

Megacorporations

A multiplayer Netrunner Variant by Toco

based on "The Big Sell-Out" by Damian O'Dea

About

Megacorporations is a Netrunner multi-player game requiring an even number of players. Special thanks to Damian O'Dea who compiled various ideas from the Net into a solid multiplayer concept. Consider Megacorporations as a service pack upgrade to "The Big Sell-Out". This ruleset extends the original with minor aids and tweaks.

Deckbuilding

Decks are built as per the normal rules for Netrunner. It is recommended that for longer games with more players that both the Runner and Corp decks be larger than the minimum, to prevent the somewhat unsatisfying problem of the Corp losing through running out of cards or the Runner playing with no new cards.

Teams & Seating

Players pair up into teams called Megacorporations. Each Megacorporation has one Corp player (the Sponsor) and one Runner (the Agent). Seating is in team order: Sponsor 1, Agent 1, Sponsor 2, Agent 2, Sponsor 3, Agent 3, etc...

Agent Dataforts

Each Sponsor's Agent resides in a data-fort akin to the Archives, R&D and HQ. The data-fort is called Agent, and is considered basic, not a subsidiary, although there are some differences.

- The Agent data-fort may be protected by ICE like any other. The costs to install Ice are paid by the Sponsor.
- Agenda may not be installed in the Agent fort.
- Nodes may be installed in the Agent fort for the normal costs to the Sponsor (ie. an action). Additionally, however, the Agent data fort must have enough spare MU to support the Node. Nodes in an Agent fort require MU equal to the Rez cost of the card. If the Agent's MU ever drops below the minimum, the first thing to be trashed must be any Nodes in the fort. Ambush nodes are legitimate installations.
- The Agent data fort may be Upgraded for increased security of the Agent player. No "Upgrade-Sysop" card may be played in the Agent fort due to the long-standing antagonism between the two roles of Sysop and Runner; most Runner's would rather flatline than accept help from a Sysop, and few Sysop's would willingly work efficiently with a Runner.

Play Sequence

Play progresses around the table in the following fashion.

- The first turn: Sponsor 1, Sponsor 2, Sponsor 3, etc..., Agent 1, Agent 2, etc...
- Each subsequent turn progresses as normal in a clockwise fashion: Sponsor 1, Agent 1, Sponsor 2, Agent 2, Sponsor 3, etc...

This serves to ensure that no Corp player faces being run without at least the security of a turn's worth of preparation. Additionally, it means that the Sponsor may assist his Agent in preparing for a run, but that no Sponsor player is able to act upon the results of his Agent's turn until after all other players have had a chance to respond.

Trading Bits

The Sponsor may exchange bits with his Agent, and vice versa. However, as Corp and Runner bits are of different values, the trade is not even. Corp bits are values at approximately 500,000 Eurobucks and Runner bits at a mere 200 Eurobucks, but also encompass a range of favors, contacts and resources that are not directly seen in play.

- The Sponsor may give his Agent 2 bits for every 1 bit spent.
- An Agent may cash in 3 bits worth of assets and favors to supply his Sponsor with 1 bit worth of dirty money. (While more might be made of the cleanliness of the funds off the street, we assume that the Corp system is efficient enough to hide this in the books well before the tax man even thinks about looking for it.)

Passing bits to a teammate takes an action to achieve. It may therefore be done only during a player's own turn, not during that of their teammate.

Any number of bits may be passed to the other player on the team in one single exchange.

For example, Sponsor 3 may spend one action in their turn to pay five bits to the bank for an exchange; Agent 3 suddenly discovers that his offshore pirate bank account has an influx of 10 bits. If during his turn Agent 3 realizes that Sponsor 3 has left himself short on bit supply, he may spend an action trading nine bits back to the bank, but Sponsor 3 only gains three bits from this.

Running the Agent Fort

An Agent's data fort may be run as any other fort. The Sponsor of the defending Agent may choose to rez the ICE or not, as normal. If the Sponsor does not rez the ICE, the Agent may (without permission of the Sponsor) attempt to fast-boot the ICE anyway. Until this point, the Sponsor's Agent may not be allowed to look at the ICE protecting him.

Fast-booting ICE

The Agent declares that he is attempting to fast-boot the ICE, and checks the rez cost of the ICE. If he can pay for it, he does so and the ICE is rezzed and encountered by the attacking Runner. For the duration of this encounter the ICE is considered to be at half its normal strength (rounded up), and it derezzes immediately after the encounter is completed. If the Sponsor chooses to rez the ICE on a subsequent run, then it is at full strength as normal.

Note: The immediate derezzing of the ICE happens even if the attacking Runner wishes to use something that would affect the ICE if it were rezzed. Thus, a "Startup Immolator" card would not be able to affect a fast-booted piece of ICE.

Agent Data Fort Access

If the run on an Agent fort is successful, then the contents of the fort may be accessed. The attacking Runner player accesses any Nodes and Upgrades in the fort, and additionally may do ONE of following two things.

- The attacking Runner may choose to tag the Agent inside the fort (accessing personnel files that the Sponsor keeps). Tagging Agents has no cost.
- The attacking Runner may steal a program. Stealing a program requires that the attacking Runner pay the bit cost to install the program (as if it were in his hand). He may choose to overwrite any of his own programs even if the MU of the stolen program does not exceed his limits.

Code Red

Corp data forts are potentially vulnerable to continuous attack by Runners. To try and limit the danger of a Corp being overrun (- pun intended), for each successive Agent that runs on a particular Sponsor's data forts between that Sponsor's turns, all the ICE of that Sponsor gains +1 strength, until the beginning of the Sponsor's next turn. This strength gain is temporary and should not be considered when adjudicating increases in the strength of pieces of Ice. In other words, it is factored in last to any calculation of the strength of an individual piece of ICE. ICE strength gains represent a Corp going to a "red alert" full security stance after discovering that it has been attacked by a Runner.

Dedicated Tags

Tags are dedicated pieces of information that one Megacorporation holds about the Agent of another Megacorporation.

As such, if Sponsor 1 succeeded in tagging Agent 2 (even through the actions of Agent 1), then Sponsor 3 may not use this tag to attack Agent 2. Tags only work for the team that managed to place that tag, unless the information is passed on to other teams.

Handling Dedicated Tags

Dedicated tags may be sold. When an Agent is tagged, the member of the team that made the tag becomes the Owner of the tag. If that Owner decides that someone else might make better use of the tag, then they may sell this information. The minimum cost for selling the tag is two bits. Tags may be sold during any Sponsor's turn. The Owner of the tag may offer to sell it to the Sponsor currently taking the turn. If that Sponsor turns down the offer then other Sponsors (and only Sponsors, not Agents) may bid for the tag in response.

Bidding works as a small, short auction that is held at the end of the current Sponsor's turn. Each Sponsor around the table (clockwise) has a chance to bid on the tag, including the Sponsor that refused the offer to buy it. If a Sponsor bids for the tag, then they must be able to pay that number of bits to the owner of the tag if their bid is successful. If a Sponsor passes on the bidding, then that player may not bid for the tag again unless it is re-auctioned at a later time. Only the successful bid is actually paid. It is acceptable (and even smart) for the Sponsor of the tagged Agent to bid on the tag, and if successful, they may trash the tag at no cost.

Selling tags is not considered an action. When a tag is sold, all the information that comprises the tag is sold, and the team that successfully made the tag (or purchased it last time) loses the tag. Tags may be represented with bit counters, provided that they are unique enough to identify which team Owns that tag marker. Megacorporation counters might be used to mark ownership of a dedicated tag.

Handling Agenda

Liberated Agenda may be dealt with in one of two ways.

- It may be scored by the Agent.
- It may be stolen and given to the Agent's Sponsor.

If the Agent chooses to score the Agenda, then the Megacorporation scores the usual number of points for that card.

If the Agent elects to give the liberated Agenda to his Sponsor, then the Sponsor must immediately install that card in a data fort. If the fort is not empty, then the Sponsor may choose to trash any Node or Agenda currently residing in the fort to make room for the new card.

Should the Sponsor manage to advance this Agenda to completion and score it, they will gain the bonus ability of the card as if it were their own.

In addition to liberating an Agenda, the Agent has a chance to steal any advancement that the card has. This gives his Sponsor the chance to benefit from another Corp's hard work. For each two bits that the Agent spends (in addition to the cost of making the run), the Agent liberates one advancement counter. These are given to his Sponsor along with the liberated Agenda card. Advancement counters on a liberated Agenda may only be placed on that Agenda, not on any other card, unless the Sponsor receiving the Agenda has a matching Agenda already installed. In this case the two Agendas' advancement counters may be combined to advance the already installed card. If this is done the liberated Agenda card should be discarded from play unseen, face down in the scored agenda of the card owner.

Shared Agenda

A Megacorporation pools all Agenda points together. Thus an Agent may spend Agenda that has been scored by his Sponsor, and vice versa. For cards like "Arasaka Portable Prototype", "Databroker" and "I Got a Rock".

Victorious Monopoly

Before the game starts, decide whether you play with the Antitrust rules in effect or not. A Megacorporation wins the game if it manages to score a combined total of 11 Agenda points or if it is the only Megacorporation remaining. A Megacorporation leaves the game if either the Agent is flatlined or the Sponsor runs out of cards.

Antitrust

Optionally, the Sponsor whose Agent flatlines may elect to hire another Runner as his Agent. In this case, he may forgo three actions (in the same manner as removing virus counters) to permit the Runner player to reshuffle and start from scratch. If the Sponsor of an Agent is bankrupted, the team loses with no recourse.