powder over some of the dishes. This is a member of the Culinary Temple spreading mild poison around in an attempt to discredit the restaurant. If the PCs tackle the poisoner, O'Shugilii's will be very grateful and will give them a special voucher for free food at any O'Shugilii's in the subsector.

8. Vilani Man/Vilani Woman

Im◀5552●34▶PubW●Ret◀1555●53▶

Description

Vilani Man/Vilani Woman has served humanity since before the formation of the Third Imperium. They provide traditional clothes for all classes as well as innovative modern designs for the daring.

GM's Notes

VM/VW is a very traditional company; what it describes as 'daring' would be classed 'conservative' by more Solomani-influenced observers. While it is true that they provide a full range of clothing, they attract little custom from the nobility since they do not offer a hand-tailoring service. VM/VW claim that their computer styling provides just as good a fit but most nobles disagree. A critic once accused them of providing "middle of the road clothing for the middle-class, middle-aged middle management"; a harsh comment but with a certain ring of truth.

The company was founded in Vland sector around -300, as the Long Night drew to a close.

Ownership: Naasirka 43%, Sharurshid 18%, Zirunkariish 8%, Imperial family 4%, Others 27%.

Plots

1: After visiting a VM/VW store, the PCs find themselves being followed. Eventually they find their belongings ransacked but only their VM/VW

clothes are taken. If asked, the company will claim to know nothing about it and will offer replacements as a goodwill gesture; if the PCs investigate further they may be able to discover the truth: elements in Naasirka have been using VM/VW for industrial espionage, bugging members of rival firms. A PC was given bugged clothes by mistake. How the PCs use this information is up to them.

9. Vilani Subject Race

Im◀2316●04▶So1e●Ret◀2374●02▶

Description

Vilani Subject Race aims to bring Vilani fashion to those excluded by the masters of the First Imperium – the "minor" human races with shapes not matching the Vilani ideal and non-humans of any description.

GM's Notes

VSR was founded as a political statement 40 years ago by Deelo Forasee, a disgruntled Geonee with a strong dislike of all things Vilani. He initially produced Geonee clothing parodying Vilani styles, but when the range proved popular he decided to cater for other races as well. As interest grew he started selling franchises to entrepreneurs in neighbouring systems.

Deelo is surprised by the success of VSR and is not sure what to do about it. He feels that he ought to be able to make some political mileage out of the situation but suspects the message is being lost along the way. The company is currently being sued by Vilani Man/Vilani Woman, who claim that Deelo's success is based on *their* name recognition and that their good reputation is being damaged by his substandard workmanship. Deelo believes the real reason is more political but can't afford to lose in court; he will be liable for full damages since VSR never incorporated (he sees Limited Imperial Corporations as being an artefact of Vilani commercial practices).

Plots

1: Deelo is running out of funds to fight the court case. He believes certain groups concerned with the rights of minor races may be willing to help but he and his staff are currently forbidden to leave the planet, so he needs someone to carry a message. Unfortunately he is right about the political motivation for the action and VM/VW will not make delivery of the message easy...

2: Given his current troubles, Deelo hires the PCs to watch his warehouse. Sure enough, some Vilani activists try to set his stock alight.

Transport, Communications and Utilities

Taxi!

"Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." – Herodotus.

1. Aguukaruu Storage

Im◀0023●04▶LL●Uti1◀0244●11▶

Description

AS provides cheap, no-frills, short or long-term warehousing. Insurance available on request.

GM's Notes

One step up from the cheapest warehousing, AS is typical of basic starport storage facilities everywhere. The few staff work shifts to cover all required jobs – receptionist, crane operator and security guard – and keep the business open at all hours of the day (starports never sleep).

Plots

1: The PCs arrive to collect their goods from AS, only to find nobody on duty and the door unlocked. A lone AS worker is asleep in the office and their goods are gone. It looks like theft, but once tempers have cooled, a check of the records and remaining stock gives clues that their stock was accidentally shipped out by another company and can be recovered fairly easily... provided it didn't contain anything too compromising, that is!

2: The PCs come to collect or deposit goods but a very scared employee refuses them access, claiming they're closed for refurbishment, or on strike, or... look just go away! Unknown to the PCs, he's got a gun pointed at his head, because heavily-armed thieves are currently removing the entire warehouse contents via the rear doors.

2. Bargain Travel

Im◀0034●13▶LL●Uti1◀3333●24▶

Description

World-hopping on a budget? Need to get places fast? Bargain Travel can find the right ticket at the right price for you!

GM's Notes

BT provides a service to passengers and ship owners alike, ensuring that berths are rarely empty and that people can travel on a budget. Many tickets are sold cheaply on a standby basis – the passenger may be bumped if someone

comes along who is willing to pay the full fare. Other deals guarantee a berth but say nothing about the conditions of the journey, which can result in a cramped and unpleasant trip.

Plots

1: The PCs buy berths through Bargain Travel and are told they will be met at the starport with the tickets two hours before the flight. Time passes but the tickets don't arrive... (Someone 'bumped' the PCs, but BT forgot to notify them.)

3. Beni Ma Interplanetary

Im◀2243●44▶Fam●Uti19-Whol1
◀2656●74▶

Description

For settlements on planets and belts around both the primary and its far companion, in-system transportation is vital to the system economy. BMI is the single biggest provider of in-system freight and passenger capacity on all major routes.

GM's Notes

BMI is run by octogenarian Rashid ibn Ma, great-grandson of the founder ("Beni Ma" means "sons of the horse"). Almost every family member works for the company but it has grown so large that outsiders are also recruited. These applicants are vetted exceptionally carefully and there have been accusations of discrimination against them; certainly almost all managers are family.

Financially and logistically, BMI divides its operations by region. Head office is on the mainworld, handling matters of general policy, but each major population centre has its own office which is fairly autonomous for local matters.

The company divides its operations according to the skills and facilities required for a particular run: ground-to-orbit, local space (between moons or stations orbiting a single world), short interplanetary, long interplanetary and microjump (trips over seven days in normal space, including travel between the primary and its companion).

BMI now runs its own academy, which handles their space pilot and steward training needs. They need few jump pilots, so these are recruited externally. The company treats its employees well

but demands a high level of performance from them; family members who cannot make the grade are quietly reassigned to less critical positions while 'outsiders' are "let go".

Plots

1: Two BMI starships are currently undergoing repairs, but service must be continued, so the PCs are contracted to make a microjump to the far companion. They are *not* told that the repairs are for damage sustained during repeated pirate attacks (or hijackings by in-system rebels).

2: Rashid intends to retire soon. His brother and several of Rashid's children are hoping for his role, jockeying for position and building up support in the family. One of them hires the PCs to "make the opposition look bad" – the means are up to them but plausible deniability must be maintained.

4. Channel 17 Media Group

Im◀3143◀33▶PubS●Uti17-Ret2-Svc1
◀3554◀33▶

Description

C17MG is now the largest broadcasting company on the planet, providing quality viewing and up-to-the-minute news globally. C17MG can meet every need – education or entertainment, holidays or text, interaction or relaxation.

GM's Notes

C17MG was formed by Bwap financier Kaper-wewepa-waka-a shortly after he arrived on this world. Through shrewd marketing and farsighted buyouts of established firms the company grew swiftly; it now controls almost half of the broadcasting stations, produces its own programmes and merchandising and has financial interests in various other telecommunication firms.

Few realise that although many C17MG broadcasts are produced in-house, few of them are popular. Imports from larger companies such as Planet X Recordings (p.32) and independently-produced local shows tend to get higher ratings. This doesn't worry the management, as profits are still good and the programme-making budget has been cut for the third successive year.

The news division has a good reputation but has been struggling to maintain its quality. Rival networks gleefully covered the recent resignation of a group of executives and presenters in a dispute over editorial control. The remaining less experienced teams must now prove themselves.

Ownership: Kaper-wewepa-waka-a 59%, Makhidkarun 11%, Other corporations 17%, Imperial family 5%, Private individuals 8%.

Plots

1: C17MG News seeks an interview with the party about one of their recent exploits; they are very persistent... If the PCs grant the request they will find the results distorted in whatever way is most likely to interest viewers; if not, their refusal will be used to make them the "bad guys" in a story which bears little resemblance to reality (but just enough to make a libel case expensive).

2: A C17MG worker approaches the PCs with a recording he has made that he wants them to take to an offworld broadcaster. It details an alleged financial scandal within the government, discovered by C17MG but suppressed by Kaper himself. Someone is certainly trying to get at the worker, and once he has talked to the PCs they are pursued as well – whether or not they accept his commission. Kaper and a government contact are swindling huge amounts of money.

3: As 2, but Kaper is being blackmailed by the government fraudsters. He will deny any involvement but will try to use the PCs to free himself from the blackmail *and* get a good story out of it!

5. Chu's Taxis

Im◀0025◀04▶NL●Uti1◀1224◀32▶

Description

A fast, efficient, cheap and convenient taxi service running throughout the city and to the starport. "On call all the time. Choose Chu's!"

GM's Notes

Chu Adnan's fleet stands at five enclosed air/rafts and three grav sedans. He has kept his operation going in the face of strong competition from bigger firms through sheer determination and hard work, putting in long hours for little personal gain. This has now paid off, and he has a good reputation locally with many loyal customers. He has a core "family" of four drivers and a receptionist; these people have been with him for years, other staff come and go.

Plots

1: The PCs are travelling to the starport by taxi. It seems to be taking a very long time, and the driver finally admits that he has lost his way. He pleads with the characters not to tell his boss (Chu) as he is new and might lose his job. If they help him and do not reveal his incompetence, he will be a useful ally later, giving them free rides, street gossip and similar services.

2: As 1, but the driver is actually taking the PCs to a quiet back street where a gang will rob and perhaps even kill them.

6. Integrated Transit Authority

Im◀424N◀73▶St0●Uti17-Pub3◀3337●52▶

Description

The ITA directly or indirectly controls all public transportation in the star system, managing everything to ensure *all* transport runs on time.

GM's Notes

The people of this world place great value by efficient public transport and willingly make sufficient public subsidies available for this to be possible. The ITA is charged with overseeing all public transportation and, unlike similar bodies elsewhere, it has the power to enforce its policies.

Key features of their strategy include banning all powered transport from cities (except for ITA carriers, emergency services and a limited number of licensed commercial vehicles); all ground, water and atmospheric vehicles are fitted with a transponder so ITA computers can monitor traffic flows and send routing advice (or in some cases, orders); traffic offences are seen as major infractions and punished with heavy fines and community service sentences. The public transport system is as good as the ITA can make it, with regular, reliable gravcar services in cities and gravrail cross-country; feedback mechanisms for complaints and praise are also well-integrated.

The ITA is not responsible for in-system traffic and there are occasional disputes over the point at which control should be transferred. The ITA also has bases on the moons of outer system gas giants. Its authority here is only nominal but the small populations this far out are relatively compliant, so the ITA effectively controls all non-space traffic throughout the system. Some decry the lack of freedom the regulations entail but most citizens are happy with the way the system works, particularly those whose lives have been saved by the extremely rapid response of the emergency services made possible by ITA management.

Plots

1: The PCs need to get to a specific place within the controlled traffic zone of the capital city. Every time they try to get there using the public transport system they are thwarted – the trains don't stop, the buses get rerouted – and if they try to walk they find the footbridge closed for repairs. Does the ITA want to stop them getting to their destination? In reality they're not being paranoid – a terrorist is claiming they've planted a bioweapon in the area; to avoid panic, the public have not been informed, but all ITA traffic is being directed away from the area.

7. Marliiner Enterprises, LIC

Rhylanor/2716 Spinward

Im◀1415●15▶PubS●Uti17-Ret2-Svc1
◀0266●13▶

Description

Marliiner Enterprises is a small interstellar transport operation moving people, freight, and mail between Rhylanor and Porozlo in the Spinward Marches. Currently the company runs three liners, employing almost 100 people.

GM's Notes

Nathler R'Elvarte is the original owner and largest shareholder of Marliiner Enterprises. He is something of a local hero to the Free Trader crowd, having worked his way up from just an old tramp trader. His crew hit the jackpot when they discovered a small cache of Ancient artefacts. Nathler used this to secure the niche trade route that has made him a wealthy individual. He resides on Rhylanor, where he involves himself in local subsector business politics.

What his admirers don't know is that some of the artefacts were used to bribe SPA contacts on several worlds to allow R'Elvarte's liners a piece of the hotly competitive and highly lucrative Rhylanor-Porozlo trade route. However, his original Far Trader (the *Marliiner*), refurbished by his own tiny shipyard, contains one of the remaining treasures – an antimatter battery, with sufficient output to power the ship for about 100 years. His ship therefore has extra space that no customs inspector would imagine could exist.

ME owns stock in a few fledgling trade lines and sometimes collaborates in mutually beneficial trans-shipping agreements. ME has also done business with MarchLines and Oberlindes.

Ownership: The R'Elvarte family 65%. Heroni MinCorp 10%. Baroness Kira von Huytera 10%. Harris Engineering LIC 10%. Other 5%.

Plots

1: Baron du Nobe of Lunion offers the PCs a nice reward for stealing Nathler's refurbished Far Trader. Little do they know that the Baron has been paid to sabotage all Nathler's liners; he plans to blow the whistle on the group, using their infiltration as a diversion to get a crack team of saboteurs past security and into the shipyards.

2: A noble on Rhylanor hires the PCs to find out whether it is true that Nathler once sent a Far Trader from Rhylanor to a college on Regina. If the players do some digging, they will find the ship was piloted by Nathler himself and that he spoke with a few noted archaeological professors

there, exchanging some unmarked packages with them before returning to Rhylanor. The noble asks them to find out, by whatever means necessary, what was in those packages (he is trying to determine what artefacts Nathler owns).

3: The PCs find an abandoned Free Trader between Rhylanor and Tremous Dex. Inside is a hidden packet marked "Marliiner" containing coded Imperial military data about Arden's forces. Nathler is trying to broker a deal between Tremous Dex and Denotam to set up a feeder line to transport food into the Imperium. He suspects Arden of planning to conquer the world and is worried about losing his trade opportunity; Arden is actually seeking closer trade ties.

If the PCs try to deliver the package to Tremous Dex, they find an Arden team already there; if they try to sell the information on the open market they will be labelled as smugglers or anti-Imperial agents; if they return the information to Nathler they will be rewarded.

8. Southern Standard Power

Im◀13152●52▶PubW●Uti1◀4443●32▶

Description

SSP generates and distributes more than 40% of the world's electricity, making it by far the largest supplier. They guarantee to match any competitor's price and have an enviable record of avoiding power cuts.

GM's Notes

SSP has been growing steadily for decades, often acquiring smaller suppliers, such that now it dominates the energy generation industry. Because of the world's anti-monopoly laws it is now in a quandary: investors demand further growth but if it takes a larger slice of the market it may be forcibly broken up. The directors have taken a three-pronged approach: promoting high-energy projects and greater consumer energy use to increase demand; encouraging the use of cleaner electricity for which they can charge more; and vigorously cutting costs. This has kept the company growing in the short term but they need to come up with longer-term solutions soon.

The most advanced power generation technology the world can produce is fission; SSP has been importing fusion generators, but there are still a lot of older power plants online. In the past SSP has been careful about safety and waste disposal but with the new cost-cutting measures this is no longer the case. They are also having problems introducing so-called "green" alternatives – attempts to set up solar,

wind or wave farms and dams for hydroelectric plants all suffer "not in my backyard" protests from locals. SSP stock is almost entirely owned by on-world concerns.

Plots

1: A group approaches the PCs, claiming to be environmental activists who believe that safety is being compromised in an old fission plant operated by SSP. They want the PCs to help get them into the plant to acquire video evidence. Unfortunately the group are actually terrorists on a suicide mission who intend to blow up the plant.

2: A cargo of food the PCs are due to ship offworld is found to be radioactive. Has SSP been dumping waste near where it was grown? The PCs will get no compensation unless they can prove who is responsible for the contamination.

9. Sweet-Carroll Lines

Saurus/1320 Spinward

Im◀1314●15▶PubL●Uti17-Who13
◀0224●34▶

Description

S-CL carries freight, speculative cargo and passengers. They operate primarily on the Saurus-Vilis run; many of their clients are tourists wishing to hunt the megasaurs native to Saurus' swamp regions. S-CL is also a specialist in providing charter flights; all ships carry fuel refining plants to enable 'wilderness' expeditions.

A much-advertised selling point for S-CL passenger traffic is that every ship has enough emergency low berth space for all passengers and crew – a useful safety feature.

GM's Notes

A former merchant with Oberlindes Lines, Kyle Sweet approached the Saurian Farmers' Co-operative (p.15) with a business proposal in 1089: if the SFC would help bankroll him, he would set up a shipping line to provide cheaper transport of SFC-controlled goods to the industrial world of Vilis. The SFC Board of Governors wanted another merchant to participate in capitalising and operating the new shipping line and Sweet enrolled the captain of the last Oberlindes ship on which he had served, Andrei Carroll, who contributed his 80% ownership of his ship. Following his marriage in 1103, Carroll sold his share of S-CL to his cousin Eneri McCormic and retired to the life of a country squire in the hinterlands of Saurus.

Current S-CL assets include four refurbished 200-ton Far Traders, with emergency low berths

replacing the standard low berths. Fuel refining plants were originally installed to reduce operating expenses but have proven a boon when hiring out ships for private expeditions.

By holding a significant percentage of stock in S-CL, the SFC recoups a portion of their shipping costs. This subsidisation justifies a regular service outside normal shipping lanes. The Saurus-Vilis run is a marginal route and the main competition comes from free traders rather than larger companies; the latter would prefer to move in by taking over an existing concern. S-CL has recently been the target of three take-over bids but all of them have been firmly rejected.

Ownership: Kyle Sweet 32%, Eneri McCormick 30%, Saurian Farmers' Co-operative 25%, Hortalez et Cie 8%, Imperial Family 5%.

Plots

1: The PCs are hired to take a hunting party to Saurus. Unfortunately, the patrons do not tell them of S-CL's exclusive rights to use of the three spaceports (Class E, *GT: Type I*) within the megasaur hunting preserves. By avoiding co-ordinating the hunt through the SFC and S-CL, the hunters are saving a lot of money but also laying themselves open to charges of trespass and poaching. There are also the inherent hazards of hunting the megasaurs with hand-held weapons (using energy weapons violates both the sporting spirit and Saurian law).

2: As 1, plus the group encounters native Saurians who, lacking any warning of the hunters' presence by the local SFC liaison, are somewhat hostile – the hunters may become the hunted...

3: As 1 or 2, plus escaping Saurus is hampered by an attempted interception by an heavily armed S-CL ship.

10. X-Link

Im◄2347●42►PubW●Util◄0433●33►

Description

Mail travels fast by x-boat, but there are many worlds which are not directly on the main x-boat route. For these people X-Link provides a regular, reliable mail service, "taking up the torch of fast communication where the Scout Service stops."

GM's Notes

Many entrepreneurs have attempted to make money filling in the gaps left by the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service's express boat network but most worlds do not generate enough mail to support the required number of long-legged ships, leaving data instead to be carried by merchants

who happen to be going in the right direction. X-Link's territory includes several profitable high population worlds and the company uses the income to subsidise the loss-making routes. It also receives government subsidies from those worlds that value the service highly.

X-Link attempts to balance two main factors when preparing schedules – the cost, and the public perception of the service as fast and reliable. However, some bad decisions over the last decade have seriously damaged the company's reputation: insufficient investment and the cancellation of some loss-making runs led to reduced income, making it still harder to keep the smaller routes open. The new CEO, Alvin das Gupta, has adopted an aggressive strategy to reverse the company's fortunes. A key focus is to counter the perception of X-Link as unreliable. Although this has resulted in larger losses in the short term, analysts are optimistic about the company's future.

X-Link crews are encouraged to carry some freight to help offset costs (although for security reasons passengers are forbidden). This practice has become even more important recently because of the financial squeeze, making the ships more like subsidised merchants. Only a small amount of cargo can be carried, but it can be priced as low as necessary to ensure the space is filled – any money is good money!

An argument is currently raging between some board members over whether the company should replace its fleet with larger subsidised merchants; das Gupta strongly opposes this.

Plots

1: Due to an unexpected safety problem with two X-Link ships simultaneously, the mail service is threatened. This could be disastrous for the gradually-recovering public confidence. X-Link will recruit the PCs' ship to fill the gap, paying over the odds to keep the service running.

2: As 1, but one of the messages in the databank carried by the PCs is a virus, which will spread throughout the databank, attempt to infect the PCs' ship and the communications systems on the destination world (unless the PCs realise the danger and disable the databank transmitter).

3: The PCs need to send a vital message in a hurry; X-Link seems to be the only secure option. Locals see the service as a bad joke, commenting that they'll be lucky if the mail is delivered at all, let alone quickly; the company representative disputes this. The PCs must choose whether to make a costly detour to deliver the message themselves or entrust it to X-Link.

Corporate Scheming

Generic plots for corporations

Corporate-related plots can be divided into three general categories: PCs owning and running a business, PCs working for someone else, and PCs as consumers. In addition to the plot hooks given for individual corporation entries, some adventure ideas are generic to any business. This section describes various schemes from subplots and 'red herrings' to major turning-points.

PC Venturers

The classic example of PCs running their own business is the "merchant" campaign – one or more of the characters own a ship (or a share in one), which they use to generate income through trade. Corsairs are similar, though their source of income has rather different risk factors! Fixed-location businesses (shops, farms, etc.) are rare as adventurers rarely settle in one place for long.

Finance

Capital is the first key factor in setting up and running a business. The bottom line is that money is needed to keep things running, and profit is the desired outcome. Few entrepreneurs can afford the initial capital investment required to start a business on their own, and obtaining funding is not always easy. This is especially true of venture capital for a trading vessel, which is regarded as a high-risk investment. Cash flow can also be a problem once the venture is up and running, even if the business is making a profit.

Plots

1: Nobody will finance the PCs' planned venture, except at extortionate interest rates. An agent offers the funding, but only if her unnamed employer can join the scheme as part-owner.

2: The PCs find themselves unexpectedly in the red, but their creditors won't wait for things to improve and seem intent on bankrupting the characters. Possible causes for the crisis include:

- Debtors defaulting on their debts;
- Increased corporate taxes;
- Increased import and/or export duties;
- Unfavourable interest rates;
- The secondary effects of almost any of the situations below.

3: The government offers strong financial incentives to entrepreneurs to set up shop in an economically-depressed part of the world. Only when they have accepted do the PCs find out how bad the conditions are – the local workforce is demoralised and the infrastructure is very poor.

Employees

Labour is the second key asset in almost any business. Finding and retaining the right people for the right job isn't easy, especially for high-profile jobs such as starship pilots, executives and scientists, but sometimes also for the factory floor.

Plots

1: The PCs are short-staffed at a vital time:

- A vital employee is "headhunted" by another firm;
- An infectious disease strikes down many employees, leaving them unfit for work;
- A traffic accident injures or kills key staff;
- It is a religious or political holiday; people are not prepared to work, even for extra pay;
- Some of the workforce are on strike, either because of the PCs' practices or in sympathy for workers elsewhere.

2: A downturn in profits means the PCs can no longer keep their entire workforce. Who will stay and who will go?

Resources

Resources and assets (including land) are the third key factor of a business. These are most important in primary industries such as agriculture and mining, but almost all businesses are dependent on having a trading location and their outputs depend on some form of input material.

Plots

1: A natural disaster disrupts the PCs' supply lines, their distribution network or a company site.

2: The rent on the PCs' site doubles. They must persuade the landlord the rise is unjust, come up with the money, or move elsewhere.

3: As a result of a new government transport strategy, the PCs are presented with a compulsory purchase order for their land.

Rivals

Competition usually benefits consumers with lower prices, but to most entrepreneurs competition is an unwelcome obstacle.

Plots

1: A rival seems to be anticipating the PCs' every move. Is it luck, skill, or an inside source?

2: A bomb destroys key company property. Did a rival plant it, or has the company offended an environmental or religious action group?

3: A bold rival tries to take over the PC's business. If the PCs resist the buyout, will the rival up the offer or employ bribery, threats, etc.?

Regulation

In theory, the Imperium guarantees free trade between the stars, but this sometimes conflicts with its policy of non-interference in the affairs of member worlds, creating a regulatory 'interface' – usually at the edge of the starport or startown. Even trade taking place on a single world or within a system can be subject to variations in local law, reflecting local customs, safety issues, etc.

Plots

1: The PCs arrive with a potentially highly profitable cargo, only to find that their goods need costly additional licensing before they can be sold.

2: As 1, but the goods are now prohibited and thus worthless... unless there's a black market.

3: The government bans a resource that the characters' business needs in order to operate.

4: New environmental, religious or political policies require the PCs to change the way they conduct business. The new way is, of course, more expensive.

5: The government decides to nationalise an industry, including the characters' company, but is offering compensation far below its worth.

Working for Others

Many PCs find themselves in casual employment from time to time; mercenaries work for their unit, and merchant starship crew without shares in the vessel are generally full-time employees. Some of the following plot ideas can also be applied to government workers such as active military, scouts and diplomats.

Unemployment

In the short term, unemployment (or the fear of unemployment) can help employers by keeping wages down; in the long term it benefits no-one. It is never a good thing for the unemployed...

Plots

1: A character is sacked. The dismissal is fair but comes at a bad time, for instance when debts are pressing and a loan shark wants to collect.

2: The PCs are dismissed unfairly due to discrimination against offworlders. Can they prove their case when the system is stacked against them and every hour in court is very costly?

3: The PCs cannot find a job without a union card, and cannot get a card without a job...

4: The firm goes bust, and the PCs (along with all the other workers) are let go.

Casual Work

Much work is done without a formal contract: the employee agrees to perform some task and receives a pre-agreed payment at the end of the work. This is common for manual labour; payment is often on a daily (or at most weekly) basis.

Plots

1: At the end of the work period the company refuses to pay the agreed amount (or anything at all). Without a contract what can the PCs do?

2: The characters find the health and safety conditions are appalling for cheap casual work.

3: The characters are constantly intimidated by regular workers, e.g. because they fear their own jobs are at risk from cheaper casual labour.

Fixed-term Contracts

A more formal arrangement involves a contract between the employer and the employee, usually for a fixed time or until a specific job is completed.

Plots

1: The characters suddenly find they need to move on, but their contract has a month before it expires and the penalty clauses are severe.

2: Halfway through the contract the PCs find that they cannot possibly fulfil the conditions.

3: After signing up for a term of work on a world with a hostile environment, the PCs find they have to buy all their equipment, food and protective gear at extortionate prices from the company store; they cannot avoid being in heavy debt to the company when their contract is over. Worse, the company will not provide transport off the world unless the PCs can pay for it...

Open-ended Contracts

This is the most secure form of employment. The contract states the terms and conditions under which the employee can quit or be fired, but specifies no fixed duration.

Plots

1: The company merges or is taken over, and announces all contracts will be renegotiated, or that the PCs' jobs are no longer required.

2: While performing their job, or when moving on, the PCs find that one world doesn't recognise the legality of another's contracts.

3: The characters fail to read the small print when they sign up, e.g. the basic contract doesn't include a pension, clothing, accident insurance...

Consumers

PCs may encounter awkward customers, but their biggest problems usually occur when buying goods or services from other corporations.

Plots

1: The PCs start receiving demands for payment from a company they have never heard of. Is there some mistake on the company's part, or has someone been misusing their identities?

2: The PCs buy something expensive that turns out to be useless because of shoddy workmanship. The local laws offer no protection to consumers; how can they get their money back?

3: The PCs buy something only to find at a later date that far too large an amount has been debited from their account, and the vendors have mysteriously disappeared...

Glossary

Asset: Anything of value owned by an individual or business.

Business: Another name for a firm.

Capital: Physical items (such as factories or tools) and staff development (training) required by a business; one of the main factors of production.

Capitalism: An economic scheme in which firms and individuals hold the means of production; a free-market or private-enterprise economy. Except for interstellar government and the military, the Imperium as a whole is capitalist (although many individual worlds are not).

Collectivism: An economic scheme in which the state holds the means of production; a centrally-planned economy. Imperial law on free trade makes it difficult for pure collectivist societies to exist within its borders.

Company: Another name for a firm.

Consumer: A buyer of goods or services from a business.

Corporation: A state-owned company, or one funded by shareholders. Less formally, another name for a firm.

Creditor: A firm or individual owed money by a business for goods or services provided.

Debtor: A firm or individual owing money to the company for goods or services received.

Entrepreneur: An individual organising a business in an attempt to generate a profit.

Firm: A producer of goods and services.

Friendly Society: An organisation into which members can deposit funds and from which they can draw money in times of need.

Goods: Tangibles such as steel, soap or air/rafts produced by a firm for sale (or, more formally, contributing to the fulfilment of intelligent creatures' wants).

Labour: The sophont effort required by a business; one of the main factors of production.

Limited Liability Company: A firm whose shareholders are protected from loss greater than the amount originally invested.

Megacorporation: A company with significant presence in every sector of a large interstellar empire (such as the Imperium, Zhodani Consulate or Hive Federation). There are 13 Imperial megacorporations, all large and diverse enough to wield significant political power.

Mixed Economy: A scheme in which the state holds the means of production for some goods or services but firms and individuals provide the rest. Many Imperial worlds have mixed economies.

Mutual Society: An organisation which distributes all profits to its members, who are regarded as creditors rather than shareholders.

Natural Resources: The raw materials and land required by a business; one of the main factors of production.

Publicly Listed Company: A firm financed by the sale of shares which can be bought or sold on a stock market.

Return On Investment (ROI): The profit margin (revenue minus costs) divided by the amount of money invested in the business. A measure of the money-generating efficiency of the company.

Revenue: Money coming into a company, either from the sale of goods and services or from grants.

Services: Intangibles such as hairdressing or banking offered by a firm for sale (or, more formally, contributing to the fulfilment of sophonts' wants).

Subsidiary: A firm owned (and often controlled) by another firm.

Trust: Assets managed for the benefit of some group by appointed trustees.

Venture: A high-risk project.

ADMINISTRATION

1. Citywide Fire Services
Im ◀ 101N ● 02 ▶ StSp ● Pub ◀ 0226 ● 21 ▶
2. (The) Company
Im ◀ 6280 ● 74 ▶ Gov ● Pub ◀ 4435 ● 56 ▶
3. Environmental Regulatory Commission
Im ◀ 3233 ● 33 ▶ StO ● Pub ◀ 4422 ● 43 ▶
4. Global Beanstalk Consortium
Im ◀ 1136 ● 31 ▶ PubW ● Util4-Fin1-Pub5 ◀ 0444 ● 42 ▶
5. Happy Enli's Redistributions
Im ◀ 3142 ● 50 ▶ StSp ● Pub ◀ 0465 ● 64 ▶
6. Imperial Securities Department (*Capital/2118 Core*)
Im ◀ 462N ● 65 ▶ StO ● Pub ◀ 1456 ● 54 ▶
7. Intelligence Management Services
Im ◀ 3434 ● 40 ▶ StO ● Pub ◀ 6663 ● 63 ▶
8. Madkashgerg & Chin
Im ◀ 1122 ● 35 ▶ Part ● Svc3-Pub7 ◀ 4356 ● 66 ▶
9. Rahman Economic Institute
Im ◀ 2433 ● 45 ▶ LL ● Svc3-Pub7 ◀ 6544 ● 35 ▶
10. Third Set Incarcerations
Im ◀ 3426 ● 32 ▶ WOS ● Pub ◀ 0552 ● 71 ▶

AGRICULTURE

1. Al-G
Im ◀ 4443 ● 26 ▶ PubW ● Ag8-Whol2 ◀ 0334 ● 22 ▶
2. Far Horizons Landscapers
Im ◀ 1322 ● 25 ▶ LL ● Ag ◀ 5525 ● 44 ▶
3. Golden Harvest Labour Associates
Im ◀ 1034 ● 35 ▶ Part ● Ag ◀ 0423 ● 35 ▶
4. Hypagene
Im ◀ 5552 ● 57 ▶ PubW ● Ag7-Manu2-Non1 ◀ 7444 ● 63 ▶
5. Kawa-paber-a-aba Fur and Hide Supplies
Im ◀ 3143 ● 20 ▶ LL ● Ag8-Manu1-Ret1 ◀ 0553 ● 42 ▶
6. Ocean People
Im ◀ 204N ● 25 ▶ Gov ● Ag7-Svc3 ◀ 2644 ● 05 ▶
7. Saurian Farmers' Co-operative (*Saurus/1320 Spinward*)
Im ◀ 1324 ● 15 ▶ Mut ● Ag8-Whol1-Svc1 ◀ 1223 ● 22 ▶
8. Stylrillyhya'a Veterinary Services
As ◀ 1422 ● 14 ▶ Part ● Ag ◀ 4634 ● 54 ▶
9. Sunarimi Bay Collective
Im ◀ 2035 ● 24 ▶ Mut ● Ag7-Manu1-Ret1-Svc1 ◀ 2101 ● 04 ▶
10. Ultimate Kian Stables
Im ◀ 2424 ● 16 ▶ Priv ● Ag ◀ 5214 ● 25 ▶
11. Uminarga Lumber
Im ◀ 3333 ● 33 ▶ Mut ● Ag6-Manu4 ◀ 1424 ● 23 ▶
12. Xenobotanicals of Pequan (*Pequan/1210 Spinward*)
Na ◀ 2033 ● 34 ▶ Emp ● Ag6-Whol3-Ret1 ◀ 3353 ● 44 ▶

CONSTRUCTION

1. The Demolishers
Im ◀ 1315 ● 24 ▶ LL ● Con ◀ 1344 ● 23 ▶
2. Diviners Well-Drilling
Im ◀ 2424 ● 03 ▶ Part ● Mine3-Cons5-Svc2 ◀ 5364 ● 42 ▶
3. Gambini Brothers
Im ◀ 1214 ● 06 ▶ Fam ● Cons ◀ 1111 ● 04 ▶

4. Habitats 4 All
Im ◀ 324N ● 44 ▶ StSp ● Cons ◀ 4346 ● 43 ▶
5. Infrastructure, LIC
Im ◀ 5452 ● 34 ▶ PubL ● Cons8-Util2 ◀ 2454 ● 33 ▶
6. McKendrie Orbital
Im ◀ 5532 ● 25 ▶ PubW ● Cons ◀ 3544 ● 43 ▶
7. SubAqua Plumbers
Im ◀ 3435 ● 24 ▶ LL ● Cons5-Util4-Svc1 ◀ 4234 ● 23 ▶

FINANCE, INSURANCE & REAL ESTATE

1. First Bank of Rhylanor (*Rhylanor/2716 Spinward*)
Im ◀ 3353 ● 54 ▶ PubW ● Fin ◀ 1765 ● 65 ▶
2. (The) Grey Guild
Im ◀ 2156 ● 52 ▶ Mut ● Fin3-Svc3-Non4 ◀ 1662 ● 74 ▶
3. Hanuman & Sagaruu, Brokers
Im ◀ 0225 ● 23 ▶ Part ● Fin ◀ 5355 ● 23 ▶
4. NITS New Islands Traveller Support (*Tobia/3215 Deneb*)
Im ◀ 152N ● 14 ▶ Priv ● Fin ◀ 3222 ● 12 ▶
5. Outsysteam Estate
Im ◀ 1234 ● 22 ▶ LL ● Fin ◀ 4334 ● 32 ▶
6. Shaim Intellectual Property Lessors, LIC
Im ◀ 3251 ● 61 ▶ PubW ● Fin ◀ 5655 ● 34 ▶
7. Siedler Insurance
Im ◀ 3445 ● 33 ▶ PubW ● Fin ◀ 2542 ● 54 ▶
8. The Tributis Arms Group
Im ◀ 4545 ● 34 ▶ Emp ● Manu4-Fin6 ◀ 0235 ● 37 ▶
9. X-Bank
Im ◀ 5544 ● 54 ▶ PubW ● Fin ◀ 1543 ● 64 ▶

MANUFACTURING

1. Amalgamated Air
Im ◀ 3434 ● 35 ▶ PubS ● Manu7-Svc3 ◀ 3554 ● 33 ▶
2. Antioch Arms (*HRD/1623 Deneb*)
Im ◀ 6532 ● 34 ▶ WOS ● Manu8-Ret2 ◀ 2544 ● 64 ▶
3. AuricTech Shipyards, LIC (*Triv/3235 Spinward*)
Im ◀ 5443 ● 27 ▶ PubW ● Manu7-Svc3 ◀ 3345 ● 44 ▶
4. Baron von Kringle Toys (*HRD/1623 Deneb*)
Im ◀ 5533 ● 36 ▶ WOS ● Manu7-Ret3 ◀ 3555 ● 21 ▶
5. Centrax Metrics & Hiver Motion Systems
Hv ◀ 5532 ● 56 ▶ StO ● Manu ◀ 5203 ● 04 ▶
◀ 2513 ● 12 ▶ WOS ● Manu ◀ 4212 ● 24 ▶
6. Famille Spofulam
?? ◀ ??? ● ?? ▶ Fam ● Manu?-Non? ◀ ??? ● ?? ▶
7. Far Past Enterprises
Im ◀ 0215 ● 25 ▶ Sole ● Manu6-Svc3 ◀ 5677 ● 23 ▶
8. Gilgameshu Yards (*Arden/1011 Spinward*)
Fa ◀ 4431 ● 15 ▶ SS ● Mine2-Cons1-Manu7 ◀ 4545 ● 53 ▶
9. Gravametrix (*HRD/1623 Deneb*)
Im ◀ 6533 ● 35 ▶ WOS ● Manu8-Ret2 ◀ 4534 ● 54 ▶
10. Gridlore Technologies, LIC (*Lunior/2134 Spinward*)
Im ◀ 5444 ● 24 ▶ Fam ● Cons1-Manu5-Whol3-Ret1 ◀ 6342 ● 33 ▶
11. Huai Ornaments, LIC
Im ◀ 2344 ● 25 ▶ LL ● Manu ◀ 4224 ● 22 ▶

12. Knappers

Im ◀ 2043 ● 46 ▶ Mut ● Manu ◀ 2116 ● 13 ▶

13. Maximus Interstellar Defence Industries (*Terra/1827 Solomani Rim*)

Im ◀ 8553 ● 57 ▶ PubW ● Manu6-Util2-Svc2 ◀ 4433 ● 54 ▶

14. Planet X Recordings (*HRD/1623 Deneb*)

Im ◀ 6534 ● 34 ▶ WOS ● Manu7-Ret3 ◀ 0432 ● 44 ▶

15. Spy-TEK (*HRD/1623 Deneb*)

Im ◀ 6533 ● 34 ▶ WOS ● Manu7-Ret3 ◀ 1543 ● 53 ▶

16. Sylk

Im ◀ 3442 ● 33 ▶ PubW ● Manu ◀ 4434 ● 32 ▶

17. Weller Associates

Im ◀ 3544 ● 44 ▶ Publ ● Manu6-Whol2-Svc2 ◀ 4444 ● 53 ▶

18. X-TEK of Deneb, LIC (*HRD/1623 Deneb*)

Im ◀ 9562 ● 54 ▶ PubW ● Cons2-Manu6-Ret2 ◀ 3532 ● 64 ▶

MINING

1. Best Quarries, LIC

Im ◀ 2333 ● 24 ▶ LL ● Mine ◀ 3433 ● 34 ▶

2. Coal Survivor

Im ◀ 2036 ● 47 ▶ Mut ● Mine ◀ 4316 ● 32 ▶

3. Imperial Sandcaster Supplies

Im ◀ 4543 ● 42 ▶ Publ ● Mine ◀ 1445 ● 63 ▶

4. Michaels & Michaels, Skimmers

Im ◀ 0206 ● 05 ▶ Fam ● Mine ◀ 2234 ● 32 ▶

5. Ocean Extractions, Inc

Im ◀ 2043 ● 53 ▶ PubS ● Mine ◀ 5444 ● 42 ▶

6. Prospector's Gold

Im ◀ 3525 ● 26 ▶ Emp ● Mine7-Fin2-Svc1 ◀ 0322 ● 54 ▶

7. Universal Belt Mines, LIC

Im ◀ 5542 ● 52 ▶ PubW ● Mine ◀ 6653 ● 54 ▶

SERVICE

1. Bank Janus

Im ◀ 5542 ● 24 ▶ Emp ● Svc ◀ 7233 ● 66 ▶

2. Culinary Temple on Vland (*Vland/1717 Vland*)

Im ◀ 4511 ● 32 ▶ StSp ● Svc ◀ 0767 ● 73 ▶

3. EntreSys Casinos

Im ◀ 3423 ● 25 ▶ Fam ● Svc ◀ 0464 ● 45 ▶

4. Founder ShipWorks (*Knabbib/2115 Core*)

Im ◀ 5514 ● 15 ▶ Publ ● Man2-Whol2-Ret2-Svc4 ◀ 5342 ● 33 ▶

5. House Justin

Na ◀ 255N ● 46 ▶ Fam ● Svc8-Non2 ◀ 0217 ● 07 ▶

6. Imperial Ship Builders Association (*Capital/2118 Core*)

Im ◀ 250N ● 35 ▶ Priv ● Svc ◀ 2420 ● 33 ▶

7. LifeTimers

Im ◀ 0024 ● 25 ▶ Priv ● Svc ◀ 0434 ● 45 ▶

8. Lindarport Security

Im ◀ 3433 ● 25 ▶ LL ● Svc ◀ 0463 ● 54 ▶

9. Local Eyes

Im ◀ 2434 ● 24 ▶ LL ● Ret1-Svc9 ◀ 5535 ● 24 ▶

10. Loxibac

Im ◀ 2433 ● 34 ▶ Publ ● Manu2-Svc8 ◀ 7121 ● 56 ▶

11. Porter & Streetman Associates

Im ◀ 1422 ● 55 ▶ LL ● Util1-Svc9 ◀ 0444 ● 33 ▶

12. Rapid Employ

Im ◀ 3334 ● 45 ▶ PubS ● Svc ◀ 1545 ● 23 ▶

13. Revenge! Unlimited

Im ◀ 1324 ● 03 ▶ Part ● Svc9-Non1 ◀ 2651 ● 72 ▶

14. Rodhogh's

Im ◀ 4504 ● 25 ▶ LL ● Svc ◀ 5112 ● 33 ▶

15. Shivshush House of Health

Im ◀ 1034 ● 27 ▶ Fam ● Svc ◀ 4306 ● 24 ▶

16. Six Suns Productions

Im ◀ 0405 ● 05 ▶ Part ● Svc ◀ 3065 ● 22 ▶

17. Stellar Education Co-operative

Im ◀ 4412 ● 33 ▶ Mut ● Svc7-Pub3 ◀ 6217 ● 54 ▶

18. Tributis Rapid Strike Force

Im ◀ 2525 ● 13 ▶ WOS ● Svc ◀ 0524 ● 55 ▶

19. Yoyodyne Propulsion Systems (*Terra/1827 Solomani Rim*)

Im ◀ 2335 ● 24 ▶ Sub ● Svc ◀ 6263 ● 66 ▶

TRADE

1. Donald's Used Air/Raft Emporium

Im ◀ 0026 ● 15 ▶ Sole ● Ret ◀ 0664 ● 71 ▶

2. Enli & Elsa, General Store

Im ◀ 0034 ● 57 ▶ Fam ● Ret ◀ 1167 ● 03 ▶

3. Ivan Evans, Electrical Wholesaler

Im ◀ 1053 ● 24 ▶ Sole ● Whol ◀ 0363 ● 72 ▶

4. Kankir Shipping

Im ◀ 3435 ● 15 ▶ Mut ● Util4-Whol6 ◀ 1103 ● 13 ▶

5. Ma Barker's

Im ◀ 3443 ● 24 ▶ PubS ● Ret ◀ 0526 ● 51 ▶

6. Noble Image (*HRD/1623 Deneb*)

Im ◀ 6534 ● 35 ▶ WOS ● Manu4-Ret6 ◀ 3434 ● 34 ▶

7. O'Shugilii's (*HRD/1623 Deneb*)

Im ◀ 6533 ● 35 ▶ WOS ● Ret ◀ 0422 ● 33 ▶

8. Vilani Man/Vilani Woman

Im ◀ 5552 ● 34 ▶ PubW ● Ret ◀ 1555 ● 53 ▶

9. Vilani Subject Race

Im ◀ 2316 ● 04 ▶ Sole ● Ret ◀ 2374 ● 02 ▶

TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATIONS & UTILITIES

1. Aaguarkuu Storage

Im ◀ 0023 ● 04 ▶ LL ● Util ◀ 0244 ● 11 ▶

2. Bargain Travel

Im ◀ 0034 ● 13 ▶ LL ● Util ◀ 3333 ● 24 ▶

3. Beni Ma Interplanetary

Im ◀ 2243 ● 44 ▶ Fam ● Util9-Whol1 ◀ 2656 ● 24 ▶

4. Channel 17 Media Group

Im ◀ 3143 ● 33 ▶ PubS ● Util7-Ret2-Svc1 ◀ 3554 ● 33 ▶

5. Chu's Taxis

Im ◀ 0025 ● 04 ▶ NL ● Util ◀ 1224 ● 32 ▶

6. Integrated Transit Authority

Im ◀ 424N ● 73 ▶ StO ● Util7-Pub3 ◀ 3337 ● 52 ▶

7. Marliiner Enterprises, LIC (*Rhylanor/2716 Spinward*)

Im ◀ 1415 ● 15 ▶ PubS ● Util7-Ret2-Svc1 ◀ 0266 ● 13 ▶

8. Southern Standard Power

Im ◀ 3152 ● 52 ▶ PubW ● Util ◀ 4443 ● 32 ▶

9. Sweet-Carroll Lines (*Saurus/1320 Spinward*)

Im ◀ 1314 ● 15 ▶ Publ ● Util7-Whol3 ◀ 0224 ● 34 ▶

10. X-Link

Im ◀ 2347 ● 42 ▶ PubW ● Util ◀ 0433 ● 33 ▶

This supplement is suitable for use with all forms of Traveller - from 'classic' Traveller through Steve Jackson's GURPS Traveller to T5 and beyond.

Money...

...makes the world(s) go round - and the sole purpose of every corporation, Imperial or otherwise, is to get their hands on as much money as possible.

Your money...

...is what they want. Whether you're interested in buying a Megaboing™ Grav Pogo Stick from FAMILLE SPOFULAM or a geneered 'dragon' from HYPAGENE, their only purpose is to separate you from your hard-earned cash. Sometimes, they don't care what they have to do to get it...

This supplement...

...is packed with descriptions of 101 corporate bodies, their backgrounds, motivations and key characters, each with one or more adventure seeds to engage your Traveller players - from simple money-making schemes to corporate corruption and boardroom back-stabbing.

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