

# Warforged

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A New Breed of Card Game by Evening Star Games



ras

LOST AGE

ster

by the counter  
nt's card.

Strike: Empower (1).  
Guard: Endure (4): Gain  
health.

INHERENT

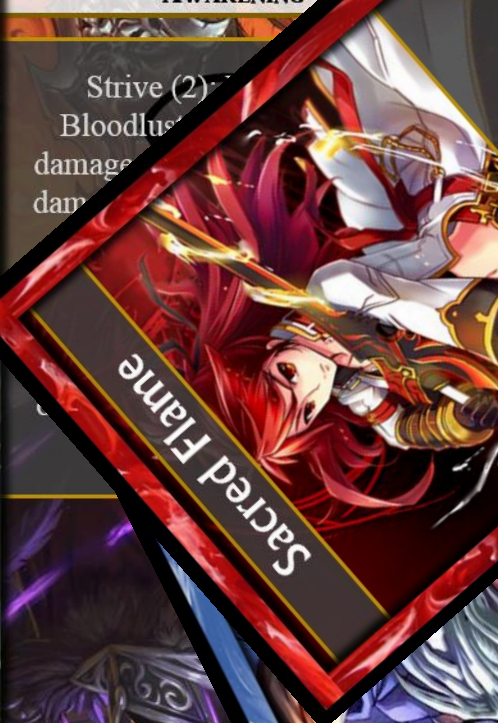
## Blood Pact



AWAKENING

Strive (2):  
Bloodlust  
damage  
dam

Sacred Flame



entering Dark



Hallowed Strike

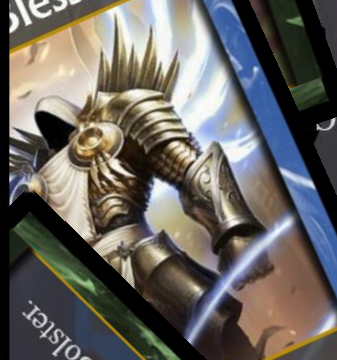


deal 2 damage.  
Next turn, gain Lifesteal.

## Ignite



## Blessing



Next turn, gain Power.  
Empower: Wounded: Re-  
Incarnate: Counter (B): Bolster.  
You took last turn.

Strive (1):

Con



Unyielding Faith



INHERENT

Endure (5): Whenever you Shift,  
gain 1 health.  
Depart: Empower (1).





# Game Summary

**Two players battle each other in a one-on-one card game, fighting until their opponent's character loses all their health.**

With Warforged we desire to provide card game fans with a new and interesting style of card game. Unlike many other card games, **there are no random elements** in this game, emphasizing player skill and decision making. We offer a low learning curve for casual players and a very high skill ceiling for more committed players. Games are short but intense, fitting many different gaming environments.

## The No-Nonsense Card Game

This is it. The last turn. One win away from Legend in Hearthstone, the highest rank only fit for the top 0.5% of players. I have a massive lead on the board; I win on my next turn. Then out comes my opponent's Ragnaros, a creature that deals eight damage to a random enemy on the board. I have six health left; if it hits my face instead of one of my minions, I lose. But I have three other minions out, there's only a 25% chance I lose; I got this.

You can imagine my reaction as I watched Ragnaros' giant fireball sail right into my face.

That was just one example of the many times my game's outcome was decided by randomness. So many instances where I felt robbed of a hard earned victory. I was sick of it, so I went to look for another card game where this wouldn't happen again. As it turns out, a vast majority of card games rely on randomness where a lucky draw or fortunate outcome would often decide games. I just couldn't find a card game that I felt relied mostly on player skill with minimal or no random elements. Then it struck me. I should just make my own card game.

Warforged is a game of many facets, focusing on Trading Card Game mechanics, mind games and unpredictability without randomness. In order to achieve this, Warforged differs from traditional card games in a few different ways.



### Simultaneous Turns

First of all, this game has simultaneous turns. Both players play a card at the same time and effects activate at the same time. This part of our game is made much more intuitive by our digital format. This mechanic ensures the players won't know what card their opponent is playing until they've both committed to an option. Simultaneous turns allow our game to maintain that unpredictability aspect, which is key to making card games feel exciting.

### Rotation System

Next, our game does not have a traditional deck like most other card games. Instead we have something called the "Standby Row." Every character has a base set of eight cards. Cards not in your hand are in this Standby Row which sits on the board. Whenever you play a card, it goes to the leftmost spot of the Standby Row and then you pick up the rightmost card in the row. This allows cards to "rotate" in and out of your hand as you play them.

What makes the mechanic interesting is how it affects player decision making. Both players can see each other's Standby Rows; this allows players to think about what cards their opponent is going to get in the next few turns, what patterns they fall into and how that affects their future decisions. This thought

process places a heavy emphasis on mind games.

## Character Based

Finally, as mentioned above, Warforged does not have a traditional deck. In our game, players choose a character which comes with a preset deck of eight base cards and four Invocation cards. This is much like other character based genres like MOBAs (e.g. League of Legends) and Fighting Games (e.g. Street Fighter). We feel that a character based system allows players to both start playing more quickly and attach themselves to a character.

## Market Viability

The design of the game lends itself to a wide variety of players and environments. In regards to casual gamers, our learning curve is low. On our physical prototype, we had over 50 unique play testers and all of them understood how to play after their first game. In a digital format, our game can convey information even more easily, which may make it even easier to pick up. On top of that, the games are short and satisfying. Players do not have to commit much time to enjoy the game and can play at their leisure. On the subject of time, a common complaint from casual card game players is they do not have the time to farm for cards and build a deck. In our game, they only need to own one character and they're ready to compete with everyone else.

While our game is simple to learn, it is very difficult to master. Playing the game at a basic level is easy but playing against skilled opponents is a whole different story. Learning exactly how important each decision is and how it changes the game's current context is key to excelling in this game. The game utilizes fundamentals from many competitive games such as: risk/reward management from card games, conditioning and match-up knowledge from fighting games and game state analysis from MOBAs. All of these genres have found large-scale success and have vibrant competitive scenes. As developers and huge fans of competitive gaming ourselves, we definitely intend to support and grow a competitive scene for our game. At its core, Warforged is designed to foster and support a competitive mindset.

Since our game uses many elements from these other games, it has the potential to attract attention from those gamers as well. Most notably, other card game players will look into the game, but when word gets out that it shares strong similarities with these other genres, it may attract more attention.

In tandem with all of the above, our game is rather lightweight and can easily be ported to a large variety of devices, most notably mobile. With our already wide appeal, this accessibility expands the range of our audience. Being on mobile devices supports our notion that players will be able to play the game at their leisure. Games like Hearthstone or Shadowverse have similar playtimes and are frequently seen being played on the go or at home.



## Market Analysis

The timing for a game like this is ideal. Digital Card Games have been put on the map through the massive success of Hearthstone. Right now, Digital Card Games are flourishing more than ever because Blizzard has opened the door for everyone else. There are three primary reasons why I believe our game will succeed in this environment.

## Digital Card Games are Booming:

Right now, SuperData projects Digital Card Games to earn \$1.4 billion in 2017 alone. In the 2016, Shadowverse earned \$100.1 Million even though it launched halfway through the year.

Something else to note is that SuperData explains how Hearthstone has changed the Digital Card Game market. Many players have a lot of new expectations for these games.

"Before Hearthstone exploded onto the scene, the digital CCG landscape was largely divided between simple CCGs on smartphones and complex PC/Mac titles that closely resembled tabletop games. Hearthstone changed player expectations. Users now expect deep gameplay in mobile titles and want to play on the same account across multiple devices."

As we've stated before, our game is lightweight and easily ported to mobile devices. We also provide that deep gameplay experience that players are looking for while remaining accessible to players.



## The Massive Growth of eSports:

With this richness of gameplay, many players also expect a competitive scene to follow up on it. Hearthstone is constantly seen at the top of the popular streaming platform, Twitch. People nowadays just love to watch games in general. SuperData reports that "more people watch GVC (Gaming Video Content) than HBO, Netflix, ESPN and Hulu combined." The competitive scene is no exception, with Hearthstone's championship series peaking at 135,000 viewers even back in 2014.

As a whole, eSports itself is growing at an amazing rate. CNN reported that the global

revenue to eSports is slated to reach \$1 billion by 2019. Hearthstone and all Digital Card Games, as seen below, are definitely a part of this action and we believe Warforged will be too.

	Revenue
Hearthstone	\$395 Million
Shadowverse	\$100 Million
WWE Supercard	\$28.4 Million
Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Link	\$23.9 Million
MTG Online	\$20.6 Million
Star Wars: Force Collection	\$16.9 Million
Magic Duels	\$9.4 Million

## Hearthstone is on the Decline:

SuperData recently released a report saying "Hearthstone is killing itself." In February 2017, Hearthstone has seen its lowest revenues on both mobile and PC since the launch of the game. While Hearthstone seems to be on the way down, this in no way is to say that Digital Card Games as a whole are declining. In 2016 many games experienced a lot of growth and continue to do so into this year.

A large reason for Hearthstone's declining returns may be frustration with the game's mechanics. Being a game with so many random elements, players may be fed up with it by this point. After all, it's no secret the game's randomness is a common concern. There might just be some players who are sick of the waves of traditional card games. They may be looking for a new card game experience. We seek to offer that fresh and new experience to players like this.

This is the perfect time for a game like ours to arise. Our game is different enough to really stand out from the crowd of traditional card games which will attract new players and catch the eyes of veteran players. We also offer plenty of the core elements to appeal to many of the veteran players looking for something new. With the monolith that is Hearthstone starting to show cracks and having already paved the way for us, we have a golden opportunity to jump into the fray.



# Potential Dangers

We strove to make the game as solid as possible but there are a few things we are concerned about.

## The User Interface

At the moment, the most pressing concern is updating the UI to be as intuitive and robust as possible. Right now there are times where it can be difficult to follow what has just happened or what you need to be doing. For instance some things are displayed through text instead of visually. Once we move to 3D models with simple animations and implement a few more UI features, it should be much easier to follow. Making sure the UI is the best it can be will be critical in the player's enjoyment of the game.

## Game Balance

Making sure the game is as balanced as possible is very important. Since we want to be able to support a competitive scene, making sure the game doesn't fall prey to a single dominant character is key. The nature of the game is very prone to extremely powerful and unstoppable plays if we're not careful about our design. Although there doesn't seem to be anything like that right now, there have been

cases like that in the past, which means we need to remain vigilant in the future. On top of this, we need to figure out the best competitive format for the game. Competitive formats are very important for establishing how the hardcore community approaches the game. We need to take into account the unique nature of Warforged and find the format best suited for it.

# MAGIC to the Rescue

While we feel much of Warforged's design is solid and rife with potential, we could use some assistance getting this project off the ground.

## Art

One of our concerns at the moment is our lack of an artist. As you can see, the art used on our cards does not belong to us and comes from various other games. Although we did create the card borders and text boxes, the art on the cards is the most important part.

There are many cases where a card game can be sold off the appeal of its art alone. A lot of effort was put into making this place-holder art establish the correct feeling we want but we still need to find an official artist to take our game to the next level. We intend to spend the first week or so finding an artist suited for this job. We understand that we are unlikely to get a professional artist. We hope that MAGIC may be able to connect us with some talented artists or guide us in how to best search for the ideal employees.

## Intricacies of an Online Game

Our team has a lot of experience creating regular games for school projects but we have never made an online game on this scale before. We could use some guidance on approaching the many caveats of an online game.

Our game already has functional networking, but getting it working perfectly is going to require time and effort. On top of the beast that is networking, we also need to handle account management from our player base. Along with accounts, we need to create a



matchmaking system that pits players with similar skill against each other. We also need guidance on how to set-up and handle microtransactions from players. Due to the fact we may be handling money as well, we need to look into protecting our players and setting up computer security measures. If MAGIC can provide guidance on how to approach online games, it would benefit us greatly.

## Shipping a Game

No one on our team has ever officially shipped a game and we would very much appreciate guidance on this. Not only could we use some help understanding what platforms we should use to ship our game, we could use help with the legal side of things. A common piece of advice given to indie developers is to get a lawyer to help make sure everything runs smoothly. As we do not have a lawyer nor know any, any help MAGIC can provide us with on this issue would greatly help us. Lastly, we lack much experience in marketing. Outside of some obvious avenues of marketing, we're mostly unfamiliar with how to effectively get our game out into the world. We hope to find a mentor in MAGIC that has been through this process before.

## Team Organization

The team is currently comprised of five members: Team Leader, Lead Programmer, Two Programmers and User Experience Designer.

### Team Lead: Steven Ma

- Create and polish all gameplay elements
- Manage and keep track of the team
- Final say in all major decisions

### Lead Programmer: Trevor Walden

- Manage other programmers on the team
- Program major game systems

### Programmers: Jeremy Lefurge Connor Milligan

- Program and fix game features
- Assist with major game systems

### UI/UX Designer: Ethan Nicholas

- Create User Interface
- Create 3D assets
- Playtesting and character balancing

## Monetization

We plan on using a "Free to Play" model for this card game. As it stands, it may be too hard to compete with other Digital Card Games on the market, if we do not use a "Free to Play" model. We believe this is the best way to approach the market in its current state. Additionally, you may remember that we mentioned Warforged's accessibility earlier in this document. The "Free to Play" model is ideal for exposing the greatest amount of people to our game.

We hope to launch on a platform like Steam through their new "Steam Direct" system and eventually make our way to mobile. Since our game doesn't have traditional card packs, we won't make money the way Digital Card Games usually do. Regardless, we're very confident we can effectively monetize other parts of the game.

### Buy Characters

Buy characters with real money instead of in-game money.

### Character Skins

Swap out deck artwork for alternative artwork.

### Player Icons

Buy icons for your player account.

### Foil Cards

Similar to real life card games, buy stylized cards with visual effects.

### Card Backs

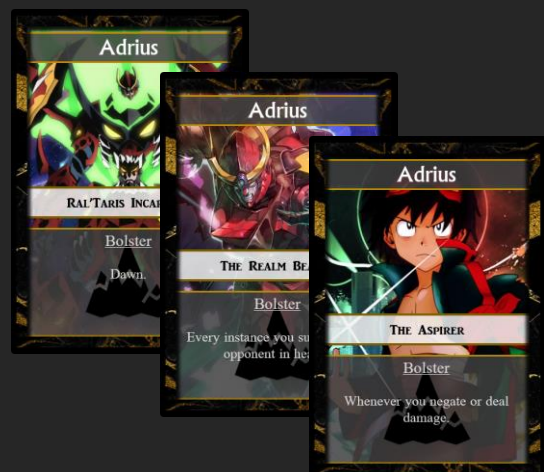
Buy alternative card backs for you decks.

### Background Art

Buy alternative artwork for your side of the board.

### Music Tracks

Buy music that plays at certain times.



# Marketing

As we have mentioned above, marketing is something we could use help with. Even though we're not experienced with this field, we still have some ideas of how to start. We're going to try social media advertisements to start out, like Facebook or Twitter ads. We also have strong connections to the Fighting Game Community on social media; it might give us a nice initial push for our own community.

We do also want to try advertising in a more local area, such as RIT itself. We can host an open entry, free tournament with a \$50 Gift Card as a prize. We can also introduce our game to RWAG (Rochester Wargaming Association and Guild). With our game's accessibility and free to play model, we will likely net some local players.



# Goals

For the summer, we want to develop our game from its current alpha state to a beta. Currently some mechanics just aren't implemented, such as being able to select your starting cards or re-order your Invocation Column.

Right now our code base could use some cleaning up and needs to go through some refactoring over the summer. Now that we've worked with the game for half a year or so, we understand how we want the architecture.

We want to go from purely 2D assets to 3D assets, creating a "2.5D" game. The whole UI, while structurally the same, will be visually overhauled. We also want to implement many

UI features over the summer such as card term definitions appearing with cards.

Some additional features we want to add are a history bar and a round timer. Due to the nature of Warforged, viewing what happened in previous turns would be a great addition to the game. The round timer could potentially change the pace of the game.

We also would like to release with a cast of 50 characters. Although we likely won't reach that number this summer, we can get close. The reason we want such a high number of characters is to create diversity and to attract a varied audience of players.





# Deliverables

## Short Term (Week 1 – 3)

Code Refactoring	Clean up the codebase of the game.
Modeling	Create the 3D assets for the board and cards.
Finish Preliminary UI	Finalize the UI to include all planned features.
External Card Editing Tool	Create tool that streamlines card creation.
Hire Artist	Find the artist for our game's card art.

## Medium Term (Week 4 – 7)

Convert to Server	Switch from a Peer to Peer system to a server.
Tutorial	Add in a tutorial for new players.
Setup Phase Feature	Implement the initial Setup Phase.
History Feature	Implement the History feature.
Timer Feature	Implement the Round Timer.
Tie Game Feature	Implement the mechanic for tie games.
Play Again Feature	Allow players to play another game.
Matchmaking Feature	Implement matchmaking feature.
Implement Characters	Implement remaining 7 characters.

## Long Term (Week 8+)

Create AI

Make an AI that can play the game.

Mobile Port

Get a mobile port up and running.

Character Goal

Have 50 unique characters made.

Player Accounts

Create accounts for players.

Ranked Matchmaking

Pair players of similar skill together.

Thank you so much for reading through our lengthy document. We hope it conveyed the enthusiasm we have for our game.

Please consider us for MAGIC's Co-Up Program and once again, thank you for reading!



# Sources

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