

# Short Guide for Offworld Trading Company

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# 1 Introduction

Offworld trading company is a game of strategy and quick thinking, most multiplayer matches last anywhere between 10 to 35 minutes. Decisions at any point lead companies to victory or defeat. With some information, CEOs aspiring to a thousand victories should be better equipped to make good decisions.

In this guide I hope to lay out mostly the facts about the game which aren't really documented yet. This guide is for the purpose of dispelling ignorance and eliminating decisions based on groping around in the darkness of ignorance.

I will not detail basic facts as new players should (or ought to) have these memorized fairly quickly and easily.

I will also not address the single player experience. This guide may be partially out of date by the time that it is read as the game is at present in Early Access and is likely to change a lot in the coming months. This guide was written based on the game state as of late February 2015, game version 0.0.4853. I've updated this guide for Beta 4 as of July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

When I use words like approx. I think or maybe, I haven't scrutinized what I wrote very closely.

At this point I've played 75 multiplayer games, 36 games won, 39 games lost. These games were mostly 4-8 player games. The win ratio would be about 48% which I hope qualifies me to write a guide, while it's not all that impressive because most players are newbies anyway because the game has only been in early access for a couple weeks. My win ratio plummets against seasoned players.

I upload many of my matches on YouTube, look for Cubit32 if you're on a tablet or try this link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNZ4aZ5t-Hvlt-cLiQkRuA>

I recommend pbhead's twitch recordings and broadcasts: <http://www.twitch.tv/pbhead/profile>.

Special thanks to the devs for the game and all the players who've defeated me and shown me better ways to win.

# 2 Gameplay Facts

First a basic list of facts:

- During the start-of-the-game scanning phase the fog of war will extend by about 1 tile per 2 seconds after the first player deploys their HQ. The amount of fog revealed per scan depends on the size of the map.
- Day time (the time during which solar panels and condensers work) is from 5:00 to 21:00, making for 16 hours of daylight per day. A day lasts for 144 seconds and daytime for 96, daytime is 2/3rds of the day.
- In an 8p game, the first lander always has 120 seconds until the black market becomes available. The 2<sup>nd</sup> lander has 105 from the moment they landed (not from the moment of the first lander) seconds and so on and so on. In 2p games the first and second landers have 120 and 60 seconds

before the black market becomes available respectively. Scavengers do not benefit from their trait until the black market becomes available for the first time.

- The last half of the companies to land receive an extra claim somewhere between hq levels 2 to 4.
- With Reveal Map enabled, players receive extra debt for founding early.
- Wind intensity is entirely based on how many down-facing slopes are directly adjacent to a buildable tile. 1 is required for any substantial wind, 4 to 6 slopes give “very high” wind with no difference between each other. Crater slopes do NOT count.
- The difference between low/veryhigh solar/wind efficiency is in the range of 1.0 to 1.3 for solar and 0.6 to 0.9 for wind.
- Bond ratings are calculated by dividing your debt by your total value (under the mouseover overview of your stock ticker). At a ratio of 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10 and 20% of debt to total value your bond rating will be from anywhere between AAA and D with a daily interest between 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 14, 20 and 30% daily interest. A bond of rating of D disables your ability to use the black market.
- Auctions start at 20:00 every day. Debt incurs interest at noon. This means the debt from auctions is (practically speaking) amplified by 3-10% because interest is levied less than one debt cycle from an auction.
- Mineable resources (water, iron, aluminium, silicon and carbon) are sent in packets of 20, water, food, oxygen, fuel & steel in packets of 40, glass, electronics, and chemicals in packets of 60.
- Transports move about 1 tile a second and take another 2 seconds to take off and land. Tiles connected (via claimed tiles) to an HQ automatically teleport their resources. In practice this means that it costs the number of tiles multiplied by the price of fuel, divided by 200 to transport a mineable resource. A water pump that is for example 18 tiles away from the nearest HQ will cost 0.1 units of fuel per 1.0 units of water to transport.
- Transports, buildings, repair droids and tile claimers move at the same rate. (Rockets start at 0 m/s speed and accelerate up to  $7/10^{\text{th}}$  of Martian escape velocity at an altitude of  $\sim 100\text{km}$ .)
- Fully zoomed out the visible surface is about 28 tiles wide on a 16:9 screen.
- The first purchase of a black market item raises its price by about 15%. Every consecutive purchase increases the price by anywhere between 15% and 25% exponentially.
- Pleasure dome income is in relation to the size of the civilian population (in the city) and the number of players in game. Income is approximately  $5 * (\text{population} + 3 * \text{players})$ . This income is further magnified by 30 to 50% depending on proximity to the colony.
- Civilians consume everything except iron and silicon. Construction materials are used on leveling up. The effect on resource prices is fairly small.
- Pirates will always hijack a certain quantity of goods. If they hover in a place where no transports go, they will linger forever. The amount of goods is 100. This makes remote factories insanely good pirate targets.
- Combined deposits of iron + aluminium as well as carbon + silicon can lead to insane bonuses from adjacency by placing miners in geometric shapes overlapping both resources. A quarry producing silicon next to a quarry producing carbon will receive adjacency bonuses from each other.

- A Robotic/Scientific/Expansive HQ costs 960 Aluminum, 960 Steel to upgrade from lv 1 to 5. Non-robotic companies additionally needs 200 glass.
- Scientific buildings retain their special on-top-of-resource ability even when a scientific player is bought out. Companies can not obtain any other traits from companies they purchase.
- Colony structures use between 0.2 and 0.05/s of a few resources

### 3 Gameplay Implications

- Power is the first resource to start becoming expensive because no company starts with a stockpile of it whereas EVERY structure uses it and the producing structures are all relatively expensive. Geothermal plants are popular structures to construct because of this. Geothermal plants however are expensive to build, take at least 40 seconds to construct and are popular black market targets.
- Adjacency bonuses can increase a buildings production by up to 95%. Starting at 50% at 1 adjacency, 75% at 2, 87.5% at 3 and so on and so on.
- The price for trading a large quantity of goods can be approximated by the following equation:  $a_1 + 0.05 * q^2$  where  $a_1$  is the starting price and  $q$  the quantity.  $q$  is negative when selling. The 0.05 applies to prices below 10\$ in price, it raises little by little. At a base price of 80\$, it is 0.1\$.
- Given that there is a map-wide deficit in the production of a resource, the price will constantly rise. If there is constant surplus production, the price will plummet. This holds particularly true for power, which can't be stockpiled. Even if there is too much production the prizes may still increase if companies are choosing to build stockpiles, instead of depressing resource prices.

### 4 Companies

There are 4 types of companies: Expansive, Robotic, Scavenger and Scientific. Each company has their bonuses. I hope you have familiarized yourself with the bonuses.

Because the bonuses may change I list them here:

**Expansive:** Half the steel cost for all buildings (except the HQ), 1 extra claims per HQ upgrade. The HQ can harvest 7 tiles on being deployed. Units travel 50% faster than the units of other factions.

**Robotic:** The HQ only uses electronics, transportation uses power instead of fuel, double the influx of resources from where the HQ is dropped, HQ upgrades cost no glass and buildings next to structures that supply input resources receive adjacency bonuses from them (particularly useful for electronics, chemicals and glass production). Robotic also produces electronics at twice the speed (meaning they also consume twice the input resources).

**Scavenger:** Half the countdown timer on the black market, carbon replaces steel (1.5 carbon per 1 steel) and they receive warnings prior to resource shortages and surpluses.

**Scientific:** EMP, Power Surge and Network Viruses last 50% shorter on their buildings and buildings built on top of primary resources no longer need to have that resource supplied.

#### Expansive

Expansive companies benefit from the halved steel costs and the extra claim. An expansive HQ covers 7 tiles and can thus claim lots and lots of iron / aluminum and upgrade their HQ straight away if placed on a proper resource pile. The larger HQ also makes it easier to spread their buildings out so that they are less vulnerable to EMPs and power surges.

Expansive can drop down on an iron/aluminum field for some free iron, send 2 iron mines to medium/high density iron and 2 mines to aluminum and buy all the steel they need, wait for the aluminium to come in and upgrade early and place 3 to 4 steel mills. In very ideal conditions an expansive player can send their first offworld shipment 18:00 of day 2 (although offworld rushing is not always a recommended strategy).

## Robotic

Robotic like expansive can get a large influx of starting resources due to the fact they get double of whatever resource they found their HQ on. The power-instead-of-fuel requirement of transport makes them pretty decent long distance haulers as long as they make sure that they have access to cheap power. Overall Robotic players can be self-sufficient a LOT easier than most other companies. Due to the lack of need for anything but power and electronics.

Even so Robotic is in excellent position to farm electronics and short the prices to astronomical levels. Robotic life support is extremely simple: power + electronics. Glass is not as hard a requirement either but still required for everything except the HQ. Robotic can also very easily manipulate the prices of everything except electronics because they do not use non-electronics for life support themselves.

## Scavenger

Scavengers are excellent manipulators of the market and have the bonuses to take advantage of down and upturns in the resource markets because they receive warnings of all surpluses and shortages. This easily enables them to increase their supply of cash-on-hand by investing it in resources just before a shortage and selling out afterward, this process can lead to up to 50% profit on substantial amounts of cash. Additionally their main construction resource is carbon, which is a resource that is easily mined in massive quantities for only 1 or 2 claims and easily puts them in a good spot to produce wind, chemicals and glass, because these structures require quite a bit of carbon. If carbon and silicon are adjacent, copious amounts of both can be easily mined and require a lot less tiles for the production of the 3 construction resources.

Scavengers are one of the companies that should go out and scout their opponents and identify their weaknesses in order to exploit sabotage optimally. Other companies (in 4+ player games) can get away with just buying goonsquad and free claims and not much else from the black market. Scavenger companies can get adjacency bonuses at production hubs as well because they can mutiny up to 3-4 facilities at once (by saving up 1 mutiny, waiting for the black market timer, using 2 mutinies at once, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> after 30 seconds and a 4<sup>th</sup> after 60).

Scavenger's carbon resource can easily afford to be over mined because carbon is an ingredient for chemicals and electronics both of which are very useful resources and frequently very expensive.

## Scientific

Scientific companies are in my opinion a very newbie friendly type of company. Their bonuses make them very resilient and easy to use. Scientific companies will tend to build remote production outposts because they benefit from building their production structures on top of resources and this means that it will take much longer to repair a structure when these outposts are struck by dynamite. Underground nukes do not hurt scientific as much because of their on top of resource bonus because even a "flat" resource enables the on-top-of-resource scientific bonus. Nukes can still significantly hurt aluminium deposits.

## 5 The Resources

### Money

Money is the main resource of the game. Every other resource (except power) can be directly bought with it.

Money is produced by

- Selling Resources
- Pleasure Domes
- Offworld Launches
- Stock sales

Money is lost through:

- Buying Resources
- Black Market Purchases
- Repaying Debt
- Hacking Array activities
- Stock Purchases

The total amount of money in game is fairly stable until speculation in the market and offworld launches begin to increase the money supply. The money supply usually becomes tied up in raised resource prices as players purchase them and get massively in debt on power, food, water, oxygen and fuel. If the race to offworld markets or rampant market manipulation does not raise the supply of money, the match will result in buyouts from very low stock prices. On the default manager difficulty players start with 2,000 funds each. This means that the total money supply at the start of the game is 16,000 in an 8 player game. Nevertheless if players get massively in debt or if multiple shortages happen, companies can accumulate massive money supplies even very early on.

The total money that is (at the start of the game) tied up in the market in the form of the prices of resources is about 39k plus 32k from electronics. This is currently without regard of the number of players in game, although I'm making lobbying efforts to ensure that this virtual supply gets to be in proportion to the number of players.

In addition to the starting pool of money there is a virtual money supply in the prices of goods on the market. The amount of this money supply (until resource prizes begin to far exceed 100\$ / unit) is roughly in proportion to sum of the squares of the prizes of each individual resource multiplied by 5. Civilians and Company HQs will raise the prices of each of the 5 consumable resources. The colony raises the price of every good except iron and silicon. The price of the primary 4 transportable consumables (Water, Food, Oxygen and Fuel) will also begin to rise at about 20:00 of day 1, when most players will have depleted all of their food followed by the resources which consume at a slower rate.

## Power

Power is usually (although not always) one of the most valuable resources. It is not a construction resource but a very important one nevertheless. The superconductors patent (+100% power for power producers connected to an HQ) is an extremely powerful patent. Solar panels can be placed anywhere on the map and generally are similarly efficient (between 1.0 to 1.3/s production during the day) so do not worry too much about elevation. Wind farms have their uses (and there aren't any random events that reduce their output) but in my opinion, solar panels are superior because they can be placed anywhere and receive better adjacency bonuses. Even when solar panels turn off between 21:00 and 5:00, they will quickly repay the energy debt afterward. Solar panels do have the disadvantage of being much more vulnerable to sabotage because the duration of sabotage can be virtually extended by using sabotage at sunrise.

Power can be an extremely profitable resource to manipulate.

## Construction Materials

With Construction materials I mean mostly aluminium, steel, carbon and glass. Other resources are also used but these construction resources are the most important. Stockpiles of construction materials are useful when you are preparing to make offworld markets, or when needed replace unprofitable structures without the nanotech patent.

## Consumables

Consumables are the resources that every company must use, these are power, water, food, oxygen and fuel. Robotic uses power & electronics. Consumables will inevitably rise in price until companies produce them.

## Advanced

Advanced resources are electronics and chemicals. They're not really necessary (not even so much for robotic) but they're very handy and the colony still consumes them.

# 6 HQ Addons

The HQ add-ons are pleasure domes, patent labs, engineering labs, hacking arrays and offworld markets. These structures consume lots of power and must be connected over claimed land to an HQ.

Every addon except the offworld market takes 40 seconds to build. The offworld market takes 60 seconds.

## Pleasure Dome

The pleasure dome is a simple and straightforward structure, power and tourism goes in, money comes out. The income is generated by the population in the civilian city and company HQs. Larger populations mean more profit. Multiple pleasure domes increase the total revenue stream by a small amount, but not a lot. The average amount of income per pleasure dome is decreased as more are built, but having more at a distance from each other will dampen the effect of them being sabotaged because a sabotaged pleasure dome means that other pleasure domes get increased income.

## Patent Office

The patent office offers a lot of technologies that will be exclusive to the researcher once discovered. A company holding patents will not transfer its patents upon being bought out though they do become available to the company that buys out the previous patent holder.

Most of the patents are extremely valuable. One of the most overlooked patents in my opinion is nanotech, which allows you to switch around your structures at no additional cost and to refund your offworld markets in the last moments of the game for anywhere between 10 to 500k of funds (depending on the price of the ingredients).

## Engineering Lab

The engineering lab can research +25%, +50% +100% and +200% production efficiency for every type of resource (the final 200% research project multiplies production by 3x). Research done is also not transferred upon being bought out by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Each individual research project takes 60 seconds to complete regardless of how many chemicals it costs.

A player who focuses on the synergy between engineering labs and chemicals production can easily make it extremely cheap for themselves to start massively researching +200% research for any resource of their choosing (by first researching +200% chemicals production), with a 60 second delay.

## Hackers Array

The hackers array can cause shortages and surpluses in any resource. The cost of the first shortage is 4,000 and permanently increases by 4,000 per use. Surpluses are half the price of shortages and take half the time to use. Hacked shortages and surpluses take effect over 20 seconds.

## Offworld Market

Offworld markets are highly profitable. At the highest prices (around 70k per shipment) they generate a revenue of 1,170\$ per second. The cost of the shipped goods, plus the fuel & aluminium and the cost of defending them (and repairing them after being dynamited) must be subtracted from the revenue. Even after all that, they usually are still worth it.

Offworld prices are fixed, and a player should check the prices to see if they are worthwhile prior to building an offworld market. Offworld markets which aren't sabotaged consume an average of 2/s of the resource they are launching or 2.5/s when launching fuel.

# 7 Black Market

The black market provides every player a set selection of actions they can purchase, which is random and determined at the start of the game. The only action that is not random is goonsquad, EMP an Power Surge. Each individual purchase permanently increases the cost of the purchased item. The black market can be a great tool to aid in the manipulation of the markets. A scavenger player can stock up on sabotage abilities and one day in a fell swoop devastate a market, and reap the profits after prizes skyrocket and continue to dominate the game. The black market can be used to manipulate any resource and many other things too.

Black Market actions can be stocked up, but not multiples of the same type of action. The only exception to this is when someone sabotages a tile on which you have a goonsquad, as this adds that sabotage to your black market pile on top of any other actions of that type that you already have.

## **New Claim**

This one is quite straightforward. A scavenger company that starts late will be able to use this once or twice before anyone else gets a dig at it. These free claims are very powerful. For comparison, the HQ upgrade provides 3 claims (or 4 for expansionist) for the first 2 levels.

## **EMP**

This one freezes buildings radially from the center point. 120, 60 and 40 seconds from the inside out. EMP Affects your own buildings too. This one is great for manipulating the price of (for example) electricity. EMPs can be targeted on empty tiles, which make EMP a good tool to scout for goonsquads with.

## **Power Surge**

This one is like the EMP, but instead it is like a bolt of lightning that travels through adjacent buildings at random (when given multiple options) until it runs out of buildings to hit. Buildings placed in a line are excellent targets. Consecutive buildings are frozen for 15 less seconds with each jump.

## **Underground Nuke**

If you want to consolidate a resource monopoly, this a good option to use. One thing that should be noted is that underground nukes will not take resources beyond the "flat" level which means that scientific buildings cannot be prevented from using their on-top-of-a-resource bonus by using the underground nuke.

The underground nuke reduces a resource by two levels or one level when used on scientific tiles.

One additional niche use of the nuke is against miners placed using the slanted mining patent on a high value resource. Nuking it will demote all adjacent miners taking advantage of that resource.

## **Dynamite**

Dynamite is nasty. First, it disables the target building and requires it to be repaired. The robot to repair the structure must be sent manually and it costs 50% of the cost of the structure or 25% for scientific companies.

One of the more effective early game uses of dynamite is the destruction of glass factories with a large stock of glass just prior to sending it. This is because dynamite destroys the stock if it hasn't been shipped off yet

The net effect may be the destruction of an important building (for up to several minutes + the time it takes for the company to send the droid), denial of its stock, denial of adjacency bonuses, long delays before it goes back up and increased prices for the resources required for the repair. Do not waste dynamite on quarries next to an HQ, but rather on more expensive buildings and high value resource producers far removed from HQs.

## **Mutiny**

Mutiny is a very useful card; it denies your target their resource and grants it to yourself, for up 120 seconds or 60 seconds on scientific targets. The exceptions are factories that require input resources. These will first have to be shipped before they are activated. When a facility changes hands through mutiny all the resources that were stockpiled there are immediately shipped to their owner, so the

company that uses mutiny will NOT be able to steal a free shipment that has been stockpiling somewhere.

Mutinied structures behave entirely like your own otherwise. Offworld Markets belonging to other companies are particularly good targets because these are usually the most profitable to use for yourself. A company can get 2 uses out of non-scientific and undefended off world markets by queuing up two extra launches prior to activating the mutiny. Mutinies can also be used to counteract mutinies or to override mutinies that are ongoing.

Mutinies can be activated during an auction and this may allow you to get a use out of even a scientific Addon or 2 uses out of anyone else's by opening up the interface and activating something before the auction runs out.

### **Goonsquad**

Goonsquad protects a tile from sabotage. Sabotage that is activated on top of a tile will trigger the goonsquad and remove it. An EMP that covers the goonsquad tile triggers it but does NOT remove the goonsquad. A power surge that travels through a goonsquad tile triggers it, is stopped and also does NOT remove the goonsquad. A goonsquad that is triggered applies the Defended status to its tile, further making it immune to being targeted for 60 seconds.

### **Network Virus**

Network virus spreads like power surge, but doubles the energy consumption, disables scrapping and disables turning the relevant buildings on or off. This can be used to force a company to actually lose funds from their production and to go deep into debt. Good targets can be anything that is unprofitable as well as HQ addons / steel mills during times of high energy prices.

### **Hologram/Spy**

Hologram projects the image of an HQ addon over the affected tile until dispelled by spy. Personally I see no use for it because it does not disguise a building coming out of an HQ and usually there are red herrings that tell your opponent exactly what is going on.

Spy will reveal a tile and the other tiles around it, showing you any Goonsquads as well as dispelling holograms. Affected HQ addons will tell you exactly what they are doing and when they are finished doing it. I have the distinct impression that the game sometimes kinda randomly is inclined to pick these two options together but I have seen it happen that they don't.

### **Cook the Books**

Cook the books improves your bond rating by 1. So a B rating becomes BB, A becomes AA, etc etc. I do not know if this effect lasts until the end of every match. It is a much cheaper option than actually paying off your debt, when available. Purchasing CB once prevents you from ever getting to a D bond rating, 2 purchases prevent a C rating and so on and so on, this has huge implications for debt-mongers.

### **Quik & Fast Stimpack**

This action affects tiles like emp, but only in a 1 tile radius. The effect lasts for 100 and 50 seconds on the inner and outer tiles respectively, and doubles the speed (doubling the input and output

resources, power consumption remains the same). This is particularly good on offworlds, pleasure domes and other highly profitable buildings.

### **Magnetic Storm**

Destroys all blimps flying through a large area, does not affect pirates. This is a lot like pirates, because it denies resources traveling through the air. I think it has some uses, especially against scientific players. I still think it is a little bit of a fringe action.

## **8 Tactics**

Tactics are the separate methods you use that make up a strategy, pointed toward victory over your opponents. Several of tactics together with an end goal in mind are a strategy. The following tactics are in no specific order. No tactic should be applied every single time.

### **Shifting Production Around**

As the markets change and as you and other people activate shortages in different resources, it will become more profitable to produce some resources over other resources. This is where it is important to change your industries around. The nanotech patent is incredibly helpful for this tactic because it refunds you the building costs of your structures upon scrapping them.

It is a frequent newbie mistake to never scrap & replace unprofitable companies.

### **Overproducing & Stockpiling**

Usually, you only limited amount of resources to build up to your endgame strategies. Overproducing is when you mine more than you immediately need. In a lot of my games I do this because it happens to be more efficient to do so. Stockpiles have a not so obvious value. Stockpiles are always there until you use them. If you have stockpiles, you don't have to overpay for the exponential price of large quantities of anything which you have stockpiled. Stockpiling is a long term strategy. Scavengers are excellent stockpilers when their HQs are adjacent to fields of carbon and aluminum because triangles of these resources will quickly build a stockpile that will last for a lifetime and allow the tiles to be repurposed to produce profit.

Simply build triangles/diamonds of miners and quarries on the fields and mine up to about 1000 to 2000 then scrap the cheap old production buildings and change production to something worthwhile.

### **Withholding Stockpiles**

New players will frequently sell out their stockpiles even to the price point of \$1, this is almost universally a mistake. Offworld Trading Company is a competitive game, and you enhance your opponents' competitive position by depressing the prices of anything that they don't have. Companies should only sell resources to the market when it gives them a larger advantage than it gives their opponents. Most cash can be made from a resource by selling enough up to decreasing the price by 50%, in this fashion 75% of the profit is made from that resource without making it obscenely cheap for other companies.

### **Buying Stockpiles**

When companies commit to depressing the price of something to \$1, remember to capitalize on it by buying a couple hundred units for yourself. Resources go up and down in price and cheap stockpiles never hurt anyone.

### **Stockpiling Cash for Shortages**

Stockpiling cash has its advantages; primarily it allows you to quickly buy into shortages there by multiplying your cash by 20-200% per shortage. The smaller your money pile the larger the % by which shortages can multiply it. Scavengers have an advantage here because they receive warnings with which they can buy into shortages before anyone else can. CEOs need to take care not to buy into resources which are likely stockpiled by other players (such as carbon when there are lots of scavenger players) because your investment into a shortage might backfire, especially late game when people are likely to have stockpiles.

Stockpiling money should be combined with judicious buying from the market. Money itself is a resource worth having at least a small amount of. Hacker arrays can help you accelerate the process of cash multiplication.

### **Creating a Market**

The hackers array must be utilized in this tactic. Simply short a resource that no-one is producing yet (or that you can keep frozen through sabotage and underground nukes) like chemicals or glass while building up production buildings to produce it yourself. Alternatively short a resource that you are already producing or have stockpiles of. Combine with black market sabotage for greater effect. (Commit sabotage a minute or two before your shortage so no-one stockpiles your particular resource.)

### **Starving**

Starving is a mean and lean tactic best used in small FFAs and 1v1. To achieve this simply make sure that your opponent is not producing any resources that sell for any appreciable value so that they cannot buy the resources they need in order to grow or even to change their industries at all. Surpluses from the hacker array are a good tool to starve a company if the other company is prevented from using the black market to recover, they are dead in the water while you continue to grow.

Starving is more effective when you know your opponent can not obtain any extra claims fast.

### **Monopolizing**

Monopolizing is just that. Mine-able resources can be fairly easily monopolized if they are rare on the map but it is not a tactic that can be relied upon in every game because resource distribution is random. When you do detect a severe shortage of something, hot drop on a field of the rare resource field and take over all the other resource pips of that type ASAP. You can afford to miss 1 or 2 but not more. Monopolies should be enhanced by hacker arrays and fiercely protected with sabotage against hacker arrays you don't control. Underground nukes are necessary and the player needs to watch out that no-one gets the slant drilling patent.

Monopolies usually don't last forever so the player must be experienced enough to be able to capitalize on this and combine their monopoly with other tactics in order to take over the game and stay far in the lead. A monopolized resource should NEVER decrease in price permanently from overselling by the company having the monopoly. Aluminum is the best resource to monopolize

because all companies need it, next is water because it's a part of 4 very necessary goods for most companies. A properly executed monopoly may get you lynched by any RL friends you happen to use monopolies against.

### **Buying Your Own Stock First**

Buying your own stock out before other companies stock means that you multiply the money you can later gain by selling them again after your stock gains massively in price from buying up other companies. Usually, if you have expanded extremely fast, you are highly in debt with decreased stock prices before other companies are ready to start investing large wads of cash into other companies stock. It depends on the situation, but buying your own stock first fortifies your position unless you badly need to buy out a scavenger company or two that are constantly sabotaging you.

It is easily possible to have your stock at 4k or 5k by the time you hit large wads of cash and in such cases it can be worth it to buy yourself out first because your stock is likely to increase up to levels of 30k, 50k and sometimes even 150k. Investing in your own stock is good if you have multiple threats you can't take on all at once.

### **Remote Manufacturing**

Remote manufacturing can be advantageous for most companies. Remote manufacturing is simply putting your intermediate manufacturing structures (things that use primary inputs like water and carbon / fuel) away from your HQ and apart from the primary resource producers. This makes it harder for your opponents to sabotage several types of your industries at once with EMPs and power surges.

### **Not repaying debt when you don't have to**

Debt isn't so bad at all, unless you're being bought out by a CEO that isn't you or your bond rating is at the C or D level. You might even say that debt is good because it depresses your stock price which makes it cheaper to buy yourself out. Of course, this is only really true if your company is the first to obtain large wads of cash to buy stocks with.

Power fuel and life support can be ignored unless the prices become profitable in which case you should start producing it. You need to keep a close eye on your debt because it can get you bought out eventually. The difference between 100k debt is 200k debt can end you if you do not manage to buy your own company and other companies out by the time people run into wads of cash.

Disclaimer: real life debt is a lot tougher than Offworld Trading Company debt!!

## **9 Hard & Fast rules**

- Every adjacency connection produces bonus production equal to 1 extra production structure.
- The possible profit from a resource is approximately its price squared times 3. Ie  $100\$^2 * 3 = 50k$ . The amount of stock required to reap 90% of this profit is  $8 \times 100$  units = 800 units. To calculate how much you need to fully tank the price of something, multiply the price by 10.
- There is a diminishing returns to the squared<sup>2</sup> rule of how much profit a company can get from a single resource after it reaches a price point of 300\$ or above. 800k profit from a single

resource in a single resource sell out is about the maximum without spending large bundles of money.

- Provided that the base value of a company stays the same and that no other company buys stock in the target company, and that all the stock is available for purchase... the price of buying all the stock of that company is 15 times the value of the first stock provided they don't buy stock in themselves while you buy their stock.

## 10 Concepts

### Stocks

Stocks are important. Their value is determined by your company value which is the sum of the following things

1. Your base value, this is 800k plus 140k per HQ level.
2. The total value of your structures. This *seems* to be a mostly fixed value per structure and not variable with the price of their ingredients.
3. Cash on hand
4. The value of your resources if they were all sold off at once instantly with ctrl shift down.
5. Company debt, this value is multiplied by a fixed value based on your difficulty (5x on manager) and subtracted from company value.

The per unit base value of your stock (the price you pay for 1 stock) seems to be 1% of the total value of your company and it increases by 10% for every stock that is owned by any company. Once all stocks in a company are owned by other companies, all remaining stock must be bought out all at once and at double the current price. Once one company owns all stock in another company, it considered bought out and is assimilated by the company that had all the stocks in it, eliminating the CEO that ran the old company from the game. When one company buys out another company and if 3<sup>rd</sup> party companies own stock in that company they receive the value for each unit of stock they owned in that company, even though the takeover company paid double the price. If a company owns its own stock and is bought out, the money disappears into the ether.

Under the default win conditions, the last CEO to retain control of their company wins.

The total stock price of a company is added on to by the stock price of the stocks that it owns. So for example if the base value of a stock is 30k and that company owns 50% of a company that has stocks at 20k per unit, 10\$ is added on to the value of the first stock.

### Tile Utility

Tiles should ideally be potentially able to efficiently produce as many types of resources as effectively as conceivably possible. Resources are going to change in value considerably and thus the best resources to produce also change. You may want to produce other more valuable resources as the prices change. If your tiles are not optimally placed, you will not be able to efficiently switch your production around.

Generally a lot of open space around your HQ with resources is optimal because this will allow you to put buildings in geometric shapes that give a lot of adjacency bonuses as well as to isolate buildings that you don't want to get sabotage just because they're in the middle of a production hub.

Putting simple structures like mines out on their own anywhere should be avoided when possible because this makes the tile on which they sit useless for any other purpose. Any tile which is not producing a profitable resource is a useless tile. Tiles on top of slopes (or on high ground for solar) with resources are excellent tiles, because they can produce mineable resources, wind power (especially with the superconductor patent) and if near the HQ can house HQ Addons too. Look at the tiles when you claim them and think about what they can potentially be used for.

### **Ease of Production**

Some resources are simply easier to produce than others. Water for example is much easier than electronics. For two reasons this is true, first a single water pump produces 4x to 8x more water than an electronics factory produces electronics (on its own). Secondly, water needs no inputs other than the water resource on the tile on which it is produced, whereas electronics needs 3 different inputs. Chemicals are quite complicated too, which needs carbon and fuel (which needs water).

The ease and quantity of production needs to be considered when evaluating what to produce.

## 11 Opening Builds

I'm assuming here you play on maps with default settings, meaning that there are usually a couple of decent resource hotspots. At the start of the game zoom fully out and look around to see where the canyons are, so that you don't scan yourself into them because they never contain any resources nor allow you to build. Scan away from the resource pips initially revealed at the start (unless it is a 1v1) because the starting resource pips will lead most players to congregate in the general direction of where the resource pips are leading them (think of Hansel and Gretel and their breadcrumbs). In 8 player games, you want to be out of sight and out of mind far away from everyone else so you won't have a lot of competition. If you can help it. Always try to scan at the edge of the fog of war unless you need to scan a collection of resource pips.



### Expansionist

The opening to the left is a good one. The HQ was dropped on a field of iron and mines placed on the three spots shown. One spot has high aluminium, the 2<sup>nd</sup> spot has low aluminium + iron and the 3<sup>rd</sup> spot has low iron. I sold all resources and upgraded my HQ right away, sent out a claim robot to a geothermal spot and build the 3 steel mills to the south. I usually follow by selling off steel and aluminum until I can buy 100 units of glass (so I have enough for HQ 4) while it's still cheap (because hopefully no-one else upgraded yet). I usually expand my steel manufacturing with 2 more mills unless I see that steel is being overproduced and oversold. If steel goes below 40\$ I may

sell all steel mills and go into food, fuel or more glass. Steel can be easily overproduced because the cost of steel mills is iron which is very cheap which means you can rebuild them any time you really need to.

### Scientific

A scientific opening is really any opening next to 3 iron pips in a triangle. Start with 3 steel mills on top of them; you really cannot have a simpler opening. Aluminum is also highly necessary and all resources should be sold off that don't help the upgrade so you have the claims to get aluminium, but 3 steel mills next to the HQ must come first due to adjacency bonuses. Remote steel mills are not recommended because of pirates and delay of first shipment + shipping costs, but are still feasible.

At level 2 glass, food, or reactors are all a possibility. I strongly recommend building out a patent lab to snatch up Nanotech, Superconductors too and any others as long as the price and time investment is right.

### Scavenger

A decent scavenger opening is on 2 carbon pips, and an excellent one on 3 carbon pips with 1 or more of medium or better quality. One or two aluminium mines are very much needed as usual and they should ideally be adjacent, close to the base and of high quality.

## Robotic

If water is scarce or even if it isn't, go ahead and use underground nukes on water (targeting stronger companies' water first) because robots don't die of thirst. They can very well hot drop on a patch of aluminium and start with enough aluminium to allow them to upgrade all the way to lv 3 without mining



but it would seem that if robotic companies hot drop on a nice flowery patch of aluminium/iron they can maneuver into a good position better than other companies. They do not suffer so much from having a lv 5 HQ as others do because they have only 1 life support good.

Electronics should be fairly simple to produce as long as there is a silicon mine somewhere on the map. Glass production may be almost entirely foregone especially with the use of nanotech. Robotic is a decent company to rush to offworld markets with.

The screenshot shows off an obscenely good robotic opening 2 minutes and 8 seconds into the game, sporting a lv 5 HQ. If you see a start like this, you're perfectly set to commit to a robotic opening (though not with more than 3 mines).

## 12 Random Events

Events happen randomly from time to time and can change the course of the game.

### Marsquakes

Marsquakes are 10x less likely to happen than solar flares or dust storms. Marsquakes cause a shortage of everything except power without warning to any company including scavenger companies.

### Solar Flares

Solar flares increase the production of solar panels by 100% and of ice and dry ice condensers by 50%. Solar Flares last for approximately 36 seconds.

### Dust Storms

Dust storms increase the production of wind farms by 100%, and reduce the production of solar panels and farms by 50%. Dust storms also reduce the production of ice and dry ice condensers. Dust storms last for about 36 seconds.

### Shortages & Surplusses

Shortages and surplusses will randomly hit any resource. Scavengers receive warnings of this. The effect is that about 200 units of the affected resource get bought over 20 seconds. Hacker Array shortages are less effective as they are used more and more.

## 13 Hotkeys & Mouseclicks

The hotkeys for buildings are available in game. Here are a few other hotkeys:

Ctrl + Shift + Down Arrow = Sell all resources.

Ctrl + Click Building = automatically turn a building on or off.

Ctrl + Shift + Click Building = Turn all buildings of that type on or off.

Shift + Click Offworld Launch resource = repeat launch that resource.

Hold Shift while placing buildings = Build multiple buildings at the clicked places.

Backspace with building selected = scrap building. Shift backspace for deleting all buildings of the same type.

C and Click = Claim Tile.

Hold Z = Hide buildings (to show precisely where which resources are).

Tab = Scroll through everyone's HQs.

Ctrl + Q = Mute Sound

B = Bid on Auction

Esc = Cancel Selection

Ctrl + Shift + T = Toggle off EVERYTHING

Shift + T = Toggle all shipment paths.

Shift + / = Show hex grid

Shift + Click Buy Shares = Buy a company of which shares are publically available for twice the price of the remaining stock.

Players used to using the left hand side ctrl and shift should remember that it takes only 3 finger on one hand to use the right hand side ctrl shift down on most keyboards.

Hotkeys can be reconfigured by editing the hotkeys.xml file somewhere in your documents.

## 14 Conclusion

The very core of the game is building up enough cash to buy your opponents out, at this stage of the game development this means having the flexibility provided by plenty of construction materials and primary resource production, enabling your company to produce any resource which happens to be valuable at the time.

The game is all about earning and multiplying money. So do not invest it where it won't return more value than it costs you, unless it wins you the game by pushing everyone else out without putting your company at risk.

I wish you the best of luck with the game.