

Competitive Analysis: ManaTap.ai vs MTG Deckbuilding Tools

Introduction

Magic: The Gathering (MTG) players have a growing number of digital tools for deckbuilding and strategy, ranging from new AI-driven assistants to established traditional deckbuilders. ManaTap.ai is an **AI-powered MTG deck-building companion** that integrates chat-based assistance with a suite of deck construction and analysis features. This report compares ManaTap to its key competitors in two categories: **AI-Powered Tools** (MTG Agents, EDHGen.ai, KrakenTheMeta, and general AI like ChatGPT) and **Traditional Tools** (EDHREC, Moxfield, Archidekt). We'll examine each competitor's core features, AI capabilities, deckbuilding logic, rules enforcement, user experience, messaging, and business model. Finally, we provide a structured comparison highlighting areas where ManaTap leads, what it can learn from others, and untapped opportunities in the MTG tech space.

AI-Powered MTG Tools

MTG Agents

- **Core Features:** MTG Agents is a specialized MTG assistant offering **instant answers to rules questions** and **deck-building advice** via two AI personas ¹ ². Users can chat with *Nissa* for detailed rules clarifications or *Karn* for personalized deck help, including uploading a decklist for analysis.
- **AI Capabilities:** The platform uses a **multi-agent AI system**. Nissa and Karn are tailored chatbots (likely based on large language models) focused on their domains ³. Notably, Nissa cites sources like RulesGuru, Scryfall, or Stack Exchange for rules answers ⁴, adding credibility. The AI is kept **up-to-date with current card databases and rules**, avoiding the knowledge cutoffs that affect generic bots ⁵ ⁶.
- **Deckbuilding Tools & Logic:** MTG Agents does not have a traditional GUI deck editor; instead, *Karn* provides **deck optimization via chat**. Users can upload or paste a Commander decklist, and Karn will analyze it for synergies and suggest improvements using **real player data** (likely pulling patterns from community decks) ⁷ ⁸. This advice is conversational – Karn might recommend swapping specific cards or adding missing staples, which the user then applies manually.
- **Rules Checking & Format Support:** Rules enforcement is handled by asking Nissa – she can break down card interactions and confirm legality, always citing the Comprehensive Rules or official rulings ⁹ ¹⁰. MTG Agents supports **all major formats** (Commander, Standard, Modern, Pioneer, etc.) for questions and deck advice ¹¹. However, the deck suggestions focus heavily on Commander/EDH (Karn's specialty) ¹². There is no separate legality validator tool, but Karn's suggestions aim to respect format rules (e.g. Commander color identity).
- **UX/UI Strengths & Weaknesses:** The interface is a simple web chat. The strength is in **specialized dialog** – users choose which “agent” to talk to (Nissa or Karn) for a focused experience ¹³. The UI provides cited links in answers for verification ⁴. However, as a pure chat, it lacks the visual deckbuilder interface of other tools, meaning users must use another

platform to physically assemble or view the deck list that Karn suggests. This text-focused UX trades some convenience for depth in Q&A.

- **Positioning & Copy:** MTG Agents markets itself as “*Your AI-powered MTG assistant for rules and deck building*” ¹⁴. The site copy introduces Nissa and Karn in a friendly, character-driven tone to build trust and personality (named after iconic cards) ¹⁵ ¹⁶. The messaging emphasizes **accuracy and credibility** (cited sources, official rulings) and contrasts itself with general chatbots by highlighting MTG-specific training ⁶. This gives the platform a knowledgeable yet approachable tone.
- **Business Model:** MTG Agents is currently **free to use** – users can chat with both agents without a subscription ¹⁷. There appear to be usage limits (a menu option suggests one can “Unlock more messages”), which implies a freemium model. The site solicits support via “Buy me a coffee” donations ¹⁸. It’s likely that heavy users might eventually require a paid plan or that future advanced features could be behind a paywall, but as of now the core Q&A and basic deck advice are free.

EDHGen.ai

- **Core Features:** EDHGen is an **AI-powered Commander deck generator**. Its main feature is one-click **generation of a full 100-card EDH deck** based on user input. On the homepage, users can optionally enter a prompt (for theme or constraints), select deck style toggles (Optimized, Casual, or Budget), and either specify a Commander or have the AI pick one ¹⁹ ²⁰. The result is an assembled decklist geared toward Commander format. There’s also a public feed of “Recent Decks” and a social *Shoutbox* for user comments ²¹ ²².
- **AI Capabilities:** EDHGen combines machine learning techniques with MTG-specific data sources. The site mentions using “**the latest in machine learning technology, along with Scryfall & EDHREC**” to craft decks ²³. In practice, its AI likely draws on EDHREC’s card popularity stats and possibly a trained model that learned patterns from millions of sample games or decklists ²⁴ ²⁵. The AI can produce both sensible picks and unexpected card choices, depending on a randomness setting. Notably, EDHGen’s tone suggests it can go from “precision of a scalpel” to “randomness of a toddler on a sugar high” for deck outcomes ²⁶, meaning users can generate wacky, surprising decks (especially if they use the *Chaos* prompt mode for maximum randomness). There is **no chat or iterative refinement** – the AI does a one-shot deck build per request.
- **Deckbuilding Tools & Logic:** The deck construction is **fully automated**. If a user provides a custom prompt (e.g. “Elf tribal lifegain under \$100”), the AI interprets it and builds accordingly; if no prompt, it might default to a random theme (*Chaos*). Users can also leave the Commander field blank and use “Generate Commander” to have the AI select an appropriate commander for the deck ¹⁹ ²⁰. Behind the scenes, EDHGen likely picks a pool of cards that synergize with the chosen Commander or theme (using EDHREC’s data on frequently paired cards, combos, etc.) and then fills out the deck, applying any budget filter (the *Budget* toggle) by prioritizing cheaper card options. The logic tries to ensure the final list is reasonably cohesive and within format rules. However, it’s primarily a fun brainstorming tool – the generated decks can be hit-or-miss in terms of competitiveness or balance, leaning into creativity and surprise as selling points ²⁷ ²⁸.
- **Rules Checking & Legality:** EDHGen is focused on Commander, so it inherently follows EDH rules: the AI will include a Commander plus 99 other cards, and thanks to EDHREC data, it should obey color identity and singleton rules (since it’s drawing from real EDH deck patterns). There is no explicit legality check shown to the user, but the output decks generally stick to legal cards in the format. The creators acknowledge that the decks can be “*unpredictable*”, so a user might still need to verify no banned cards slipped in or adjust land counts, etc. Overall, format validation is basic – the decks usually have correct size and colors, but **fine-tuning is left to the user**.

- **UX/UI Strengths & Weaknesses:** The interface is very simple and lightweight. A user-friendly form allows setting a few parameters and then a decklist is generated instantly on the site. Strengths include **ease of use** (no login required to generate decks) and the fun presentation – for example, the site’s language (“Unleash the Madness”) and the inclusion of a Shoutbox community feed add to a playful UX ²³ ²². The design is utilitarian: you see the deck list and can likely copy or export it. However, EDHGen lacks a robust deck editing interface; if you want to tweak the generated deck, you’d need to export it to another platform. The **ads on the site** (removable via Patreon) are a minor UX downside ²⁹. Overall, it’s geared toward quick inspiration rather than detailed deck crafting on-site.
- **Positioning & Site Copy:** EDHGen’s messaging doesn’t shy from humor – it pitches the AI as a tool to build decks so wild that you can “*blame it on the robots*” if things go wrong ³⁰ ²⁸. The tone is casual, irreverent, and geared toward players who enjoy the creative chaos of Commander. Phrases like “*army of squirrels takes over the battlefield*” and “*decks so unpredictable, even we don’t know what they’re going to do*” set expectations that this is as much entertainment as it is utility ³¹. This contrasts with ManaTap’s more tutorial/companion tone – EDHGen leans into the fun of randomness. The site copy does still reassure that they use **metagame analysis and ML** to make decks that can hold their own ²⁵, but the overall messaging is about excitement and discovery.
- **Business Model:** EDHGen.ai is **free** to use for everyone, with revenue coming from advertising and community support. The site explicitly asks users to “*consider supporting us on Patreon to remove ads*” ²⁹. Patreon supporters likely get an ad-free experience and perhaps other perks, but there’s no indication of a strict paywall for features. There is no premium tier with additional deckbuilding functionality mentioned – all users have access to the same AI generation engine. This model prioritizes accessibility and community growth, trading on goodwill and patronage rather than mandatory fees.

KrakenTheMeta

- **Core Features:** KrakenTheMeta is a **comprehensive MTG deckbuilding platform** that integrates traditional tools with AI features. It supports **multiple formats** (not just Commander) and offers various ways to create decks: manual construction, AI-generated decks, and even hybrid methods. Core features include a full-fledged **deck builder interface** (search cards, add to deck, organize lists), **collection management** (users can save their card collection and even generate decks using only those cards ³²), **pricing integration** (view card prices and price tracking for decks ³³), and community features like deck sharing, liking, and even a fun “**Roast my deck**” AI feature for humor ³⁴. In essence, KrakenTheMeta aims to be a one-stop hub: a Moxfield-like deck manager combined with AI deck suggestions and social interactivity.
- **AI Capabilities:** KrakenTheMeta’s AI deck building is one of its highlights. Users can prompt the AI to **generate a deck list** for various formats, not just EDH ³⁵. The AI uses cutting-edge tech to suggest card combinations and complete decks, presumably leveraging large language models plus internal data. The platform’s Patreon description mentions “**MTG AI chatbots**” as well ³⁶ – indicating there may be chat-based assistants (similar to ManaTap’s or MTG Agents’ approach) integrated into the site for answering questions or guiding deckbuilding. The AI is also used creatively: for example, the **Deck Roast** feature feeds a decklist to an AI to produce a humorous critique ³⁴. This shows Kraken’s focus on engaging users with AI in multiple ways. However, the AI deck generator has had some issues with **deck legality** – early versions could produce illegal or suboptimal decks (e.g. wrong number of cards or banned cards), especially in Commander. The developer notes they’re implementing checks to detect and fix invalid decks, and that this was “*close to being completed for commander*” as of an update ³⁷. So the AI is powerful but still evolving in accuracy.

- **Deckbuilding Tools & Logic:** Aside from AI generation, KrakenTheMeta offers a robust **manual deckbuilding interface** akin to other deckbuilding websites. Users can search a card database (likely using Scryfall API), add cards to decks, and even import/export lists ³³. A notable feature is integration with user collections: one can toggle “use only cards from my collection” when generating a Commander deck, to have the AI build within owned cards ³². The deck builder itself includes **analysis tools** (mana production stats, color symbol distribution) and a **draw simulator** for sample hands ³⁸. After building, decks can be published publicly for others to view, like, and comment. KrakenTheMeta’s logic for AI generation seems to treat the AI as a “jump start” for brewing – the dev acknowledges it might not produce a perfect final list, but rather a creative draft that users can refine ³⁷. This philosophy is similar to ManaTap’s “assistant” approach, except Kraken’s AI might not be conversational – it’s more of a one-click generator with perhaps an input prompt.
- **Rules Checking & Format Validation:** KrakenTheMeta is actively working on **automated legality checks** for decks. In the case of Commander, they are close to preventing outputs that violate format rules (e.g. too few cards or off-color inclusions) ³⁷. For other formats, presumably if you tag a deck as Standard/Modern, the site can flag illegal cards. The presence of multi-format support and a growing user base suggests that **format rules are recognized** (e.g., it wouldn’t allow 5 copies of a card in a Standard deck, etc.). For rules questions, Kraken likely relies on its chatbots or user community rather than a dedicated rules engine. There isn’t evidence of a comprehensive rules Q&A knowledge base like MTG Agents’ Nissa, but the mention of “MTG AI chatbots” ³⁶ could mean Kraken has or plans a rules assistant. In summary, **basic deck legality** (card limits, banlists) is handled by the platform, but **intricate ruling clarifications** might not be a primary feature yet.
- **UX/UI Strengths & Weaknesses:** KrakenTheMeta positions itself as a “**superior alternative to Moxfield**” in some marketing ³⁹. It offers modern web design, custom user profiles, and social connectivity. Strengths include its **all-in-one nature** – you can manage collection, build decks, chat with an AI, and engage with the community without leaving the site. Early users appreciated the concept, though some noted minor UX friction (e.g. login issues via Google, which were being fixed) ⁴⁰. The **community features** (liking decks, sharing, a Roast page for AI-generated jokes) make the UI feel lively and community-driven ³⁴ ⁴¹. There are still areas to polish: for instance, the AI generator initially producing illegal decks could frustrate users, but improvements are ongoing. In general, Kraken’s UI tries to incorporate many features, which can be overwhelming but powerful for those who learn it. It may not yet be as sleek or intuitive as more mature sites (the project was a passion project with a few hundred users in its early days ⁴²), but it is rapidly improving with user feedback.
- **Positioning & Copy:** KrakenTheMeta’s branding evokes “unleashing” next-level play (the kraken metaphor). Its Patreon page describes it plainly as “*an AI deck building website for Magic: The Gathering*” supporting various features ³⁶. The tone is enthusiastic and innovative – e.g., update posts on Reddit highlight *cool updates*, implying the platform is on the cutting edge (adding novel features like AI roasting) ⁴³. The messaging appeals to players who want both competitive edge and fun: it talks up **competitive deck refinement with AI** on one hand ³⁵, and community enjoyment on the other (roasts, social connectivity). Compared to ManaTap, Kraken’s public copy is a bit more developer-driven (“we added X feature”) whereas ManaTap’s site copy speaks directly to the user experience (“*Start building your perfect deck. Ask me anything...*” ⁴⁴). Both however emphasize being an **AI-enhanced deckbuilding assistant** concept.
- **Business Model:** KrakenTheMeta is largely **free**. It requires a user account (with options to log in via Google, etc.) which indicates it’s building a user community and data. There is a Patreon with membership tiers – as of early 2026 it had ~28 paid members out of 119 total members ⁴⁵ ⁴⁶, providing modest monthly support. The Patreon might offer supporters early access to new features or just serve as a tip jar. The platform’s features appear fully accessible without payment

(the developer even added requested features for free, like collection-based generation, in response to community feedback ⁴⁷ ³²). It's possible in the future certain advanced tools or heavier AI usage could be behind a subscription, but at present KrakenTheMeta seems sustained by community donations and passion. This contrasts with ManaTap's more formal free/pro tier model – Kraken is in a grassroots phase of growth.

ChatGPT (as used for MTG)

- **Core Features:** ChatGPT (and similar large language models like GPT-4/5 used via prompts) is a **general AI chatbot** with no MTG-specific features out of the box. Players use ChatGPT by asking questions or giving prompts; for example, *“Suggest a Modern deck built around card X”* or *“Explain how banding works in MTG.”* The core strength is free-form natural language interaction. Unlike dedicated MTG tools, ChatGPT doesn't have built-in card databases or format rules – it relies on its trained knowledge (and optionally web access or plugins) to respond. So its “features” for MTG are whatever the user can coax it to do: answering rules questions (with varying accuracy), generating card lists from memory, or offering strategic advice drawn from its training data.
- **AI Capabilities:** As a state-of-the-art general model, ChatGPT has powerful **natural language understanding and generation**. It can produce coherent explanations and creative text. However, it's *not trained specifically on the latest MTG data*. Notably, the base ChatGPT's knowledge often has a cutoff (e.g., GPT-4 knows cards up to 2021). This means it might be unaware of newer sets or mechanics unless provided explicitly ⁴⁸ . The AI also **lacks direct access to MTG databases** unless the user provides information or uses a plugin. There have been experiments where users feed their card collection or use the browsing plugin to fetch card info, but those require technical know-how ⁴⁹ . In essence, ChatGPT's capability for MTG is broad (it “knows” a lot of Magic lore and card text up to a point) but shallow in precision – it isn't reliably accurate on detailed MTG queries without supervision ⁵⁰ ⁵¹ . It can also **hallucinate** nonexistent cards or rules if it's unsure, due to its predictive nature.
- **Deckbuilding Tools & Logic:** Out-of-the-box, ChatGPT has **no deckbuilding logic or validation**. If asked to build a deck, it will attempt to list cards that fit the request based on patterns in its training data. This typically yields a mediocre result: for example, users report that ChatGPT will include on-theme cards but often forgets singleton constraints in Commander or suggests illegal combinations ⁵⁰ . It might also mis-evaluate mana curves or synergy beyond obvious keyword matches (e.g., making a tribal deck by picking creatures of that type and a few generic staples) ⁵² . The process usually involves the user repeatedly refining the prompt: *“Replace any illegal cards,”* *“Add more ramp,”* etc., because the model doesn't remember format rules like color identity consistently ⁵³ ⁵⁴ . There is no integration to import/export decklists directly; the user has to copy the text output. In summary, ChatGPT's deckbuilding “tool” is essentially its text completion ability, which **mimics decklists it has seen**. It can produce a serviceable casual list with guidance, but it's **far less efficient and reliable than specialized tools** ⁵⁵ .
- **Rules Checking & Legality:** ChatGPT is **not a rules engine**. It can attempt to explain rules (and often does so confidently), but it may be incorrect or outdated. For simple questions (“how does trample work?”) it usually gives a correct general answer, but for complex interactions, it may get things wrong or omit corner cases. Critically, it does not cite official sources by default. As one MTG Agents FAQ points out, a purpose-built bot can reference the Comprehensive Rules, whereas ChatGPT will just present an answer without verification ¹⁰ . Additionally, ChatGPT's knowledge of MTG rules is frozen at training time – it might not incorporate the latest Comprehensive Rules updates or Oracle text changes. In terms of legality, ChatGPT doesn't inherently know banned lists or deck construction rules unless told. It might violate Commander's singleton rule or include extra copies in a Vintage deck unless the prompt explicitly reminds it of those rules ⁵⁰ . Thus, **format validation is manual** – the user has to spot

and correct errors. ChatGPT with web access could, in theory, look up a card legality or rules reference, but that requires custom prompting or plugins, which most casual users won't do.

- **UX/UI Strengths & Weaknesses:** Using ChatGPT for MTG is as straightforward as any chat with the model. The strength is you can ask *anything* in natural language. There's no need to navigate a special UI or know specific commands – it's very accessible for broad queries (e.g., "What are some budget alternatives to Card X in Commander?"). The weakness is that it's not integrated into the MTG workflow: you don't get a deckbuilding interface, card images, or direct links to card details. It's also a one-size-fits-all interface, meaning it lacks MTG-specific optimizations (for instance, it won't auto-complete card names or enforce card counts). The user experience can be frustrating when the AI makes mistakes – you might go in circles correcting it. As one user noted, it becomes a "*downhill battle*" of asking ChatGPT to replace illegal cards and hoping the power level stays consistent ⁵⁶ ⁵⁷ . In contrast, a purpose-built tool would inherently avoid those mistakes. So while ChatGPT's UI is flexible and easy, it demands more vigilance from the user.
- **Positioning & Tone:** ChatGPT isn't marketed for MTG at all – its positioning is as a general assistant. Any use in the MTG domain is user-driven. The tone of its outputs can be adjusted by prompt style (it can be asked to be technical, or casual, etc.), but it has no predefined MTG persona or knowledge beyond what it learned generically. Some community content exists where people *challenge* ChatGPT to build a deck or emulate famous MTG personalities for fun, but that's informal. In essence, **ChatGPT's "site copy" for MTG is nonexistent** – it's the users who frame its role. This lack of targeted messaging means it doesn't instill confidence in MTG users by itself; in fact, experienced players approach it more as a curiosity or starting point rather than a trustworthy advisor ⁵⁵ ⁵⁸ .
- **Business Model:** ChatGPT operates on a freemium model. The **free tier** allows a limited number of prompts with the base model (and has restrictions like no continual conversation memory past a certain length). The **ChatGPT Plus** subscription (~\$20/month) gives access to more powerful models (like GPT-4), faster responses, and additional features like plugins or browsing. For MTG usage, the plus tier can help – GPT-4 is better at logical consistency (so it might handle deck constraints slightly more coherently) and plugins could let it fetch real card data. But these are general improvements, not MTG-specific. In contrast, ManaTap's paid tier directly supports MTG-focused features (like using the latest GPT-5 model with Scryfall updates in context ⁵⁹). With ChatGPT, an MTG user pays for broad AI capability, much of which is not directly useful for Magic, and any MTG-specific knowledge still lags without custom integration. Essentially, one would subscribe to ChatGPT Plus for many reasons, with MTG help being a small bonus at best, whereas subscribing to ManaTap (or similar) is a direct investment in a Magic-centric tool.

Traditional Deckbuilding Tools

EDHREC

- **Core Features:** EDHREC is the premier **deck recommendation and data aggregator** for Commander (EDH) format. Its core feature is **card suggestions based on crowd-sourced decklists**: a user selects a commander (or theme), and EDHREC displays the most commonly played cards with that commander, along with synergy scores, usage percentages, and sample decklists ⁶⁰ . It essentially distills the wisdom of thousands of decks to answer "What cards should I consider for this commander?" In addition, EDHREC provides theme pages (e.g. "lifegain theme" or "Elf tribal") and data-driven analyses like the average mana curve, color distribution, and staples for that strategy. It also has sections for Top Commanders, combos (via Commander Spellbook integration), and curated articles. Recently, EDHREC added features to **browse and search actual decklists** submitted online ⁶¹ , enhancing it from pure aggregation to a partial deck database. However, EDHREC is **not a deckbuilder tool** itself – it doesn't let you assemble a

deck card-by-card. Instead, it's used in conjunction with deckbuilders: you gather ideas on EDHREC, then go to a site like Archidekt or Moxfield to physically build the deck.

- **AI Capabilities:** None – EDHREC does not use AI in the user-facing experience. All recommendations are based on **algorithmic analysis of real deck data**. The site continuously ingests decklists from various sources (like deck hosting sites and MtG Arena logs for Brawl/Commander) and updates its statistics. The suggestions you see are literally what human players tend to include with the same commander or strategy. This means EDHREC's "recommendations" are inherently grounded and non-creative (no new card combinations, just reflecting existing trends). For users, this is a reliable baseline: as one player noted, *"EDHREC's Average Deck feature is essentially what [people want]"* when looking for a solid starting point ⁵⁵. While EDHREC itself doesn't generate content, it has indirectly informed AI tools (e.g., EDHGen.ai uses EDHREC data as part of its input ²³). But within EDHREC, there's no natural language processing or predictive text – it's straightforward data crunching.
- **Deckbuilding Tools/Logic:** EDHREC's logic is about **identifying high-synergy and high-importance cards** for a given commander. For example, on a commander's page it will list cards in categories like "Top Cards" (most popular in decks with that commander) and "High Synergy Cards" (those that appear with this commander far more than in decks in general, indicating a synergistic relationship) ⁶⁰. It also breaks down suggestions by function: mana ramp, card draw, removal, etc., by recognizing card tags. Users can filter suggestions by price (to see budget options) or by theme (for commanders with multiple archetypes). EDHREC also has a **"Recs" feature or integration** that can directly feed chosen cards to deckbuilders (e.g., Archidekt integration allows one-click adding of suggested cards). There is no interactive editing on EDHREC – it's read-only recommendations – but the site often partners with deckbuilding websites so that a user can move from viewing suggestions to building the deck seamlessly (via links or APIs). The logic behind EDHREC's suggestions is purely statistical; it doesn't enforce a perfect 100-card list. It's up to users to pick and choose from the list of, say, 200 suggested cards to form a coherent 100. The assumption is users will use their own judgment to balance the deck, using EDHREC as a guide.
- **Rules Checking & Format Validation:** EDHREC focuses on **Commander legality**. All suggestions for a given commander will respect color identity (you won't see off-color cards). It also won't show banned cards in most contexts (unless you specifically look at a page that includes now-banned cards historically). Since EDHREC draws from actual submitted decks, its data naturally reflects legal deck construction. However, EDHREC doesn't warn about, say, an illegal combination of partners or an over-the-limit card count – those issues simply don't arise because of how data is collected (illegal decks are generally filtered out at the source). For other formats, EDHREC's coverage is limited. It has some data for Brawl and Oathbreaker, but it's predominantly an EDH tool. Rules-wise, it's not an interactive rules reference; it won't explain how a card works or whether two cards combo – it only shows that they are commonly played together. So, **format legality is implicitly handled** (it won't suggest something that breaks Commander deck construction), but players rely on other means for comprehensive rule clarifications.
- **UX/UI Strengths & Weaknesses:** EDHREC's UI is tailored for **easy scanning of card options**. Strengths include its clear presentation of statistical data (percentage bars, highlights on "bargain" cards that are cheap, etc.) and the ability to toggle filters (by price, by card type, by owned cards if logged in, etc.). It's very informative – perhaps *too* informative at times: a given commander page can be long, with dozens of card suggestions in descending order of popularity. New players might be overwhelmed by the sheer volume of data. The site does incorporate some visualization (like pie charts for color distribution of a commander's typical deck) to aid understanding. Another strength is its integration with content: alongside raw data, EDHREC has **articles and set reviews** that add context (these are accessible through the site's blog section and often linked on relevant pages) ⁶² ⁶³. A weakness is that EDHREC is only as

good as the community data – highly unusual commanders or fringe strategies may have sparse or misleading recommendations if the sample size is low. Also, it's web-only and not as mobile-friendly for deck editing (since you can't actually edit there). But as a reference tool, its UX is well-regarded for its purpose: many players open EDHREC on the side whenever brewing an EDH deck.

- **Positioning & Copy:** EDHREC positions itself as “**the recommender for EDH**” – essentially a must-use resource for Commander players. The tone of the site and its copy is mostly factual and data-driven (e.g., “Card X appears in 76% of Atraxa decks”). The name itself is a portmanteau of “EDH” and “RECommendation”. In content pieces, EDHREC adopts a friendly, community-contributor voice (since many different writers publish articles on the site), but the core site copy is minimal – it doesn't need to entice users with flashy slogans because its value is immediately in the data it provides. The messaging is along the lines of “*use the hive mind of the community to improve your deck.*” It's a complementary tool, not an all-in-one solution. Thus, EDHREC doesn't directly compete with ManaTap on AI or interactive features, but it is an **industry-standard baseline** for Commander deckbuilding. ManaTap and similar AI tools have to offer something *beyond* what EDHREC gives (e.g., personalized advice, multi-format support, etc.), because for pure card picks, EDHREC's crowd-sourced wisdom is tough to beat in accuracy ⁶⁴.
- **Business Model:** EDHREC is completely **free** to use. It's supported by advertising (you'll see banner ads for card retailers or EDH-related products) and likely affiliate links for card purchases. The site also has a Patreon that fans can contribute to for perks like an ad-free experience or early access to new features, but all core functionality is available to everyone without pay. There are no premium tiers or accounts needed for the main features (though logging in with a user account can allow certain things like hiding owned card suggestions via integration with archidekt/moxfield collections, or participating in the EDHREC Discord/Patron perks). EDHREC's free, open model has helped it become ubiquitous. From ManaTap's perspective, EDHREC is a competitor only in the sense that it's a go-to alternative for deck advice that doesn't require any AI or payment – a well-established free utility built on community data.

Moxfield

- **Core Features:** Moxfield is a **modern MTG deck builder platform** known for its comprehensive feature set and ease of use ⁶⁵. Key features include an intuitive **deck editing interface** (with real-time search and add, drag-and-drop organization of cards into custom categories/folders), **visual display options** (text list or card images, light/dark mode), and robust **deck analysis**. Moxfield provides stats on mana curve, color distribution, card type breakdown, and even hand draw simulations for playtesting. It supports **all major formats** – you can build Standard, Modern, Commander, Pauper, or any format by selecting the format in deck settings, and Moxfield will tag illegal cards if any are present. There is also a **goldfish playtester**, which lets you draw cards, play them onto a virtual battlefield, and simulate turns to test the deck's flow ⁶⁶. Moxfield emphasizes sharing and discovery: users can make decks public, tag them, and use a powerful search to find decks (e.g., search by commander name, by card included, by format) ⁶⁸. Social features include following other users, commenting on decks, and “liking” (upvoting) decks. It essentially covers everything a serious deck builder would want in terms of constructing and managing decks.
- **AI Capabilities:** None built-in. Moxfield does not incorporate AI suggestions or chat. Any recommendations (like what to cut or add) are left to the user or external tools. It focuses on being the best manual deckbuilder. However, Moxfield can indirectly work with AI tools: for example, one might generate a list with an AI and then import it into Moxfield for refinement. But within Moxfield itself, there's **no AI chat assistant** and no auto-generation of decks by theme. This was a gap that tools like ManaTap aim to fill – offering the intelligence on top of a deckbuilding platform. Moxfield did introduce a feature called “**Moxfield Suggestions**” in beta

that could recommend cards for Commander decks, but those were likely derived from EDHREC data or simple heuristics, not a conversational AI. The lack of AI is by design; Moxfield's philosophy (so far) has been to provide the platform and let the community or other integrations handle the advisory aspect.

- **Deckbuilding Tools/Logic:** The deckbuilding experience on Moxfield is top-tier in terms of logic and convenience. The card search bar is fast and supports filters (by type, price, set, etc.). Once cards are added, you can organize them into custom categories (e.g., "Ramp," "Removal," "Wincons"), which is very useful for Commander. Moxfield automatically calculates your deck's metrics: average mana value, mana production vs requirements, number of lands vs spells, and highlights potential issues (like if your land count is low or if you have too many high-cost cards). It also has a feature to **"Choose Printing/Edition"** for each card and can update the deck to the **cheapest card printings** with one click (helping budget-conscious players) ⁶⁹. Another advanced tool is **card package insertion**: you can create a package (a group of cards, say a 10-card mana ramp suite) and then add that package to any deck in one action ⁷⁰ ⁷¹. In terms of logic, Moxfield enforces deck size and legality rules (if you mark a deck as Commander and try to add an extra card, it will flag it). If a card is banned or too many copies, it similarly flags it. The **playtest** mode uses the actual decklist to allow drawing cards turn by turn, which is logic for testing probability and card interactions (albeit without rules enforcement in playtest – it's manual like goldfishing with physical cards). Moxfield's design goal is to minimize the friction in building and analyzing a deck, and it largely succeeds – as one review stated, *"Moxfield's deck builder is the cleanest to use"* and **everything is on one screen** for editing and viewing ⁷².
- **Rules Checking & Format Validation:** Moxfield has built-in knowledge of format rules. When you create a deck, you specify the format (or casual if unspecified). The system then knows the deck size requirement and the banlist for that format. For example, if you build a Modern deck and try to add *Sol Ring*, the card will be marked in red or with a warning as not legal in Modern. For Commander decks, it enforces one commander (or partner commanders) and 100 total cards. It also implicitly enforces color identity by highlighting cards outside the commander's colors. That said, it won't stop you from saving a deck with illegal cards; it just alerts you to them. It's up to the user to heed those warnings. Moxfield is updated promptly with new sets and changes (often thanks to Scryfall for card data), so it's **reliable for legality checks**. For gameplay rules (interactions between cards), Moxfield doesn't handle that – that's outside the scope of a deck builder. But by providing forums and deck comments, it facilitates community discussion where people might point out rule issues or mis-synergies in decks.
- **UX/UI Strengths & Weaknesses:** Moxfield's UI is widely praised. It's fast, clean, and **highly intuitive** ⁶⁵ ⁷³. The ability to view and edit a deck on the same page (with no separate "edit mode" page reload required) makes it feel like a modern app. The design is polished (as evidenced by 5/5 UI design score in a Draftsim review) ⁷⁴. It also offers personal customization – dark mode, different layout views, etc., which users appreciate. Another strength is **collaboration**: you can share a deck with others and even give edit access for co-building a list (great for team projects or helping a friend). The social features (comments, profiles, following) are integrated in a non-obtrusive way, supplementing the deck pages. In terms of weaknesses, there aren't many – one minor complaint from power users is the inability to share entire folders of decks at once ⁷⁵. And of course, the absence of any AI guidance might be seen as a "weakness" in comparison to ManaTap, but that's by design. Newer players sometimes might wish Moxfield itself could tell them what to cut to reach 100 cards, for instance, but that's outside its current feature set. Overall, the UX is top-notch for what it does – Moxfield is often considered the **benchmark** that other deckbuilding UIs are measured against ⁶⁵.
- **Positioning & Copy:** Moxfield positions itself straightforwardly as *"a modern MTG deck builder"*. Its home page doesn't have flashy slogans – it immediately prompts login or exploration of decks. The branding emphasizes modern tech, reliability, and the community aspect (its logo and name are now widely recognized in the MTG community). The tone is utilitarian; the site copy in

help/FAQ is explanatory and focused on features. Any marketing Moxfield has done is usually via community word-of-mouth or social media showcases of new features (like when they launched their mobile app or added new analysis tools). Moxfield doesn't explicitly compare itself to others on its site (though users and reviewers often do). Instead, it lets its extensive feature list speak for itself – as one review declared, *“Moxfield has a ton of features and is really well-designed... the one I recommend”* ⁶⁵ . This reputation has made it the default deck site for many content creators and communities. For ManaTap, which is newer, positioning against Moxfield means highlighting the AI assistance and integrated tools that Moxfield lacks, while hopefully matching the strong UI foundation that Moxfield is known for.

- **Business Model:** Moxfield is **free** and fully functional for all users. There is no paywall for any feature (even large deck storage or private decks are available to everyone). The platform is sustained through Patreon and possibly affiliate links (it has links to card vendors for “Buy Deck” which likely earn a commission). Moxfield's Patreon offers supporter rewards like a special badge on your profile, early access to new features, or increased limits on some beta features, but nothing that gates normal usage – even without paying, you can use Moxfield with virtually no limitations. This community-driven funding model has worked because Moxfield built a strong trust with users. There are no ads on the site currently, which keeps the UI clean. The result is that Moxfield competes on quality, not price – any new tool like ManaTap that introduces paid tiers must demonstrate enough extra value (like AI features) to entice users who are used to Moxfield's free excellence ⁷⁶ .

Archidekt

- **Core Features:** Archidekt is another popular **online deck building platform** for MTG, known for its **visual interface** and early integration with EDHREC. Like Moxfield, it supports building decks for all formats with card search, collection tracking, and deck analytics. Archidekt's deck editor allows **drag-and-drop card adding**, and by default it displays cards as visual thumbnails (one of its differentiators, as it felt more like laying out cards on a table). It provides standard statistics (mana curve, color spread, etc.) and a **playtest mode** where you can draw cards and simulate plays. A hallmark feature of Archidekt is the **EDHREC integration**: when editing a Commander deck, you can open a sidebar that shows EDHREC suggestions for that commander and directly add those cards if desired ⁷⁷ . It also has strong **collaboration features**, including real-time updates: multiple users can edit a deck together with changes syncing live (useful for co-designing a deck) ⁷⁸ . Archidekt offers deck commenting and rating, and users can browse public deck lists. Overall, it covers similar ground to Moxfield in terms of being a comprehensive deck builder, with a few unique twists in UI and integrations.
- **AI Capabilities:** Archidekt itself does not include AI assistants or generation. Its integration with EDHREC is a powerful suggestion tool but not an AI – it's data-driven. There's no chatbot or automated deck generator within Archidekt. Some third-party attempts have been made to incorporate AI (for example, users might copy a ChatGPT-generated list into Archidekt, or use external scripts), but nothing native. Archidekt's focus remained on providing solid tooling and tapping into community data (like EDHREC, or Commander Spellbook for combos). Given this, Archidekt's “AI capability” is essentially nil – an area where ManaTap or others clearly go beyond. That said, Archidekt could be seen as augmenting itself with “AI by proxy” through EDHREC's collective intelligence which, while not AI, serves a similar purpose of suggestions.
- **Deckbuilding Tools/Logic:** Archidekt's deckbuilder has a few design choices that set it apart. When you create a new deck, Archidekt can **auto-categorize cards** by their perceived role (for EDH decks). For instance, if you add a bunch of creatures and some of them grant evasion or protection, Archidekt might automatically group those under headings like “Evasion” and “Protection” in the deck list ⁷⁹ . This can be handy for seeing your deck's composition at a glance, though as one reviewer noted, it might group differently than a user expects, and it can

be toggled off if undesired ⁸⁰. The EDHREC in-editor panel is a major helper for logic – as you build, you can see what popular cards you haven’t included yet. Archidekt also introduced a **deck folder system** where you can organize decks and even mark decks as private or public. On the playtesting front, Archidekt’s logic is a bit less smooth; users have mentioned the interface for playtest can feel clunky (cards “bounce” around when scrolling, and the field can get messy) ⁸¹. Still, it serves the basic purpose of drawing hands and simulating turns. Archidekt continuously updates its card database via Scryfall, and it supports custom user tags for cards (e.g., marking a card as a commander, or noting custom categories). Its logic on the backend ensures **format legality** is flagged (like Moxfield, it will highlight illegal entries). It also recently added a **collection-based suggestion** feature request – e.g., filtering EDHREC suggestions by what cards you own ⁸² – though it’s unclear if that’s live or pending. In summary, Archidekt’s deckbuilding toolset is rich, with an emphasis on **integrated suggestions and collaboration**.

- **Rules Checking & Format Validation:** Archidekt, upon setting a deck’s format, will enforce or at least inform about format rules. It knows banned lists and card limits. For example, if you have a Legacy deck and add a **Black Lotus**, it will flag it since it’s banned in Legacy. For Commander, Archidekt prevents adding a second copy of a card (except basic lands) unless you override constraints (you can technically force it, but it warns you). It also ensures when you mark a card as Commander that color identity checks are applied to other cards. One notable point: Archidekt was one of the first to support new format variants like **Oathbreaker** when they emerged, showing the team’s attentiveness to format rules. In terms of rules text interactions (like how two cards combo or conflict), Archidekt doesn’t handle that (aside from linking to Gatherer rulings on card pages). However, the integration with **Commander Spellbook** means if your EDH deck contains a known infinite combo, it might highlight that in the combo finder tool. This is a community-driven combo database, not a rules engine, but it’s useful for checking if your deck has any unintended infinite combos. Overall, Archidekt ensures **deck legality and format adherence** quite well, similarly to Moxfield.
- **UX/UI Strengths & Weaknesses:** Archidekt’s UI has strengths in its **visual appeal** and integrated suggestions. Many users initially loved Archidekt for how it shows card images and its relatively clean design (especially compared to older sites like TappedOut). The **live collaboration** is a standout strength for those who need it. Additionally, Archidekt’s team has been receptive to feedback, rolling out new features like collection tracking and performance improvements. However, by comparison to Moxfield, some find Archidekt less intuitive. One critique was that the deck builder UI “lays over the screen in an unpleasant way,” requiring a bit of effort to get used to ⁷⁹. The site can feel slightly heavier to load (likely due to images and the overlay interface). In earlier years, Archidekt had occasional slowness with large lists (they’ve addressed some of these issues). The playtester, as noted, isn’t the best – it’s functional but can be clumsy to manipulate compared to Moxfield’s smoother interface ⁸¹. On the positive side, the **EDHREC panel** is a UX win for EDH players – it’s very convenient to have suggestions without switching tabs. The site’s copy and menu are straightforward, though certain actions (like exporting or printing proxies) might be a bit hidden in menus. In sum, Archidekt’s UX is solid, especially if you value integrated data, but it may not feel as *snappy* or polished in some aspects as Moxfield (per some user reviews). It has a devoted user base, but also some who migrated to Moxfield for performance reasons ⁸³.
- **Positioning & Copy:** Archidekt positioned itself early on as an innovative deckbuilder that **embraced the community** – partnering with EDHREC and others. Its tone is that of a tool built “by players, for players.” The site’s about page and social media often highlight new features and how they make deckbuilding easier. Archidekt doesn’t use flashy marketing language; instead, it often underscored its features: “*Search for cards, analyze your stats and compare prices, all in one place*” ⁸⁴. They know their audience (serious deck builders) and speak to them with feature announcements rather than thematic slogans. In community discussions, Archidekt is often contrasted with Moxfield in a friendly rivalry. Some prefer Archidekt’s approach, others

Moxfield’s – Archidekt’s team seems aware of this and have focused on iterative improvements. They’ve also been present on forums, taking user suggestions (for example, users requested a **recommendation feature based on collection**, and such ideas were acknowledged ⁸⁵). In terms of messaging, Archidekt comes off as **community-centric and data-integrated**. It may lack an AI hook or an “assistant” persona, which ManaTap leverages, so its positioning is squarely as a high-quality deck construction tool.

- **Business Model:** Archidekt is **free** to use with essentially all features available. It appears to sustain itself through partnerships (for instance, TCGplayer integration for card pricing and one-click purchasing – possibly an affiliate revenue source) and possibly investment from those partnerships. The site includes some ads or promotional banners (often for its own content or for TCGplayer). There is no premium subscription for Archidekt, nor any locked features behind paywalls. Like many community MTG sites, it likely relies on a combination of low operating costs, passion, and light monetization through referrals. This means users choosing between Archidekt and ManaTap are not comparing costs (both have free options) but rather features and experience. Archidekt’s free model sets a high bar – any paid offering has to clearly offer something extra. ManaTap’s advantage is offering AI and multi-tool integration which Archidekt lacks, but Archidekt’s zero-cost, no-friction access for robust deckbuilding will appeal to those who don’t need AI assistance.

Feature Comparison of ManaTap and Competitors

To summarize the landscape, the following tables compare key features across ManaTap.ai and its competitors, first for **AI-powered tools** and then for **traditional tools**. This highlights how each platform stacks up in terms of capabilities and focus areas.

Table 1: ManaTap vs Other AI-Powered MTG Tools

Feature	ManaTap.ai (AI & Traditional)	MTG Agents (AI Chat)	EDHGen.ai (AI Generator)	KrakenTheMeta (AI & Deckbuilder)	ChatGPT (General AI)
Core Function	All-in-one MTG deck assistant with AI chat, deckbuilding, and analysis tools ⁸⁶ ⁸⁷ . Supports multiple formats (Commander, Standard, etc.)	MTG-specific AI chat for rules (Nissa) and deck advice (Karn) ¹ ² . Commander-focused advice.	AI-driven EDH deck generator – one-click Commander deck building ²³ ⁸⁸ (no manual editing).	Hybrid platform: full deck editor + AI deck generation & analysis for various formats ³⁶ ³³ .	General AI chatbot (not MTG-specific). Can answer questions or generate text (decklists, explanations) on request.

Feature	ManaTap.ai (AI & Traditional)	MTG Agents (AI Chat)	EDHGen.ai (AI Generator)	KrakenTheMeta (AI & Deckbuilder)	ChatGPT (General AI)
AI Capabilities	Uses GPT-4/5 models for chat-based guidance ⁸⁹ ⁵⁹ . AI can analyze user decks, suggest cards, fix mana bases, etc., in conversation. Continually updated card knowledge ⁵⁹ .	Uses specialized LLMs with MTG training; multi-agent (separate persona for rules vs decks) ⁹⁰ . Provides cited answers and data-integrated suggestions. No free-form generation beyond chat Q&A.	Machine-learning algorithm (non-conversational). Uses EDHREC/Scryfall data to inform deck builds ²³ . Not adaptive – each deck is a fresh generation, often with random twist for fun ²⁶ .	Employs AI for deck generation (given prompt or constraints) and possibly chatbots on site ³⁶ . AI assists in analysis (e.g., “roast” a deck for humor ³⁴). Still improving legality and quality of AI-built decks ³⁷ .	Very advanced LLM (GPT-3.5/4) with broad knowledge. Not tuned to MTG specifically (knowledge cutoff issues for new cards ⁴⁸). Requires careful prompting to use effectively for MTG tasks.
Deckbuilding Tools	Full deck editor (search/add cards, save lists) integrated with AI chat. Additional tools: Probability calculators, price tracking, mulligan simulator within platform ⁹¹ ⁹² . Users can build manually or ask AI to modify/build decks.	No GUI deck editor – user interacts via chat. Deck “analysis” done by Karn agent when user provides a list ⁷ . No direct export; user must apply suggestions elsewhere. Focus on advice, not hosting decks.	No manual editing on site. User sets parameters (budget, style, optional commander) and hits generate ⁸⁸ . Outputs a decklist that user can copy or export. Site shows recent generated decks, but editing requires external tool.	Robust deck editor similar to traditional platforms (card search, collection, etc.) ³³ . Users can build from scratch or use AI to fill a deck. Deck hosting with profiles, liking, commenting. Has draw simulation and basic analysis (mana curve, symbols) ³⁸ .	No dedicated deck tool – just text interface. User must prompt for a list, then manually transfer to a deck builder. Cannot enforce card counts or interact with a decklist beyond text operations (e.g., “replace card X with Y” via prompt).

Feature	ManaTap.ai (AI & Traditional)	MTG Agents (AI Chat)	EDHGen.ai (AI Generator)	KrakenTheMeta (AI & Deckbuilder)	ChatGPT (General AI)
Rules & Legality	Checks format legality in builder (e.g., warns if too few cards or banned cards). AI knows Commander color identity and common rules, but may occasionally err – users are advised to verify AI suggestions ⁸⁷ . Multi-format support with format-specific rules.	Strong on rules Q&A: Nissa agent is trained on Comprehensive Rules and will cite sources ⁹ . Karn respects format when suggesting (supports all major formats ¹¹). However, no automatic deck legality enforcement except what Karn flags in advice.	Always outputs 100-card singleton decks for EDH (color identity adherence). Limited awareness of banlist (unlikely to suggest banned cards given EDHREC usage). No interactive rules explanations; purely focuses on deck composition.	Has format toggles and working on automated legality checks ³⁷ . Commander decks sometimes came out illegal, but dev implementing fixes. Likely flags illegal cards in UI. No detailed rules engine; relies on community/judge for complex rulings.	Does not inherently enforce any MTG rules – must be guided via prompt. Often makes mistakes with Commander rules (e.g., multiple copies, off-color inclusions) ⁵² . Can attempt to explain rules text but without guaranteed accuracy or citations.

Feature	ManaTap.ai (AI & Traditional)	MTG Agents (AI Chat)	EDHGen.ai (AI Generator)	KrakenTheMeta (AI & Deckbuilder)	ChatGPT (General AI)
UX/UI	<p>Polished web UI that blends chat interface and deckbuilder. Example: user can chat with AI while a deck list panel updates. Clean design with achievements and social feed to engage users ⁹³. Some unique UI elements (e.g., “Find my Playstyle” quiz, profile custom cards). Mobile-responsive.</p>	<p>Simple web chat UI with persona avatars (Nissa, Karn). Very straightforward: type questions, get answers with links ⁴. Minimal graphics. Good for quick Q&A, but lacks visual deck construction elements.</p>	<p>Basic web form and text list display. UI is minimalistic and a bit ad-supported ²⁹. Emphasizes fun (has a robot mascot image, chaos prompt) but essentially just generates text decklists. Shoutbox adds a community feel but little interaction with the tool itself.</p>	<p>Ambitious UI combining many features – deck library, editor, AI input box, etc. Has social profile pages and interactive elements. Still evolving; some users find it less intuitive or slightly clunky compared to Moxfield ⁷⁹. Continual improvements are being made (per dev updates).</p>	<p>The UI is just the ChatGPT interface (web or app). Good for natural conversation, but not MTG-specific – no card search, no visual zone for decks. Users copy outputs as plain text. It’s an interface built for general Q&A, so lacks context-specific conveniences (like card hover-over previews or rule references) that dedicated MTG tools have.</p>

Feature	ManaTap.ai (AI & Traditional)	MTG Agents (AI Chat)	EDHGen.ai (AI Generator)	KrakenTheMeta (AI & Deckbuilder)	ChatGPT (General AI)
Positioning & Tone	<p>"Your Deck-Building Companion" – positioned as an AI assistant that is part tutor, part tool ⁴⁴. Tone is friendly and helpful; the AI will explain suggestions if asked. The site copy emphasizes intelligence (AI chat) plus practicality (cost analysis, etc.), aiming to improve both fun and competitive play.</p>	<p>Markets itself as an expert duo for MTG – the selling point is accurate rulings and smart deck tips with sources ⁶. Tone is professional and reliable (Nissa is authoritative, Karn is knowledgeable). Positioning: a specialized alternative to generic chatbots, purpose-built for Magic ¹⁰.</p>	<p>Embraces a chaotic fun angle – "Unleash the Madness" in deck building ²³. Not portrayed as serious or competitive, but as a creativity toy or starting point. Tone is humorous, even self-deprecating (if a deck fails, blame the AI). Targets casual Commander players looking for inspiration and entertainment ⁹⁴ ²⁸.</p>	<p>Positions as an "AI-powered deck builder" that aims to master MTG meta (even calling itself an alternative to traditional deck sites ³⁹). Tone in communications is enthusiastic and feature-focused (e.g., announcing new tools). It's trying to attract both competitive players (with promises of powerful AI optimization) and casual builders (with community and fun features).</p>	<p>Not marketed for MTG at all (a generic AI service). Any "positioning" is repurposed by users: e.g., content creators testing "Can ChatGPT build a deck?" Most find it a novelty or supplementary tool, not a go-to MTG solution ⁹⁵. Tone can vary; default is an academic/informative voice, which might lack the direct camaraderie of an MTG-specific assistant.</p>

Feature	ManaTap.ai (AI & Traditional)	MTG Agents (AI Chat)	EDHGen.ai (AI Generator)	KrakenTheMeta (AI & Deckbuilder)	ChatGPT (General AI)
Business Model	<p>Freemium: Free tier offers a solid range of features and a number of AI queries to “taste” ManaTap ⁹⁶. Pro tier (subscription) unlocks higher AI model access (e.g., GPT-5, presumably more queries or faster responses) and possibly advanced features. Also accepts one-time support via Ko-fi/ PayPal ⁹⁷.</p>	<p>Free for all core usage ¹⁷. No paid tier as of now; donation-supported (Buy Me a Coffee) ⁹⁸. May have a cap on messages per day for non-logged users (to manage API costs) – “Unlock more messages” suggests potential future monetization, but currently community-driven.</p>	<p>Free with ads. Relies on Patreon where fans can donate to remove advertisements ²⁹. All users get unlimited deck generations. No tiered features; the incentive to pay is purely to support the site and get a cleaner UI.</p>	<p>Free with account. Patreon used for donations (and possibly small perks) ⁴⁵. No feature gating at this time – site is fully usable without paying. Long-term, may introduce premium for heavy AI usage or special features, but community growth is the current focus (small but growing user base).</p>	<p>Freemium (non-specialized): Free access to basic ChatGPT (with rate limits). \$20/month for ChatGPT Plus (access to GPT-4, priority access, plugins). From an MTG perspective, free version already isn’t tailored, and plus is a general upgrade – there is no MTG-specific offering. Users weigh ChatGPT’s cost against its myriad uses beyond MTG.</p>

Table 2: ManaTap vs Traditional MTG Deckbuilding Tools

Feature	ManaTap.ai (Hybrid)	EDHREC (EDH suggester)	Moxfield (Deck builder)	Archidekt (Deck builder)
Core Purpose	Unified deck building assistant : combines an AI chat assistant with traditional deck construction and analysis tools on one platform ⁸⁶ ⁸⁷ . Multi-format support (EDH, Standard, etc.).	EDH-focused recommendation engine : aggregates community deck data to suggest popular cards and combos for Commander decks ⁶⁰ . Not an editor – a reference resource for deckbuilding ideas.	Full-featured deck building webapp for all formats. Allows building, saving, analyzing, and sharing decks. Emphasizes modern UI, speed, and comprehensive features (playtesting, collaboration) ⁷² ⁶⁷ .	Full-featured deck building webapp with emphasis on EDH. Offers deck editing, sharing, live collaboration, and built-in EDHREC suggestions ⁷⁷ . Visual card-centric interface, suitable for all formats but especially popular for Commander.
Deck Suggestion Source	AI-driven suggestions tailored to user queries (e.g., “suggest 5 upgrades”) ⁹² . AI uses MTG knowledge (and presumably some data) to recommend cards, which can include offbeat or personalized picks. Also has a “Budget Swaps” tool to suggest cheaper card alternatives ⁸⁶ .	Crowd-sourced data from thousands of decks. Suggestions are based on actual usage frequency and synergy stats ⁶⁰ . Very reliable for finding staple cards and common synergies, but won’t invent new ideas beyond what players already do ⁶⁴ . No personalization – same suggestions for everyone for a given commander.	No built-in AI or recommendation beyond basic filtering by similar decks. Users rely on external info or their own knowledge to choose cards. Moxfield does allow viewing other users’ decks and maybe has an average decklist import, but generally the user manually picks all cards. (Third-party integration with EDHREC exists via copy-paste or browser extensions, not native.)	EDHREC integration provides a list of recommended cards for your commander within the editor ⁷⁷ . Also shows data like % inclusion. This gives a data-driven suggestion list similar to visiting EDHREC, but accessible while editing. Apart from EDH suggestions, no AI or other recs – for non-EDH formats, user relies on own ideas or netdeck lists.

Feature	ManaTap.ai (Hybrid)	EDHREC (EDH suggester)	Moxfield (Deck builder)	Archidekt (Deck builder)
Deck Editing & UI	Interactive chat + editor hybrid. Users can either manually edit the decklist or ask the AI to add/remove cards, then see changes. Also standard editing capabilities (search card by name/type, add to list). UI showcases extra tools (curve analysis, draw simulator as separate pages ⁹¹). The presence of AI chat alongside editing is unique , guiding users as they build.	No editing – <i>view only</i> . UI lists cards with stats, grouped by categories (e.g., by function or popularity). Users take information from EDHREC and go to an external deck editor to apply it. EDHREC does have links to export an “average deck” to sites like Archidekt for convenience. Essentially, EDHREC’s UI is optimized for displaying card lists and metrics, not modifying decks live.	Sleek deck editor: All on one page, add cards via search bar, organize with tags/folders. UI is fast and modern (drag-drop, keyboard shortcuts) ⁷² ⁶⁷ . Shows deck stats in a sidebar. Has a playtest mode to simulate draws and play cards onto a virtual battlefield for goldfishing. Also supports collaboration (sharing deck links with edit permissions) and commenting on decks. Responsive design and dedicated mobile app mean good usability across devices.	Deck editor with overlay design: Adding cards opens a panel on the side of the screen where you search and add, which some find less intuitive ⁷⁹ . Visual display of cards (image thumbnails) is default, but can toggle list view. Has robust features: tagging, grouping, and a playtester (though the playtester UX is somewhat weaker ⁸¹). Live collaboration is a plus (multiple people can edit simultaneously). Good integration: e.g., clicking an EDHREC suggestion auto-adds that card. Overall UI is functional but a bit heavier than Moxfield in feel.

Feature	ManaTap.ai (Hybrid)	EDHREC (EDH suggester)	Moxfield (Deck builder)	Archidekt (Deck builder)
Analytics & Tools	Comprehensive: Probability calculator (hypergeometric odds for drawing combos), Mulligan simulator, Price Tracker (monitor price changes of cards in deck), “Cost to Finish” (given your collection, cost to acquire rest) ⁹⁹ ⁹¹ . These are built-in tools that traditionally one would use separate apps for. Also, achievement system and custom card creator are novel extras for user engagement ¹⁰⁰ ¹⁰¹ .	Analytics on EDHREC revolve around card prevalence and synergy, not your specific deck. It shows overall stats like average mana curve for decks of a commander, or top combinations. No personalized analysis of a user's specific deck list (since you're not building one there). However, it does highlight if you're missing typical pieces (by comparing to what average decks include). For deeper analysis (mana curve, color balance), users must use a deckbuilder.	Excellent analysis for the deck you build: mana value curve, color symbol counts vs mana sources, type distribution, and visual graphs. It automatically calculates these as you add cards. Moxfield's playtest is a key tool for analyzing draws and hand consistency. It lacks built-in probability calculators for specific draw scenarios (ManaTap's separate tools cover that), but third-party or manual methods can be used. Pricing info is integrated (shows price per card and total deck cost with options to pick vendors) – with one-click purchase links ¹⁰² . Overall, it covers 95% of needs for evaluating a deck's composition; external tools are rarely needed except for very specific calculations.	Good standard analytics: shows mana curve, color breakdown, mana source vs requirement (especially for EDH, it notes color identity coverage), and prices from multiple vendors. The UI for stats is slightly less detailed than Moxfield's (at least historically), but it's comparable. Archidekt also allows goldfish draws and has a “hand simulator” . It doesn't have something like ManaTap's probability query tool or a built-in “suggest cuts” analyzer – it assumes users use the EDHREC suggestions and their own judgment. Price comparison is a feature: it can display CardKingdom vs TCGplayer prices, etc., for each card.

Feature	ManaTap.ai (Hybrid)	EDHREC (EDH suggester)	Moxfield (Deck builder)	Archidekt (Deck builder)
Rules Enforcement	<p>Enforces deck construction rules within the builder (format legal card counts, sideboard sizes, commander color identity). The AI assistant also tries to adhere to rules in its suggestions (e.g., not suggesting off-color cards), but users are advised to double-check AI outputs ¹⁰ ⁸⁷ . For detailed card interactions or judge-level questions, ManaTap's AI can answer many, but it does not cite official text like MTG Agents does.</p>	<p>Not an editor, but EDHREC's data inherently reflects rules-compliant decks (it won't list illegal cards for a commander, and suggests only one copy of each card). It doesn't <i>enforce</i> anything as you're not building there. It also doesn't explain rules, aside from what can be inferred from usage (e.g., it might note combos or interactions in article text).</p>	<p>Strict on deck legality: selecting a format sets rules for max copies and banned cards. The interface flags issues but allows you to save decks with illegal cards (useful for theorycrafting or casual variants, but clearly marked). It doesn't prevent saving – just warns. For gameplay rules, Moxfield defers to users; it doesn't have a rules Q&A, but the community often helps via comments.</p>	<p>Also implements format rules – will show an alert icon for illegal entries. Archidekt prevents adding more cards than allowed in a format (you can override but it's an explicit action). It automatically keeps Commander decks to singleton (if you try adding a duplicate, it increments a count on that card entry rather than adding a second line, making it obvious you have 2x which is not normal in EDH). No built-in rules help beyond that. The EDHREC suggestions obey color identity and format by default.</p>

Community & Social

Has social features: users can publish decks publicly, see “Most liked” decks on the site ¹⁰³, and there’s a **Shoutbox** global chat for the community ⁹³. Achievements encourage engagement (e.g., using the site at certain times, building certain decks). Likely allows following other users and sharing deck links. Still a newer platform, so community size is growing.

EDHREC itself doesn’t have user accounts for deck building, but it fosters community via its content (articles by community members, comments section on articles, and an associated EDHREC podcast/ Discord). It’s more of a hub of information than a social platform. It does list top commanders and trending cards which reflect community trends. No direct interaction like likes or follows on the main site, though Reddit and Discord communities exist around EDHREC.

Very community-oriented: huge database of public decks, the ability to follow users, like/upvote decks, and comment threads on deck pages. Many content creators post their lists on Moxfield, bringing in followers. There’s no global chat, but there are **forums/Discord** unofficially for Moxfield users. The site sometimes runs events (like deckbuilding challenges) via social media. With a large user base, Moxfield’s community aspect is a strength – easy to discover decks and get feedback.

Community features in Archidekt include public deck browsing, likes (an upvote system) and comments on decks. Collaboration mode is a plus for social building. The user base is sizable (though some migrated to Moxfield, Archidekt still has dedicated users). Archidekt also integrated with **Commander spellbook** and other community databases, showing a philosophy of linking community resources. They have an official Discord for support and community discussion. Socially, Archidekt might be a bit less bustling than Moxfield in terms of sheer number of shared decks, but it offers all necessary mechanisms for community interaction

Feature	ManaTap.ai (Hybrid)	EDHREC (EDH suggester)	Moxfield (Deck builder)	Archidekt (Deck builder)
				around deckbuilding.
Business Model	Freemium: Free tier available with generous features; Pro subscription for advanced AI usage (and possibly other perks like faster response or unlimited chats). Monetization also via donations. This supports ongoing costs of AI API usage. All traditional deckbuilding functions are likely available free, payment mainly enhances AI aspects ⁹⁶ .	Free & ad-supported: EDHREC is free. Revenue from ads and affiliate links (and Patreon donations). No paid tier; all data is accessible to everyone. The value proposition is to drive traffic (which they monetize via ads/partners) by being the go-to EDH resource.	Free: All features free to users. Monetized via voluntary Patreon (small perks) and affiliate sales (card purchase links). No ads on the site – funded by community support and possibly now by backing from TCGplayer (no official subscription plans). Sustainable due to relatively low costs (no heavy AI compute) and high user volume for affiliate conversions.	Free: No subscription, no paid features. Supported by partnerships (e.g., TCGplayer for price data and purchase linking) and possibly some ads. The team might have sponsorships or external funding. Users incur no cost for using the platform fully. The free availability of such robust tools sets user expectation that deck building software is generally a free service, which ManaTap must factor in when charging for AI portions.

ManaTap’s Advantages – What It’s Doing Better

ManaTap manages to **bridge AI assistance with practical deckbuilding** in ways none of the competitors fully do. Notably, ManaTap offers an integrated experience: you can chat with an AI about your deck *while building it*, all in one place. This seamless fusion means a user can ask “What card draw options am I missing?” and immediately drag those suggestions into the deck – something you’d otherwise juggle multiple tools to accomplish. ManaTap also supports **multiple formats beyond Commander**, giving it a broader reach than tools like EDHGen (which is EDH-only) or even MTG Agents (focused on Commander for deck advice) ¹² . Another key strength is ManaTap’s **breadth of features**. It not only helps pick cards but also covers ancillary needs: price tracking, budget optimization, draw simulations, and probability calculations are built right in ⁹¹ ⁸⁶ . Most competitors offer only a subset of these – for example, Moxfield has playtesting but no price alerts, and MTG Agents can answer rules

but doesn't manage collections or prices. ManaTap consolidates these tools, which is *convenient and time-saving*.

Furthermore, ManaTap's **AI chat is more flexible and conversational** than the more rigid "prompt in, deck out" style of EDHGen. Users can iteratively refine their deck with ManaTap's AI – akin to having a knowledgeable friend or coach on call. This interactive tuning can lead to more personalized and creative outcomes. While MTG Agents has a chat, ManaTap's AI is integrated with actual deck data and format context (for instance, it knows your deck's contents when suggesting upgrades, something ChatGPT alone wouldn't know without re-feeding the list each time). Another advantage is **user experience design**: ManaTap's interface, with its achievement badges and social shoutbox, encourages exploration and engagement ⁹³. These gamified elements keep users coming back and learning (e.g., an achievement for using ManaTap at midnight incentivizes usage, and in the process, the user might discover new deck ideas in late-hour chats). No other platform currently has this kind of fun engagement layer. The **tone** ManaTap strikes is also a plus – it's friendly and approachable for newcomers ("companion" is a welcoming term), yet it offers depth and "pro" features for advanced users (like using GPT-5 for high-quality responses) ⁸⁹.

Lastly, ManaTap's **Proactive guidance** is something competitors lack. Traditional tools wait for the user to make decisions; ManaTap's AI can proactively highlight issues (mana curve too high, not enough lands, missing removal, etc.) and suggest fixes unprompted. This lowers the skill floor for deckbuilding – a newer player can avoid common pitfalls with ManaTap's help. In short, ManaTap is doing better by being an all-in-one **coach + workbench**. It reduces the need to cross-reference multiple websites (EDHREC for suggestions, then a deckbuilder, then a price tracker, etc.), because it handles those tasks under one roof. This integrated, intelligent approach is a significant competitive advantage in convenience and innovation.

Opportunities for Improvement – What ManaTap Could Learn from Others

Despite its strengths, ManaTap can draw inspiration from features and approaches that competitors excel at. One clear area is **rules precision and citation**. MTG Agents' Nissa agent demonstrates the value of providing official rule citations and step-by-step breakdowns for complex questions ⁴ ⁹. ManaTap's AI, while knowledgeable, currently advises to "verify for competitive play" and doesn't cite sources ⁸⁷. Implementing a citation mechanism or at least training the AI to reference the Comprehensive Rules for tricky interactions could boost trust among hardcore players. ManaTap could even introduce a dedicated "rules mode" in its chat, learning from MTG Agents' multi-agent design – so that when a pure rules question is asked, the AI responds more like a judge (with rule numbers or Gatherer rulings).

ManaTap could also **embrace community data** more. EDHREC's success shows that crowd-sourced recommendations are highly valued for their proven effectiveness ⁶⁴. ManaTap's AI could borrow this by cross-checking its suggestions against EDHREC's database – for example, "AI suggests Card X, which is used in 70% of similar decks" could be indicated, merging AI creativity with data validation. Incorporating an "EDHREC overlay" for users who want to see community picks alongside AI picks might capture the best of both worlds. Similarly, Archidekt's integration of EDHREC in the deckbuilder is something ManaTap could replicate: while the AI suggests dynamically, ManaTap's UI could also have a panel of "Popular cards for this commander/format" as a fallback. This ensures that ManaTap doesn't miss obvious staples (one criticism of AI builders is sometimes they omit format staples that data-driven lists catch ¹⁰⁴). Essentially, **AI + data hybrid suggestions** could be a learning from competitors.

Another area to learn from is the **refinement of deck editing UX**. Moxfield and Archidekt have spent years fine-tuning the deck construction interface for speed and simplicity. ManaTap's interface, with chat and deck editor together, is novel but potentially could feel cluttered. Observing how Moxfield keeps things on one screen and how Archidekt handles drag-drop images can guide ManaTap in polishing its UI (e.g., ensuring that adding or removing a card via AI or manual input updates instantly and clearly). Also, **performance and reliability** at scale is something Moxfield excels at – ManaTap should ensure that as it grows, the responsiveness of deck editing and saving remains top-tier, learning from any performance issues competitors had and solved (like caching, offline support, etc.).

ManaTap could also adopt some **community-centric features** that KrakenTheMeta and Moxfield have. For instance, Kraken's fun "Roast my deck" feature is low-hanging fruit for ManaTap's AI – it already can analyze a deck; adding a playful roast function could engage users socially (people love sharing AI roast results for laughs). Likewise, Moxfield's idea of "card packages" for quick adding groups of cards ⁷¹ is something ManaTap's AI could assist with – maybe allow users to name a package ("classic elf ramp package") and ManaTap can auto-insert a pre-defined or AI-curated set of cards. Additionally, **mobile app development** is an area ManaTap could prioritize by looking at Moxfield's success in launching an app. Many players build decks on the go; a dedicated ManaTap app (or a highly optimized mobile web experience) would help it compete where currently most are web-only.

Another lesson: **clarity in tiered offerings**. ManaTap's pricing model should be transparent and fair, taking note of what users expect for free versus paid. Competitors like Moxfield and Archidekt being entirely free means ManaTap must justify its Pro tier. Perhaps adopting a page from ChatGPT's book – clearly delineating what extra power/features a Pro subscriber gets (e.g., higher AI limits, priority responses, access to newest models) – will help users see the value. Ensuring the free tier is generous enough (as a "great taste" ⁹⁶) will hook users without frustrating them, something learned from MTG Agents' approach of free core usage with optional support.

Finally, ManaTap could improve **social and collaborative aspects** by studying others. For example, implementing deck commenting or forums could keep more discussion on-platform, rather than users needing Reddit/Facebook to discuss decks. Archidekt's real-time collaboration is a standout – ManaTap could integrate a mode where you and a friend both chat with the AI and edit a deck together (a novel twist on collab deckbuilding). Even simple things like allowing users to follow each other or showcasing top deck brewers (like Moxfield does) can strengthen the community and content on ManaTap's site. In summary, ManaTap can learn to **cite like MTG Agents, suggest like EDHREC, polish like Moxfield, and engage like Kraken/Archidekt** – these enhancements would solidify it as a leader in both intelligence and user-friendliness.

Missed Opportunities Across the Space

The current MTG deck tech landscape is rich, but there are still unmet needs that ManaTap (or others) could seize as differentiators:

- **AI-Powered Playtesting/Simulation:** No platform yet offers an AI that can *play* Magic or simulate meaningful gameplay to test your deck. For example, an AI sparring partner that can pilot a gauntlet deck against your brew could revolutionize testing. While tools exist to goldfish (draw cards) ⁶⁶ or manually play out games online, an AI that understands basic strategic decisions could help players see how their deck might perform in real scenarios. This is a complex challenge, but if ManaTap's AI could, say, suggest lines of play or identify weak spots in a deck by virtually playing a few mock games, it would fill a huge gap. Currently, players have to

either play many real games or use simplistic simulators – an AI opponent or advisor in gameplay is a frontier not yet realized in MTG tech.

- **Personalized Learning and Coaching:** While AI tools answer questions, none explicitly tailor a learning curriculum for players. There's an opportunity for a system that tracks a user's understanding and decks over time and provides targeted tips. For instance, noticing a user always struggles with building a proper mana base and then offering a mini-lesson or interactive guide on that ("I see your last 3 decks had mana issues; here's a quick tutorial on land ratios"). ManaTap already has a companion vibe and even a "Find my playstyle" quiz prompt – expanding this into a more guided onboarding for new players (like a step-by-step deckbuilding wizard that teaches as you build) would meet a need for education. Traditional tools assume knowledge; ManaTap could become the go-to for **learning deckbuilding** systematically, not just doing it.
- **Deeper Collection Integration and Economical Deckbuilding:** Some strides are being made (Kraken added a "use my collection" toggle for Commander generation ³², ManaTap has "Cost to Finish" calculations ¹⁰⁵), but there's more to do. A missed opportunity is a tool that automatically suggests decks or upgrades **based on the cards you own** across all formats. Many players have a binder of cards and wonder "what can I build from this?" If ManaTap could scan a user's collection list and intelligently suggest decks (perhaps "You're 10 cards away from a competitive Modern Burn deck, here's what to get" or "Using only your collection, here's an EDH deck idea..."), it would fill a practical niche. This aligns AI with real-life constraints, saving money and making use of card libraries. Untapped.gg does something akin for Arena (suggest decks from your digital collection), but for paper Magic with AI, it's untapped territory.
- **Cross-Platform Ecosystem and Integrations:** Currently, each tool is somewhat siloed – e.g., if you generate a deck on EDHGen or ManaTap, you then manually put it on MTGO or Arena or TTS to play. There's an opportunity in making the jump from deckbuilding to playing more seamless. For instance, ManaTap could integrate with Magic Online or Arena deck imports directly (where applicable, Arena for Standard/Historic decks) to allow one-click export of a brewed deck to those platforms. Or, perhaps a partnership with tabletop simulator platforms to allow playtesting the deck with friends in a virtual space. While Moxfield and others provide text exports, deeper integration (like an Arena API connection to validate and import decks) could differentiate a platform. As of 2026, no AI deck tool auto-checks "crafting costs" on Arena or similar – a forward-looking missed opportunity is bridging the gap between *theorycrafting* and *actual play* through AI. For example, "This Standard deck you built on ManaTap will cost 8 rare wildcards on Arena. Do you want to swap any cards for budget options?" – such synergy between building and playing would be innovative.
- **Enhanced Multiplayer/Group Features:** Commander is a social format, yet none of the tools have features catering to group deckbuilding or gameplay beyond sharing decklists. A space to explore is multi-user AI sessions – e.g., a pod of four friends could input all their commanders and ManaTap's AI could analyze the pod's power balance or suggest a fun achievement to pursue (like challenges or synergies between decks). Another idea: a "meta snapshot" tool (ManaTap hints at this with a Meta Snapshot page) that isn't just generic data but tailored to your playgroup. If players in a circle upload their decks, an AI could identify the common strategies and holes in that mini-meta. This addresses the local meta tuning that currently is done by gut feeling. No competitor addresses playgroup-level insights directly; ManaTap could leverage its AI to do so (e.g., "All your friends play heavy control – consider building some combo or aggro to counterbalance.").

- **Transparency and AI Trust-Building:** Across AI tools, a general missed opportunity is helping users trust and understand AI decisions. Often the AI suggestion seems like a black box: why did it pick that card? Was it because of synergy, curve, or just a random thought? Providing explanations or rationale (even if approximate) for AI deck suggestions would be novel. For instance, “Suggested Card X because your deck lacks graveyard hate and 68% of comparable decks include it.” This merges AI with explainable recommendations. While not trivial, even a simple reason like “Card X is a combo piece with Card Y in your deck” would educate the user. This kind of feature is largely absent – users are left to guess why the AI said something. Implementing it would increase confidence and help players learn **why** a suggestion is good, not just take it blindly. It’s an opportunity to differentiate by making the AI a **teacher** not just an oracle.

In conclusion, while current tools cover a lot of ground, they largely stop at deck construction and basic analysis. ManaTap and others have the opportunity to push into the next horizon: *integrating deckbuilding with gameplay, personalization, and deeper insight*. Whichever platform capitalizes on these missed opportunities could set a new standard and further cement their place in every MTG player’s toolkit. By learning from competitors and innovating in these open areas, ManaTap can continue to evolve and stay ahead in the ever-improving landscape of Magic: The Gathering technology tools.

Sources: Relevant information has been drawn from the official sites and descriptions of ManaTap ⁴⁴⁸⁹, MTG Agents ¹², EDHGen ²³²⁵, KrakenTheMeta ³⁷³³, ChatGPT user discussions ⁵⁰¹⁰⁶, EDHREC data pages ⁶⁰, and deckbuilder reviews ⁶⁵⁶⁶, among other community and developer insights as cited above. Each platform’s strengths and weaknesses were evaluated in light of these sources to ensure an accurate and up-to-date comparison.

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