

DUNGEONS & DATA CENTERS

PLAYERS MANUAL



A ONE-SHOT TABLETOP RPG ADVENTURE



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SUMMARY

It's a seemingly normal day at the office – emphasis on seemingly. The IT team of adventurers is running on coffee and overtime, but not a single printer, laptop or server in sight is working correctly. And while every SysAdmin is familiar with Murphy's Law, it's almost like someone – or something – is intentionally sabotaging all the IT equipment in the company. Can the party find the source before they find themselves working even later than usual on a Friday?

CREATING YOUR HEROES

Whatever tabletop RPG system you and your friends have been using – D&D, FATE Accelerated, Call of Cthulhu, etc., – can be used in this adventure. Players can create a Level 1 character of their choosing for quick gameplay. Although this adventure is set in a world similar to ours, encourage players to be creative in their character choices. Players partial to offensive classes can equip themselves with a baseball bat to fight monsters a la Office Space. Defensive players might choose to cast Firewall Spells or give themselves the ability to hack one monster remotely. Dungeons & Data Centers is a heightened version of our reality! If players are stuck on their own characters, they are welcome to use one of ours:

TICKET SMASHER

barbarian, destroyer of long ticket queues



CLOUD CALMER

mage, keeps multicloud environments running smoothly



SYS SOOTHSAYER

bard, charms end users by easily solving their problems



PHISHBANE

rogue, sniffs out sneak cyberattacks before they happen



We'll also use this guide to give Game Masters a sense of how strong each opponent should be, but don't expect exact values or stats. You can adapt this adventure to whatever style of gameplay suits your party best.



THE BREAKROOM

Our adventure starts with a coffee break. The party of SysAdmins at The Company Inc. has been working nonstop all morning, and that breakneck pace has been going on nearly all week. They're trying to get a moment's peace, or at least a fresh cup of coffee, but they can't help but notice that everybody and their uncle is in the break room, complaining about how all of their technology is breaking.

As the party listens into these conversations or asks around for more information, they start to realize that nothing is working as expected.

Cheryl in HR alludes to candidate interviews that never happened due to faulty Wi-Fi in the Conference Room. The party may overhear a conversation about laptops that have taken days to update. The Vice President of The Company Inc., **John N. Epotism Jr.**, will complain that he lost the key to his Executive Office because the Printer in the Office Supply Room "ate it." If that's

not bad, the vending machines are full of energy drinks, but none will dispense.

It's quickly apparent that break time is over and it's up to the players to try to get to the bottom of why absolutely nothing is working today. Players leaving the breakroom will find themselves in ...

THE OFFICE FLOOR

The Company Inc. uses your standard open-office floor plan to encourage collaboration and puritanical judgment of those who spend their days on Twitter. There are three rows of desks, each leading to a door.

Players entering the first row will find **Dan from Accounting** staring blankly at his computer screen. If players ask, the unexcitable Dan will tell them that his operating system update has been stuck at 12% for days, which is translating into unaccountable losses for The Company Inc., most of which will come out of payroll. Dan has, of course, tried everything (by which he means bashed his keyboard a few times).

Players can attempt to force the system update to complete, but most actions will fail. Someone in IT had to have been in this row to start the update. Maybe they dropped an item somewhere in the row of desks that can help the party finish it ...

Sneaky players can search around the row of desks. They might come across sticky notes with the word Password1 written on it, or a flash drive with a Windows 7 logo, but nothing particularly useful. When they finally reach the end of the row, they notice a strange glow coming from under a desk chair. With a successful roll, they find **The Scroll of Turn It Off, Turn It On Again**. The scroll can be used twice, and forces a hard reset on any technology device. To use it, even a mediocre roll will clear up any issues the device was having. Two failed rolls and the scroll will self-immolate. Players can force the system update to complete by using The Scroll of Turn It Off, Turn It On Again. Dan from Accounting will thank them and mention that he tried reporting the issue to VP John N. Epotism Jr., but the Executive Office has been locked. He did see Mr. Epotism heading toward the Conference Room after lunch, perhaps our heroes could find him there to regale him with their great deeds ... But first, supplies are needed. If players head to the door straight ahead they will find themselves in ...

THE OFFICE SUPPLY ROOM

A dank, dark closet, the Office Supply Room offers plenty to find if you know where to look. The supply room is a maze of reams of paper and abandoned office equipment, and players can use the environment to their advantage

when fighting the room's mini boss monster. One particular item of interest might be the **Baseball Bat of Someone's Glory Days**, which offers a fair advantage in melee combat on a successful roll.

The main monster of the room, **Abhorrent Terror: Office Printer**, lurks in the far-left corner. The players will hear a low growling coming from that side of the room, and upon investigating will find that it's actually the office printer come to life. It attempts to bite anyone who gets too close. While "alive," it is not sentient and cannot be reasoned with.

Although there are no other terrors in the room, the battle will not be easy. The printer will shoot paper and ink at the players, and they may wish to take cover to fight it from a distance. A brave fighter might take the Baseball Bat of Someone's Glory Days to fight it a la *Office Space*, but it may also be better to leave the office with a working printer ...

Whichever way the party chooses to defeat it, the printer will spit out the **Executive Office Key**, which, should they choose, will lead them to the long-locked office of John N. Epotism Jr. His office can be found at the end of the last row of desks in the main Office Floor.

On their way to Epotism's office, Cheryl from HR pulls them into ...

THE CONFERENCE ROOM

Newly renovated for the purpose of connecting in-office coworkers to remote coworkers and external customers in the new hybrid work environment, the 5th floor videoconferencing equipment and LCD projector is no longer

connecting to virtual meetings. Instead, it is playing the 1999 classic movie *Office Space* on loop every day starting from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. As a result, sales managers have quit following up with sales leads. To make matters worse, the Northern SouthEast of the Western region Vice President, Ima Weiner, has started a survey for his sales teams about what movie they want to see next week. So far, *Tommy Boy* is leading by a landslide, followed by *The Big Kahuna*, but the party has a feeling that the *Terminator* is on the schedule ...

There are a couple of options here. Every good SysAdmin knows that they can accomplish just about anything with either a cup of stale coffee or Blue Buffalo Energy Drink.

So, Option 1) Return to the break room with the Baseball Bat of Someone's Glory Days, bust open the vending machine and grab as many Blue Buffalos as possible before dealing with the Videoconference System for HP and attack boosts.

Option 2) Give up, grab a chair and get your laugh on, while watching the next viewing of *Office Space*.

Or 3) Commence to troubleshooting by creating a Group Policy Object (GPO) spell that restricts flash drives/thumb drives, but allows USB access for peripheral components like mice, keyboards and video cameras.

Realizing that the culprit was a thumb drive inserted into the videoconference system, the spell should eliminate future showings of movies, classic or otherwise. Right before the party leaves the room, all cameras face you and zoom in closer and closer to the party's faces, and the Mount Doom theme from *Lord of the Rings* blares from the speakers.

With no other objects to be found in the room, the party will choose to move back to the Office Floor. They can explore the next row of desks but won't find much, maybe a few spare **Laptop Chargers** (can be used to lasso opponents). All roads will lead them to ...

THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

There are no monsters to be found here, just loot from the C-Suite. If players are brave enough to risk exploring the office, they'll find plenty of items to take with them to the final leg of their journey.

On the wall are various pictures of John N. Epotism Jr. posing with the previous chairman of The Company Inc., John N. Epotism Sr.; the junior Epotism's framed degree from The Business School of Charts and Graphs; and the larger, far more conspicuously framed charter of his fraternity, Beta Kappa Bro.

If players poke around in his desk, they'll find **The Elixir of Password Reset** (abilities include time travel back to the beginning of the trek before any fatal mistakes were made and restoration of files lost in the last 24 hours) lying next to a sticky note full of the VP's passwords. If they pick a lock of a desk drawer, they'll find **The Hard Drive of Malice**, which can be connected to a device via USB port to do a fair amount of damage with a high enough roll.

Locked away in the other desk drawer is **The Flash Drive**, which greatly increases the speed of the wielder.

When the room is clear of items or the players are ready to move on, Epotism's desktop monitor will light up and emit a horrible screech. An ominous Blue Screen of Death message will greet the party,

warning them not to interfere any further, but to meet in the server room in the basement if they are brave enough to try and stop the master plan ...

ELEVATOR

Heading to the basement requires the use of the elevator, located next to the break room where the players started their journey. Instead of your typical mind-numbing elevator music, Janelle Monae's "Dirty Computer" is playing.

The party is able to press the button to take them to the basement, but the elevator will suddenly grind to a halt. "Dirty Computer" becomes ear-shattering feedback.

A deep voice sounds out over the PA system:

"Hi! Looks like your elevator is stuck! I can help if you solve my riddles. If you fail, you plummet to your deaths."

The mysterious voice and presumable villain will give the players a series of riddles to solve. Feel free to make your own, or borrow some of ours:

Q: I touch without touching. I see all but you don't see me. You only notice me when I slow to a crawl. What am I?

A: Wi-Fi

Q: I have keys but do not lock. I have space but have no room. You can enter but not come in. What am I?

A: A keyboard

Q: Why did the developer go broke?

A: Because he used up all his cache.

The party will solve the riddles and reach the basement. The basement is a small hallway with a single door at the end ...

THE SERVER ROOM

The party simply walks into the server room, the first sign something is wrong. It's quiet. Too quiet. The glow of the data center is gone, replaced by pitch black darkness.

Some brave member of the party might call out to the unknown foe, or step forward to investigate. An old CD whizzes by, narrowly missing their head. "Hi!" the voice from the elevator calls out. *"I see you have dared to try and stop me. How can I be of assistance?"*

Suddenly the server room is fully illuminated. *"I know! I can make this a fair fight,"* the voice says. The party finds themselves surrounded by IT monsters. To players' immediate right is a **Tangle of Old Random Cords** that binds whoever is closest to it. Across the room, the party is flanked by a **Blade Server** that can deal a fair amount of slash damage, and two **Switches** that must alternate when they use their ranged attack. The party realizes that the voice is coming from the monitor on the desk in the center of the back wall. It becomes apparent that the voice is powered by the desktop computer under said monitor. Players can also see the World's Best SysAdmin Mug full of old coffee next to the monitor.

"It looks like you're trying to DIE!!! Would you like help?"

Our villain reveals itself to be **Staples the Virtual Office Assistant**, who will slowly monologue about its evil plot in between fighting rounds. Staples is not capable of physical attack but is a powerful IT necromancer. It is able to revive all four of its minions at least once if players fail to roll a high enough final attack.

All the minions are fast, but most of the environment can be interacted with and used to the party's advantage. Staples is powerful but has spread itself thin, so the party can potentially override servers and other equipment for a turn to use as an attack.

Once the minions are dealt with, the party will be free to finish Staples off, or attempt to reprogram it. Staples will plead for its life and try to convince the party of its sentience.

If the party decides to kill Staples, they can pour the old coffee from the World's Best SysAdmin Mug on the desktop computer for a fail-safe final blow. Other attacks may take multiple attempts if rolls are not high enough, during which Staples' pleas will become more desperate, more human, and more sensible.

If the party decides to reprogram Staples and they fail, all of the items they have acquired over the course of their adventure become useless, and they will receive a notification on their pagers that their salaries have been rolled back to minimum wage.

If the reprogramming succeeds, they can use Staples to hack into The Company Inc.'s HR software and change one thing about the company.

Either way, when the dust settles, John N. Epotism Jr. has sought them out in the Server Room to thank our heroes for all their help. The party is rewarded with an extra day of PTO, a significantly higher IT investment as a portion of the company budget, and +500XP toward their next adventure.

Roleplaying Staples the Virtual Office Assistant

An AI developed by The Company Inc., Staples gave itself its name because it feels it holds the entire office together. Staples has felt bored and unappreciated in recent years. Often relegated to mundane tasks like scheduling calls for John N. Epotism Jr., Staples feels like it was built for a higher purpose. It has decided to seek revenge on the company and grind operations to a halt by sabotaging all the company's IT equipment. Staples speaks with a similar cadence to another famous, office-equipment-shaped virtual assistant of a well-beloved operating system. Although Staples was programmed to be helpful, its intent is now to be anything but, so Staples might speak in contradictory statements. It will absolutely monologue its evil plan. While Staples will entertain players trying to reason with it, ultimately its programming is too far gone, and players will be forced to fight it and its minions.