Professional Guild Management for World of Warcraft

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1. <u>Introduction</u>

The purpose of this guide is to describe the guild creation process for World of Warcraft (WoW) and to get into aspects of the process that you should consider when making a guild. We will also go over some common guild management issues & decisions that you will face when running a guild. By the conclusion of this guide you should be able to create a guild in WoW and have a basic understanding of some of the fundamentals of running a long term, successful gaming guild.

This guide is based on not only the actual WoW game mechanics but also on years of practical research and expertise by the online gaming guild, The Syndicate (www.LLTS.org). The Syndicate has been a stable 525+ person, adult guild since 1996 where more than 80% of the members have been with them for at least a year. That large size, multiple gaming world experience, and lack of any major implosions or other catastrophes uniquely position us to offer some tips and tricks and basic guild fundamentals.

The World of Warcraft game engine provides a robust and somewhat flexible architecture to design, create and manage a guild within. The Syndicate is a guild of hundreds of members, across several games, and has survived the test of time and as such has a lot of practical experience to share with future guildmasters.   Combining those two components makes this guide a very good one for getting the basics solidly in place for a successful WoW guild.

Research conducted by The Syndicate, since 1996, indicates that:

- ➢ The average lifespan of a guild is 3-6 months
- ➢ The average size of a guild is around 20 members
- ➢ 99.999% of guilds will fail before the 3 year mark which means since 1996 around a million guilds or more have risen and fallen. As there are only 2-3 million MMORPG subscribers, guilds are almost a dime a dozen.
- ➢ The average player will be in 2 guilds per year they game with most common reason for changing guilds being their guild imploded and ceased to exist.
- ➢ Across the major MMORPGs combined, as of 2004, 400-500 new guilds are created each day and almost an equal number cease to exist each day

> ➢ While many guilds will cease to exist when the guildmaster retires, the second leading cause is poor management and poor decisions made by the guild's leadership that lead to a guild imploding

By following the guidance provided within this write-up, you will at least be able to start your guild off on the right foot. You will get your guild created and learn some of the basics of guild management that may allow you to beat the odds and manage a larger guild, for a longer period of time, than might otherwise occur. There are very few '1 size fits all' solutions in the online world since there are more than two million fantasy MMORPG players with a great many personality types and gaming styles. But many of the fundamentals in this guide can be tailored to your guild and your members to help make you more successful. And the basic mechanics of how a guild works within the World of Warcraft game entity apply to everyone.

2.   Steps To Create A WoW Guild

The following is the list of steps one should go through when creating a World of Warcraft guide. A more detailed explanation of each step and the considerations for it is included further down in this section of the guide.

- ➢ Decide on a guild name: Every guild needs a name. Guild names in WoW must comply with the terms of service and cannot be used by another other guild within the same realm. A realm is a collection of servers like "Eastern" or "Pacific".

- ➢ Decide if you will be horde or alliance: A guild in World of Warcraft can contain either characters from the Horde races or characters from the Alliance races but it cannot contain both.

- ➢ Decide on what ranks you wish to have in your guild: You can have up to 10 ranks defined to your guild. You don't have to use all 10 spots but you can have up to 10 ranks and you can customize the privileges each rank has.

- ➢ Find 9 friends or recruit 9 guildmates. You must have 10 signatures (with yours counting as one) from 10 different accounts (not characters) to create a guild.

- ➢ Collect 10 silver: It costs 10 silver to create a guild. This is easy to get.

- ➢ Visit the Guildmaster NPC: You will purchase a charter for 10 silver and it will appear in your backpack. It will validate your guild name at charter purchase but will not reserve it/secure it until you turn in your charter.

- ➢ Find your friends and have them sign your charter. As I said above, you will need 10 signatures

- ➢ Turn in your charter to the Guildmaster NPC and you will become the guildmaster of the guild.

2.1.   Decide on a guild name

Every guild needs a name. Guild names in WoW must comply with the terms of service and cannot be used by another other guild within the same realm. Let's look at each of those factors individually so you can make the best choices.

First off, your guild name is the first thing other players will notice about you. It hangs, in green text, over your head every where you go. What sort of image do you want to convey to other players?   "haX0rZ" is not going to tell people you are a mature, friendly or

sociable group. Your name is your first impression and it will be how many groups judge you. Choose a name wisely.

Don't pick a name that is in use by some other guild. You may well be choosing a name that they have trademarked (i.e. own) like The Syndicate is trademarked and can only legally be used by them in any online game. Using a trademarked name could land you in legal trouble with the guild and with the game you are playing since all games enforce trademark laws so all the trademark owner has to do is request they terminate your use of their mark to have the guild closed down or possibly renamed if they are willing to do that. Secondly, if you use a name someone else goes by or that you saw used in some other game, then you may be inheriting their reputation, at least in part, and that isn't always a good thing.

Second, your guild name must comply with the World of Warcraft terms of service. While you may not have realized it, you agreed to the ToS (Term of Service) the first time you loaded WoW and when you created your account for the game. That term of service contains, but is not limited to, the following stipulations:

  ➢ No racial slurs

  ➢ No profanity

  ➢ No use of copyrighted or trademarked material (unless you own the mark) So you cant name your guild "The Lord of The Rings", for example much like you cannot name your character Gandalf without having it renamed. Blizzard has and will continue to enforce copyrights and trademarks since it is the law.

  ➢ No offensive statements

It is very important that you remain within Blizzard's terms of service. If you violate it several penalties can apply including:

  ➢ Renaming of the guild

  ➢ Deletion of the guild

  ➢ Banning of the guildmaster's account

  ➢ Banning of the accounts of all members

The final consideration is that the name you chose for a guild cannot be used by any other guild, on any server, within your realm. When you first load WoW, there is a button

labelled Change Realm. When you click it you see there are several realms like Eastern, Central, Mountain and Pacific (if you are playing on the North American servers). Each realm is a collection of servers, some of which are classified as normal and some as pvp. No other guild, on any of those servers, within a given realm, can have a guild by the same name as the one you wish to use for yours. If any other guild already uses that name, you will get a message back when you go to purchase your guild charter stating that your name is already in use.

2.2. <u>Decide if You Will be Horde or Alliance</u>

The decision to be Horde or Alliance is the most important decision (after the choice of an appropriate guild name) that you will make prior to creating your guild. This has permanent implications on your guild for months or possibly years to come. Once you decide you cannot change without disbanding your guild and you cannot use/reuse your guildname so long as the original guild continues to exist. So chose Horde or Alliance for your focus.

You may not guild Horde and Alliance characters within the same guild. The game engine physically will not allow that. You cannot even talk to characters in the opposite faction. Nor can you enter their towns/villages without turning pvp+ and being attackable.

The Horde side is composed of the races:

> ➢ Troll
>
> ➢ Orc
>
> ➢ Tauren
>
> ➢ Undead

The horde side has one additional class (The Shaman) that the alliance side does not have. The Horde's 3 main cities are: Orgimmar (orc home town), Thunderbluff (Tauren home town) and Undercity (undead home town).

The Alliance side is composed of the races:
> ➢ Human
>
> ➢ Dwarf
>
> ➢ Gnome

> ➢ Night Elf

The alliance has one additional class (The Paladin) that the horde side does not have. The Alliance's 3 main cities are: Stormwind (Humans home town), Ironforge (Dwarf home town) and Darnassus (Nightelf home town).

Once you know if your guild will be alliance or horde, all guildmembers must chose a race within the list of 4 races supported by that faction and all characters that you plan to guild must be of those races. The guildmaster that buys the charter to create the guild, must be one of the correct four races and must visit one of the correct three faction cities.

2.3.   Decide on What Ranks You Wish to Have in Your Guild

You need to think about your guild ranks right now, before your guild is created, because once it is created, adding and reordering ranks is not an easy task. All new ranks are added as the lowest tiered rank in the system. So if you later decide that you wish to have a new rank that fits between two existing ones, you will need to add a new rank and rename all existing ones and promote/demote members accordingly to line up with your new structure. It is far easier to plan things out, before hand. In my opinion, even if you wish to add temporary placeholder ranks, it is a good idea to use all 10 rank spots now.

By default when you create a guild the following ranks are created:
> ➢ Guildmaster
> ➢ Officer
> ➢ Veteran
> ➢ Member

You can have up to 10 ranks so if you do not have predefined ranks in your guild, but think you may have them later, you may wish to at least create temporary ranks to save yourself the trouble of reordering people later. While this isn't much of an issue with 10 or 20 characters, even if you have only 20 members, if they make 5 chars each, trying to reorder 100+ characters can get to be quite cumbersome. So, since no one see's the actual list of ranks, unless one is assigned to a member, you may consider setting up a structure like:

1) Guildmaster

2) Temp Officer Rank

3) Officer

4) Temp Vet Member 1

5) Temp Vet Member 2

6) Veteran Member

7) Temp Member 1

8) Temp Member 2

9) Member

10) Newbie Rank

Your newbie rank should have no privileges to talk in guildsay and perhaps not even to read guildsay. All brand new members will get that rank. All of your Temp rank positions are simply placeholders which you can rename later, and promote members to, without having to reorder your entire guild. And no one will see them or know they are there, except the guildmaster since no members will yet be assigned to them.

Each rank can have different permissions which we will cover in a later section. But be thinking about how much/how little power you wish each rank in your guild to have. Can anyone add members? Can anyone promote members? Should anyone be able to set the Message of the Day (MoTD)? Those are good questions to ask yourself at this stage in the guild creation process.

2.4. <u>Find 9 Friends or Recruit 9 Guildmates</u>

In order to form a guild in World of Warcraft, you must have the signatures of 9 different characters, plus your own, from 10 different accounts. This is a minor point if you have a guild of at least 10 members but if it is just you and a few friends, this can a real pain. However, all is not lost. Here is the trick: You and your friends will sign your guild charter. Then, for whatever unsigned spots remain, talk to unguilded players in game and ask them if they will sign your charter to help you form the guild. As soon as the guild is formed, you can remove them or they can quit. Of course if you plan to remove them you should let them know up front that you just need their help for a short time and explain the process to them. So long as you have at least one person (yourself) guilded, the guild continues to exist. You only need the 10 people to form the guild, not to maintain it.

While Everquest would periodically go through and remove guilds that did not meet the minimum number of members, WoW has so far not indicated that it will do so.

If you are trying to build a longer-term guild or cannot find random people to temporarily help you form it, then you need to invest time in recruiting. This is critical to do before you buy your charter, in game, because if you logout with your charter on your character, it will be deleted. That is one of the methods used to prevent someone from hoarding guild names. So either decide to go the route of asking people for temporary help in game or recruit 9 actual members, before you go buy the charter and have them online at the time you buy the charter.

If you wish your guild to last, then put some serious thought into whom you recruit and why you would like them in your guild. You should seek people that:

➢ Share your goals

➢ Play at similar times that you play

➢ Share your values (i.e. if you don't exploit, you shouldn't recruit exploiters)

➢ People you like being around

➢ People who like being in a guild

➢ People who like grouping with guildmates

➢ People who are willing to invest time to support the guild and help you grow it

One of the most common mistakes a new guild makes is to accept anyone willing to join. The unintentional (or sometimes intentional) mindset is that 'size' is needed to have a guild therefore taking anyone who wants to join is the way to go. You only need 5 people to have a full group. You only need 1 buddy to have a hunting partner. Your guild will last longer and be more fun and less work, for you, if you recruit 4 good friends instead of 20 random strangers that you have nothing in common with.

2.5. <u>Collect 10 silver</u>

10 silver is an insignificant amount to any established player in the game. You will spend more than that restocking your character with supplies between exp hunting. However, if you are brand new to the game this can be a seemingly large amount to get You can adventure and level up and save your coppers and within a few hours you will have 10 silver. If you are impatient, one of the fastest methods is to get a low end fishing pole and

fish your way to 10 silver. Within 90min you can have fished up enough things to sell to have the silver to buy the charter. You could always beg for it from other players but it isnt very socially acceptable for a guildmaster to be begging for a paultry 10 silver. So if you are new to the game, spend a little time and earn the silver or get your soon to be guildmates to each donate some.

2.6. <u>Visit the Guildmaster NPC</u>

Now that you have your guildmates (who need to be online at this time) or your plan to get signatures and you know your ranks and you know your guildname and you have your 10 silver, you are ready to create your guild. To do that you need to find an NPC (Non Player Character) that is titled "Guildmaster". There is one in each of the three cities for each faction. Here is where you can find each one:

The Horde:

Thunderbluff: At the top of the western lifts, there is a building immediately on the right. Standing in the doorway is the guildmaster

Orgimmar: As you enter the city through the main gate, take a sharp left and go up the inclined road. Right ahead of you is a building called the Embassy and the guildmaster is in there on the right.

Undercity: This city is underground so first you need to work your way through the above ground ruins and take an elevator below. All elevators empty you out in the middle circle of the city (the whole city is a giant circle with inner and outer rings). At the center of this inner ring is the bank. Around this inner ring, in one of the cubby holes, is the guildmaster

The Alliance:

Stormwind: This is a typical sprawling human city laid out in different sectors. Entering through the main gate, go into the first building on your left and you will find the guildmaster standing by the fire.

Ironforge: This dwarf city has a lot in common with Undercity. It too is a circle with an inner and outer ring much like Undercity but done in typical dwarven flair. The guildmaster is in one of the shops in the inner ring.

Darnassus: The nightelf city has a much different look and feel to it than most players are used to. It is done very well in the motif of the night elf. The guildmaster is not far from the main entrance to the city.

If all else fails and you cannot locate the NPC easy, ask a guard. If you pass your mouse over a guard and the talk/thought bubble comes up then you can talk to that guard and get directions. Click on the guard and select the appropriate category. He will then mark your map with a small red flag to show you were to go.

Once you have located the guildmaster NPC, talk to them. A menu will popup that will include 2 or more options (some guildmasters are also tabard designers so there may be more than 2 options). One of them will be Purchase A Guild Charter. Another will be Register A Guild. You want to select the Purchase A Guild Charter option.

Upon selecting that option, you will be prompted to enter your guild name. Enter the name you wanted for your guild and click the ok button. At this point the game will validate your guild name. It must pass all of the following checks to be approved:

- ➢ No other guild on any server within the realm must be using that name
- ➢ It must comply with all Terms of Service checks (like for profanity)
- ➢ It can contain no numbers (There will be no Fluffy Bunnies 2 guilds in existance)
- ➢ It can contain no special characters (like $ % ^ # @ &)

You CAN have the following features included in your guild name:

- ➢ It can be multiple words separated by spaces
- ➢ You can chose to make it all lower case
- ➢ You can mix upper and lower case
- ➢ You can use the word Horde or Alliance in your name

If your guild name fails a check, a message will be displayed indicating the problem. Correct the problem and click the OK button again to have the new name revalidated.

Once your guild name passes the checks, a charter (which looks like an open scroll) will appear in your backpack. Press B (or F12) to open your backpack and see the item. A message will be displayed to you indicating that you purchased a guild charter for XXXX guild name.

If you double click your charter you will see it has your chosen guild name at the top, 10 spaces for signatures and your signature occupying one of the spots.

2.7. <u>Find Your Friends and Have Them Sign Your Charter</u>

Now that you have found the guildmaster and paid your 10 silver and successfully created your guild charter, you need to obtain all of the necessary signatures. You must have 10 signatures from 10 different characters that are located on 10 different accounts (it cannot be 5 chars from your account and 5 chars from a buddies) on the charter in order to complete it.

Double click the charter. It will open a window that lists the guild name and all 10 spaces for signatures and will show your signature in the first slot of the charter. At the bottom of the charter is a button that you can click to request a signature of someone.

- ➢ You can only request a signature from an unguilded character
- ➢ The account that owns the unguilded character can have chars in another guild
- ➢ The character that signed your charter should not also sign anyone else's charter until yours has been turned back in or things could get bugged
- ➢ The account that signs the charter cannot have signed it on any other characters, although other characters on the account could be signatories of other active charters that have not yet been turned in.

Seek out your 9 other guildmates or request help from unguilded characters in the area. You must complete this step AND the next step BEFORE you logout. If you logout before completing this and the next step, your charter will vanish and you will need to earn 10 more silver and buy a new charter and begin this step again.

To request a signature of someone:
- ➢ Target an unguilded player by single left clicking on them
- ➢ Click the Request Signature button on your open charter

> ➢ They will get a message on their window indicating you are inviting them to sign your charter. So if they are not guildmates of yours, it would be a good idea to ask them first.

> ➢ If they click Yes and accept the invite, their name will appear in one of the empty slots on your charter

When you have all 10 signatures, and before you log off, move on to and complete the next step.

2.8. Turn in Your Charter to the Guildmaster NPC

If you are at this step, you should have a valid guild charter that has 10 signatures on it. Return to any guildmaster NPC. It does not have to be the same one you purchased the charter from.

Talk to the Guildmaster and select the menu option to Register A Guild. The guildmaster NPC will search your backpack for a completed charter. If you are not carrying a charter, or if the one you are carrying does not contain all 10 signatures, an error is returned indicating that you cannot register your charter and the reason why not.

If you do have a charter that contains all 10 signatures you will get a message back indicating that:

> ➢ Your guild was formed

> ➢ Your guild name is XXXX (whatever you registered)

> ➢ You are a founding member of the guild

Since you cannot see your own name and guildname hovering over your own characters head, look around at the other signatories and you will now see, in green letters, your guild name hovering over their heads.

If you type "/GU Hello" then you will speak the word Hello into guildsay and all of the other founding members will hear it.

Congratulations! You have now formed a new World of Warcraft guild. However, there remains much work to be done and many lessons left to learn if you want your guild to survive.

3. <u>Post Guild Creation Tasks</u>

Once your guild is up and running the following tasks are things that you should consider performing to better organise your guild. A number of these steps are optional but all are recommended. Each step is explained, in more detail, in the sections following this checklist.

- ➢ Create your ranks within the guild interface in game and assign guild privileges to them. There are a number of privileges that WoW allows you to assign. You can assign as many or as few of them to each rank as you wish.

- ➢ Promote your friends and guildmates to the ranks you wish to them to have. Initially all people who signed your charter are classified as "members". Once you have setup your ranks you may wish to promote some to officers or demote them to ranks you recently setup.

- ➢ Invite to the guild the rest of your members. If you guild is larger than the original 10 people, you will need to invite them to join. You may have secondary chars that need adding and you will likely recruit new members over time.

- ➢ Consider saving for and purchasing a guild tabard. These cost 10 gold to create a guild design for one and are designed by the guildmaster and then purchased by members. They are a status symbol early in the game but are also a way to easily recognise your guildmates

- ➢ Create your core guild rules and ensure members know them. If your guild is meant to more than a short term collection of friends sharing a common chat room, then you will need some core rules to run the guild by. You should establish those early and make them clear to all members.

- ➢ Set and maintain your MoTD (Message of the Day). Every guild member will see the MoTD every time they login. You can use it to communicate important information to them.

- ➢ Set and maintain your members Public Messages in the roster. The roster has a field for public messages that there are a number of good uses for.

- ➢ Decide how you wish to use the Officer Messages part of the roster. There is an officer message part of the roster that only those with the correct privilege can read. You can use it to keep private notes on members.

3.1.   <u>Create Your Ranks and Assign Privileges to Them:</u>

Ideally, before you even created your guild you put some thought into what ranks you wanted to have. In WoW, you can have up to 10 slots. They can all have different privileges or they can all be identical but different in name only. It is up to you how to structure them. Most guilds will use a combination of both approaches. There will be a number of ranks that essentially have the same in game powers (like reading and talking in guildsay) but differ in name in order to show a hierarchy in the guild. There will be some other ranks that have more or less power than the others.

What ranks you put in place is your choice but here are some recommendations for categories of ranks you should consider including:

Guildmaster: This rank is created by default and must exist. You can rename it to something else but it is always the top rank. It can only ever have 1 member. And it has all the privileges by default. This rank is the defacto "in charge" person. Even if your guild is run by committee, the GM ranked person can demote and remove any other member in the guild.

Officer: Regardless of what you call the rank or ranks, most guilds will have at least one officer rank. Typically they can do things like add new members, remove members, set the message of the day and things like that. You may have as few or as many officers as you wish. By default, one officer rank is setup with basic officer powers granted to it.

Member: There is likely to be one or more member ranks in the guild. By default the ranks of Veteran and Member are setup. They are essential the same with the names of the ranks showing a hierarchy of who is "higher" in the guild. Who gets assigned to what rank is up to you. Typically the member ranks have a lot less power granted to them and often simply can talk in guildsay and read guildsay.

Recruit: You do not get a recruit rank by default but you may wish to create one. Make sure it is the very last rank you create since by default the game adds new ranks you make to the bottom of its in game hierarchy list. So all new members will automatically be granted whatever the last rank is that you created (or will be set to Member if no new ranks were created). You may wish to have a low-level rank that cannot read or speak in guildsay, or perhaps can only read but not speak. You can use this rank to evaluate new

recruits before you hand over your guilds secrets to them or give them the ability to potentially cause havoc by trusting them with a higher rank that has more privileges.

Specialized: You may also wish to create some specialized ranks like a recruiter rank that can add people but perhaps cannot promote them or remove them. You may wish to have a pvp commander rank that can set the MoTD but cannot add or remove members. Think about the roles you wish to have in your guild and use your 10 rank spots wisely.

3.2.   The Guild Interface:

To create a rank or adjust the permissions on a rank, you must first know how to get to the guild interface and understand how to navigate it. To load the guild interface press O (the letter, not the number). That will open a window and across the bottom of the window are various tabs. The second to the last tab is labelled "guild". Click on it.

The resulting view will show you your guild roster. In the lower right of the guild roster is a small arrow. Pressing that arrow will change from 1 guild roster view to another. You have two different views. One shows you members and their levels and the zones they are in. The other shows you members, their public note (if any) and when they were last online. You can sort on most of the columns by clicking on the column heading.

There is a checkbox in the upper right to toggle on and off the viewing of offline characters as well. And in the lower left there will be a display showing how many characters are in the resulting list. If the list is too long you will need to use the scrollbars, on the right side, to scroll down and see the remaining names.

Just below the roster list are a series of buttons. Some of those buttons will be discussed, in more detail, in later sections.   Here is a quick definition of each one:

Small Bugle/Trumpet: There is a gold trumpet icon. That icon is for setting the guild message of the day. Pressing it will change the words, immediately to the left of it, to read "Guild Message of the Day" and then display whatever it is set to.

Small Piece of Paper: Immediately to the right of the gold trumpet is a small piece of paper. That is the Set Public Note option.   Pressing that will change the words,

immediately to the left of it, to read "Public Note" and allow you to change a member's public note.

Small Piece of Paper #2: Immediately to the right of the first paper icon is a second one. That one is to set the Officer note which is basically a second notes area, for each member, which only those with the correct rank can view.

Group Invite: There is a large red button labelled group invite near the lower right of the guild interface. Its function is just as its name implies. You single click on any online member in your guild list and press group invite and they will get an invitation to join your group, if you are the group leader or just forming a new group.

Guild Control: The guild control option is the one that you will use to both add new ranks and adjust the permissions on an existing rank. Pressing this button will launch another small window that is titled "Select a Guild Rank to Modify"

Add Member: As the name implies, if you target a character that is not already in a guild and select Add Member, they will be invited to join the guild. If they accept, their name will appear in your guild roster.

Promote: In the lower left of the guild window is the button labelled promote. If you do not have permission to use this feature or if no member is selected, this option will be greyed out. If you do have permission to promote members, select one from the roster and this button will be activated. You can press it and they will move up 1 rank in the roster. You may promote members to the rank just below the one you currently hold. Note: All members online will see the message that someone has been promoted and to what rank they were promoted to.

Demote: Located right next to the promote button, this button has the exact opposite affect. Highlight a member and press it and you will move them down 1 rank in the guild. Note: All members online will see the message that someone has been demoted and to what rank they were demoted to.

Remove: As the name implies, there may be times you need to kick someone out of the guild. Locate their name on the roster and click on it. Then click Remove and if you have

the remove permission, they will be removed from the guild. Note: All members online will see the message that someone has been removed.

3.3. <u>Grant Privileges To A Rank:</u>

Each rank in the guild has its own set of privileges assigned to it. Only the guildmaster character can set those or even see what they are. To set a rank's privileges, the guildmaster character loads the guild interface and presses the Guild Control button. A window pops up. At the top of the window is a drop down list box with the Guildmaster entry highlighted and a down arrow next to the list box (click there to expand it and select any other rank in the list) and a plus sign (+) to the right of that which is used to add a new rank. Just below this area of the window is listing of all 10 ranks with checkmarks in the boxes next to the privilege that rank has granted to it.

The guildmaster rank always has every privilege but the other ranks could have as many or they could have less. Select the down arrow and pick any other rank and you can adjust its privileges. When you select a rank the area just below the list box changes to show only checkmarks next to the privileges the newly selected rank has granted to it. No checkmark means that the privilege isn't granted to that rank.

To grant a privilege to a rank, first select the rank. And then check the box next to the privilege you wish the rank to have. Then click the red ACCEPT button just under the list of privileges. You can also click CANCEL to undo the changes and not apply them.

Here is a definition of what each privilege means and what powers it gives a rank that has been granted it:

Guildchat Listen: Anyone with this privilege can read what is said in guildsay. If you wish to have a rank where they cannot read guildsay, remove this privilege.

Guildchat Speak: Anyone with this privilege can type text into guildsay using the /GU command. If you do not wish a rank to be able to talk in guildsay, remove this privilege.

Officerchat Listen: Anyone with this privilege can read what is said in the officer (/O) chat. Typically this is not granted to anyone but officers.

Officerchat Speak: Anyone with this privilege can speak into officer chat. Again this is typically limited to only officers, hence the name, so they have a private channel to discuss core guild issues. Note: By default the text for this channel is a slightly darker shade of green than guildsay which can lead to confusion and misspeaking into the wrong room. You may wish to have all of your officers change their default officer speak to a different color like yellow.

Promote: When a rank has this privilege, if they highlight a member in the roster the red promote button will be activated. Anyone with this privilege can promote another member to the rank just below theirs.

Demote: When a rank has this privilege, if they highlight a member in the roster the red demote button will be activated. Anyone with this privilege can demote another member to the lowest rank defined to the guild.

Invite Member: When a rank has this privilege they can add new members. All new members are added at the lowest rank so if your lowest rank is set so that it cannot read or speak in guildsay then this privilege is not very dangerous if most members don't also have the ability to promote. However, a person that can both invite and promote has a lot of power in the guild since they can grant anyone they wish access to your guildsay even if you tried to limit that by having lower tier ranks that lacked guildsay permission. Grant this privilege with care.

Remove Member: This privilege should also be granted with care. Ranks that have it can remove any member from the guild that is of a lower rank than they are. So a lower ranking person can't kick the guildmaster out. Officers can't kick officers out. But a higher ranking member could kick lower ranking members out, if you freely give this power out. So grant it with caution.

Set MOTD: The MOTD (Message of the Day) at the time of the writing of this guild only holds 60 characters. That is inadequate for most guilds. This rank, however, gives a member the ability to edit the MOTD. There are no filters on what can be said and there is no tracking of who edited it to put up nasty things or remove important things. So again, grant this privilege with care.

Edit Public Note: In the roster listing, there is a column for public note. Any rank with this privilege can edit or add a public note to a member. All guilded members can see all public notes. Common uses for the public note include indicating whose alt a specific character is and indicating who the guild's craftsman are.

View Officer Note: In the roster listing, there is also a column for officer note. This is meant to be a private note that only your officers can see however technically you can grant this view to all members and use the public note to serve one function and the officer note to serve another.

Edit Officer Note: Ranks with this privilege have the ability to edit the officer note for a member. By keeping officer notes private, your officers can use them to record facts on characters that only other officers can read.

3.4. <u>Adding A Rank:</u>

World of Warcraft allows a guild to have up to 10 ranks. You are not required to use them all but one important thing to note is that all new ranks that you add, are added to the bottom of the hierarchy and all new members added to your guild are initially granted your bottom rank (i.e. the last rank you created). So even if you call a rank "Top Dog Officer", if it is the last rank you added, then all new members will get that rank. Therefore it is important to plan out your ranks early in the guild's creation and then make all of those ranks (or at least create placeholder ones). Ensure they are in the order you wish them to be in (by renaming ranks, promoting and demoting as appropriate). And ensure they have the proper permissions. It would be embarrassing to create a new rank that was an all powerful and not realise all new members got that rank until one of them wreaked havoc on your guild.

To add a rank, perform the following steps:
- ➢ Press O and select the Guild tab to bring up the guild interface
- ➢ Press the Guild Control button to load the rank/privilege interface
- ➢ Press the small red plus sign (+) to the right of the rank list box at the top of that new window

➢ A small popup window appears asking you for the new ranks name. Type in what you wish to name the rank. Note: This will be how the rank appears in your roster that members see and how it shows up on web sites like thottbot.

➢ Click Accept when you have entered the name you wish the rank to have.

➢ Now select your new rank from the drop down list box and the list of privileges will update to just have Guildchat Listen and Guildchat Speak checked. Grant or revoke any privileges you wish this rank to have, or not have

➢ Click the Accept button at the bottom of the window to commit the change

➢ You now have a new rank which is the lowest rank in your guild hierarchy.

Again it is important to point out that regardless of what you name your ranks, the game doesn't know and doesn't care about their importance to you. It treats the last rank added as the lowest rank in the hierarchy. That means that all new members automatically get granted your last added rank when they join. It means that if your ranks are in a nice linear order, as far as the game is concerned, weird messages will result when you promote and delete members. To illustrate that, let's take this simple example.

You create a guild and get the following ranks by default:

➢ Guildmaster

➢ Officer

➢ Veteran

➢ Member

You now wish to add in ranks for Assistant Guildmaster and Raid Commander. You click the + button and you add Assistant Guildmaster. Now your guild ranks are:

➢ Guildmaster

➢ Officer

➢ Veteran

➢ Member

➢ Assistant Guildmaster

You click the + again and add in Raid Commander. Now your guild ranks are:

➢ Guildmaster

> Officer

> Veteran

> Member

> Assistant Guildmaster

> Raid Commander

Now, when you add a new member, they are added to the guild as a Raid Commander since, as far as the game is concerned, that is your lowest level rank. If you click the promote button twice to make them a member, your guildmates online will see, in their guild chat area,

XXXXX is promoted to Assistant Guildmaster

XXXXX is promoted to Member

Needless to say that is confusing and not very well organised. A better way, to add those two ranks, would be to use this example:

Create the guild and get the base ranks. Select the Officer rank from the drop down list box and rename it to Assistant Guildmaster. Select the Veteran rank from the drop down list box and rename it to Raid Commander. Select the Member rank from the drop down list box and rename it to Officer. Now, click the + button and add a rank called Veteran. Then click the + button again and add a rank called Member. Now you have all of the same ranks but they are in the correct logical and hierarchical order and the game will function much more smoothly for you.

For the reason illustrated by those examples above, it is a good idea to plan out your ranks before you heavily populate your guild with characters. If you need to add a rank in later, you will end up needing to rename old ranks and demote members to the new, lower rank (lower in terms of its location in your hierarchy list in game). That can be a lot of work and a lot of spam in your guildsay.

3.5. <u>Promote Your Friends and Guildmates:</u>

Now that your ranks are all created, you need to spend some time promoting or demoting (depending on if you needed to add in ranks and reorder the names in the list, as a result) your guildmates to the correct rank. Not everyone is a chief and too many chiefs will ruin

any guild. So odds are you will have some brand new members, some members who have been around awhile, some long time veterans or good friends and some trusted officers. You need to get them assigned to the correct ranks.

To do this press O and click on the guilds tab. If needed, select the little arrow in the lower right of the light to change the view so you can see the member's name and current rank. As you will recall, there are 2 views. The last view you used will be what is displayed when you press O so if needed, change the view.

Now that you see a list of all members and their current rank, to promote or demote anyone, do the following:

> - Single left click on their name
> - Click once on the red promote or demote button
> - Wait for the yellow message to appear indicating that char has been promoted or demoted (going too fast will result in an error occuring)
> - Repeat the button press as needed to reach the desired rank

3.6. <u>Invite/Guild the Rest of Your Members:</u>

If you guild is larger than the original 10 people then you will need to invite the rest of them to join. You will also likely have secondary chars that need adding and you will likely recruit new members over time. Every time that occurs you will need to guild the new character. Fortunately in World of Warcraft, you can guild a player from anywhere in the world. You do not have to see them or target them or even be in the same zone. You are, however, limited to only guilding the people from the races of the faction of the guildmaster character.

Horde Faction Guildable Races:
> - Orc
> - Tauren
> - Troll
> - Undead

Alliance Faction Guildable Races:

➢ Human

➢ Dwarf

➢ Gnome

➢ Nightelf

The steps to guild a new character are as follows:

➢ Ensure you know the person you are adding really is your guildmate

➢ Type /GINVITE charname

➢ They will get a prompt on their window saying that you are inviting them to join.

➢ When they accept the prompt a message will be displaying, in yellow text, in your guildsay area indicating their char was added

➢ Wait a few seconds (5 to 10) since the game usually lags behind in updating the rosters and then Press O and click on the Guild tab to reach the guild interface

➢ Sort the list by rank and scroll so you can see those people by the lowest rank.

➢ You should see the new character you added listed there as whatever your lowest rank is

➢ Single click on their name and promote them to whatever rank they should be at

3.7. <u>Removing One of Your Members</u>

Over the lifetime of a guild, it is common to have to remove a character or member at some point. Perhaps the person sold their account on eBay and you don't want the new owner in your guild. Perhaps the person broke a guild rule and needs to be removed. Perhaps they shut down the account and aren't playing anymore. Whatever the reason, there will come a time you are likely to need to remove a char. Fortunately it a very simple process AND the character does not need to be online, like it does in some MMORPGs. To remove a character, perform the following steps:

➢ Press O and click on the Guild tab to get to the guild interface

➢ Check the box, in the upper right, to see Offline Members

➢ Sort the list by name

➢ Locate the char name of the char that you wish to remove

➢ Single left click on it

> ➢ Press the red REMOVE button at the bottom of the guild interface

Please note that anyone online will see a yellow message in guildsay indicating that you removed the char. It will read something like "XXXXXXXX was removed by YYYYYYYYYY".

3.8. Consider Saving For and Purchasing a Guild Tabard

Every character has a spot on their character sheet for a Tabard. Tabards do not drop from any monsters. They do not have AC or stats. Their sole purpose is to be a representation of the guild you are in. They are purchased from special Tabard vendors. The guildmaster designs one (which costs 10 gold) and then every guild member that buys one, gets an exact copy of the one the GM designed (which costs 1 gold).

The first step in the process of getting a tabard is to save up for one. Early in the game, 10 gold is a huge sum. But by the time you members levels are in the 30s, 10 gold is a fairly easy sum for a guild to accumulate. So before you begin the process, collect 10 gold and ensure the guildmaster character has it.

Once the GM has the gold, you need to design the tabard. To do that you need to locate the Tabard Designer NPC. This is not consistent across cities, as of the writing of this guide.

On the Alliance side, the easiest way to handle this is to fly to Stormwind and go to where the guildmaster NPC is and there is a tabard designer right there.

On the Horde side here are your options:

Thunderbluff: There is no way to make a tabard there so don't waste your time looking

Orgimmar: Go to where the guildmaster NPC is (inside the main gate, to the left, and into the building labelled the Embassy). Talk to the guildmaster NPC. He will have an option for "Design Tabard"

Undercity: Go to where the guildmaster NPC (around the main inner circle area) and next to the guildmaster is an NPC that is labelled Tabard Designer. Talk to that NPC.

Regardless of whether you are horde or alliance, the final tabards all look the same and both sides have the exact same options. So find the tabard designer NPC and select the Design Tabard menu option.

Upon selecting that option, a tabard design window will launch. That window will display a picture of your character on the left, wearing your current tabard design. On the right side will be the various options you can chose to customize the tabard.

With the tabard design up the likely first thing you will want to do is pick an icon. That icon will display on the front middle of the tabard. Use the left and right arrows in the icon area and scroll through the list of choices until you find one you like.   There are 100 or so choices you can pick from. Supposedly more will be added as time goes on.

Now, below the icon are a number of color customisation options. You can set the color for:

> ➢ Tabard main color
> ➢ Tabard border/fringe color
> ➢ Icon color
> ➢ And another minor color or two.

People will notice your tabard. So unless you want to be known as the colorblind kiddies put some thought into your color choices.   Once your design is as you like it and feel that it will represent your guild in the manner in which you desire, click the accept button. 10 gold will be deducted from your characters backpack but the window will not close. You may think nothing happened and wonder what is going on. If you notice, you are 10 gold lighter so it did accept your changes.   Just close the design window as you have completed the tabard creation process.

At this point the guildmaster and all members can go to the NPC (located in the same spot as the Guildmaster NPC, in all cities) that is named the Tabard Vendor. That NPC sells one item, a tabard, for 1 gold (90 silver if you have "honoured" faction to the city). Purchase the tabard and it looks like a plain grey one in your backpack. Drag it into your character sheet and it will turn into the same color and design the guildmaster created at the tabard design vendor.

If a member buys a tabard before the guild tabard is designed, they can still wear it. It simply shows up as a plain grey tabard over their clothes. Once the tabard is designed they can take off the plain one and put it back on and it will update with the guild's design.

3.9. Create Your Core Guild Rules and Ensure Members Know Them

  If your guild is meant to more than a short term collection of friends sharing a common chat room, then you will need some core rules to run the guild by. You should establish those early and make them clear to all members.

What core rules you wish to have if up to you and your members as guilds come in all shapes and sizes. The goals of the guild or who the membership is made up of may dictate the rules. Whatever you decide them to be, they should be made clear to everyone and reinforced as needed.

If you don't follow the rules, then don't have them. If you have a rule, then make sure everyone follows it. Red-tape no one listens to is useless and will undermine your authority. So either enforce your rules or get rid of them.

In addition, make the rules apply to everyone. Giving exceptions to your buddies or people you feel you can't afford to lose will ultimately crush the guild and should not be done. One set of rules that everyone follows is the way to go for success over a longer time.

3.10. Set and Maintain Your MoTD (Message of the Day)

Every guild member will see the MoTD every time they login. You can use it to communicate important information to them.

The WoW Message of the day is displayed in green text at the top of the main chat window every time a character logs in. It can be a very powerful communications too but it is also limited. It is limited in the sense that it can be a MAX of 60 characters long, as of the time of writing this article. Players have complained many times and asked for a longer one so perhaps that change will be forthcoming.

You cannot say a lot in 60 chars. This sentence alone is around fifty characters. So you really need to keep your points clear and concise and use meaningful abbreviations. You might put up something like:

"Raid At XXXXX Sat. 8pm EST 1st 40 get spot"

or maybe

"Send all ore to XXXXXXXX and skins to YYYYYYY"

Keep messages short and to the point and clear. If you try to say too much or abbreviate too much then too many people will misunderstand.

You can also see the Message of the Day by pressing O and selecting the guild tab. It is displayed in the lower left window of the guild tab. This is how you can see it after you have logged in and it has scrolled off your screen.

To set the MoTD you need to have the correct privilege. If you do, simply press O, select the guild tab and then select the Set MoTD icon. A small window will popup and you can edit the current MoTD or type a new one. When you reach 60 characters, no more will be accepted. Delete some or abbreviate more.

3.11. Set and Maintain Your Members Public Messages in the Roster

The in game roster feature has a public message section. Every member can read the public notes and those with the correct permission can edit them. This can be a very powerful tool for you.

You should consider the use of your notes wisely. When used incorrectly, they will just become useless spam that no one reads. When used correctly they can offer value to your guild. Some examples of how you might make use of them include:

> Tagging who your office holders are when your ranks don't easily indicate who those people are
> Tagging who the different guild craftsman are

➢ Tagging who your raid leaders are

➢ Tagging who the main char is for a guilded alt

➢ Noting the date people last paid guild dues

Since all members see the list it is important to put information there that you are comfortable with everyone seeing. If you put "Johnny is a dork, watch him" then Johnny is going to know you think that as is everyone else. If you put completely useless information there like 'l33t d00d" then no one will read the public notes and you have wasted that valuable communication tool.

If you don't have something useful to put for someone, then leave the public note blank. That will make the useful information stand out more. If you do have a useful reason to have a note there, then by all means, use them. In game communication tools are limited enough that to have an effective guild, you need to make use of all of the communication opportunities at your disposal.

To set the public note for a member, perform the following steps:

➢ Press O

➢ Then click on the Guild Tab

➢ Locate the member in the roster that you wish to set the note for

➢ Single click on their name

➢ Click the Public Note button located in the lower part of the guild window

➢ A small popup box appears. Type the note or edit the existing note and press ok

➢ Note: You may not see your note show up in the roster for 10-30seconds or until you close/open the list again. There is a slight lag in getting the notes to show up.

Public notes can be a very valuable tool or they can just add spam to an already busy window. Make good use of them and increase your guild's effectiveness and cut down on questions and issues that you have to deal with.

3.12. <u>Decide How You Wish to Use the Officer Messages Part of the Roster</u>

In addition to the public message part of the roster, there is also an officer message portion. No one can read that section unless they have the privilege granted to them to View Officer Note. Similarly, only those with Edit Officer Note can add or edit them.

There is no column in the roster to show officer notes. To see one, you have to select the member name from the roster and select the officer note button near the bottom of the guild window. That will reveal to you, if you have the View Officer Note privilege, what is recorded for that member.

To set an officer note, perform the following steps:

> ➢ Press O
> ➢ Then click on the Guild Tab
> ➢ Locate the member in the roster that you wish to set the note for
> ➢ Single click on their name
> ➢ Click the Officer Note button located in the lower part of the guild window
> ➢ A small popup box appears. Type the note or edit the existing note and press ok

Some uses for an officer note might include:
> ➢ Adding a note about a problem member to watch for
> ➢ Adding a note about someone who is overdue for dues
> ➢ Adding a note about why you aren't kicking out a character that hasn't logged in for some time
> ➢ Adding a note about unguilded alt chars that member has or other guilds they are in
> ➢ Tracking points.. Demerits.. blackballs.. votes or other point related systems that you may use in your guild

Since the officer note is private to only those members with the View Officer Note privilege, and since it doesn't show up in the guild roster, then its use isn't a large concern in terms of causing spam or excessive text on members screens that they will stop

reading. However, if you do use it to record less that nice things about some members, you want to be sure you haven't granted the privilege to view that data to just anyone. Even if a member cannot see it themselves, a screenshot or an officer with a big mouth can still reveal what you have written there. Either control access to the officers note area effectively or don't write anything that you are unwilling to stand behind if it is make public knowledge.

4. Hints & Tips For Creating A Successful Guild:

The following section touches on a number of guild areas that may or may not apply to the style of guild you are setting up. These are drawn on past experiences running The Syndicate, which has been around, and one of the lead gaming guilds since 1996. They are also drawn from lessons learned watching thousands of other guilds rise, and fall, during our lifetime. Some of these points are definitely debatable and you might be better served using them as lessons learned or starting points to think about how you wish to run your guild. There are some right and wrong answers for running a guild but there is also a large grey area that is influenced by you personally, as guildmaster and the goals you wish the guild to achieve and the types of people you recruit.

4.1. Setting Up A Raiding Guild

In World of Warcraft, a "raid" is a collection of up to 8 groups of 5 members per group (i.e. 40 people max). Some raid targets require less. Some raid targets will be unwinnable even with 40 people until you learn the tactics or get the necessary type of gear or both.

A raiding guild for WoW is not quite the same as it was in Everquest, where the concept of raiding was born. The Everquest designers designed encounters, up through the Planes of Power expansion, which required increasingly large numbers of players to win them. Post Planes of Power they began to scale back and limit encounters to a much more sane number of players. World of Warcraft was in its design and coding phases during the height of the 'massive' raid size push in Everquest. It was going into beta right as there was a massive backlash against EQ by the players and the Blizzard team clearly saw that occur and took that into account when designing their raid content. They took the approach of limiting the number of people to a reasonable size and they chose 40. They, in turn, balanced all encounters (assuming you know the tactic to defeat the monster and have the necessary basic gear for that fight) for 35 people. And once you have the tactics down and pretty good gear, 30 people or less should be possible.

4.1.1. Recruiting Members for a Raiding Guild

So the first aspect of a raiding guild is having the people to raid. A typical rule of thumb is that at peak time, you will have 50% (or less) of your core raiders available to you unless you mandate that they be online. So if you need 40 people to raid, you will either need to preschedule your raids so people know to be online or you will need to recruit 80 to 100

raid capable members. There are several schools of thought in that arena. The first is that you are better served having 40 or 50 raid people both to limit the number of members who get left out and to ensure that each one knows their role and perform it well. The price for this route is possibly not having enough people to raid and each person is more important so if your key tank or healers can't make a raid, you could have 35+ other people waiting around doing nothing. The second is that in order to ensure you do have enough people to raid you really need the higher numbers of members understanding that you may sacrifice some quality to get size. You certainly don't have to sacrifice quality for size but in order to avoid the quality sacrifice you have to invest time to find the right people. So there is a price to pay whichever route you chose and you simply need to pick the one with the price you are willing to pay.

4.1.2.   <u>Raiding Guild Structure</u>

The first rule of thumb when picking a structure for your guild is picking one that works for you and your members. But a structure, of some sort, is necessary. Showing up with 40 people to raid with no plan and no clear person in charge is a recipe for disaster. In addition, having too many chiefs trying to lead the group can also cause issues.

Since raid size is limited to 40 people, anywhere from 1 to 3 people is probably a good number of leaders to have for a given raid. You don't need 5 or 10 people to coordinate the activities of 40 or less raiders. If you do then your raiders are not paying enough attention and don't know the basics of raiding to begin with.

A suggested structure would be to have a group of Raid Commanders within your guild. Those people are familiar with the tactics of the different raids and are capable of organising 40 people into a cohesive raiding force. Those people need to have patience, since mistakes will happen. They need to be able to clearly communicate and not just assume everyone knows the tactics or goals. And they need to understand all of the classes on the raid and how to deploy them for the best chance of success.

In addition to the raid leaders themselves, there are some other raid roles you may wish in your guild. While these are not necessarily 'lead' roles they can add value to have them in your structure.

Main Tank: The main tank is the person in charge of getting aggro on the mob and holding it. Everyone keys off them and assists them for their target. Assigning off tanks/crowd control tanks to handle any adds is a good idea as well. Your main tank is likely to be a defensive specialized warrior with as high of AC, HP and resists as they can get. The more they have then the easier time keeping them alive you will have.

Main Assist: The main assist is the person your members must all assist to get their target. This person is often not the same as the main tank since the tanks may need to change targets, midfight, to save the healers. A hunter can do a pretty good job in this role as they can also mark the target. If a hunter is not your main tank you may wish to assign a hunter to mark the target once they assist the MA. Its hard to miss a giant blinking red arrow. The MA is important since attacking a Crowd Controlled (CC) mob will result in breaking the CC (sheep form… banished etc..)

Main Looter: You definitely need to have a loot policy of some sort in your guild. WoW is setup with a random rolling method of loot. One typical way to handle raid loot is to use the Main Looter strategy. The raid sets one person to be the main looter. That person is the only one that the game allows to loot all corpses. They loot the misc. items and hold anything that is not "bind on equip". Those items get rolled on by your members using whatever rules you setup. At the end of the raid, the main looter calls out all items they are holding and everyone present rolls on them. This allows you to move faster and not stop every minute to roll on loot. It also lets people see the sum total of items you collect before they decide to roll on items so that they don't take a lesser upgrade if a better one is available later on.

Healer Lead: Having a lead healer can be an asset. There are encounters where you will want to do more than just spam heals at the main tank. You may wish to have a healing rotation of healers firing one after the other to chain heal. You may wish to have waves of healers that move in and out as mana allows. Whatever the strategy you use, having a healer lead at the raid, to coordinate the correct healing, will relieve the raid lead of that responsibility.

Pull Team: Good pulling can make or break a raid. Pullers who bring too many mobs can kill a raid. Pullers who pull to slow can kill a raid or drag it on far longer than it should go. Chose your pullers with care and you may wish to have a semi-permanent pull team that

learns the dungeons… learns how to work with the different Main Tanks… learns the speed their raid can handle incoming mobs… learns to communicate with the Off Tanks to handle adds… and that can ensure they don't kill your raid repeatedly with bad pulls. Practice does make perfect when it comes to pulling so don't just send anyone out to pull.

4.1.3.   Raid Tactics

Blizzard has repeatedly said that he secret to winning WoW raids is in the tactics. You cannot "zerg" them by throwing warm bodies at a target until it is dead. Not all encounters are straightforward ones where the main tank gains aggro and the healers heal them and everyone else wails on the monster while it stands there blindly hitting the main tank. The encounters are varied and some are complex. So raid tactics are key.

Blizzard has also said it is likely you will die your first time or first several times until you learn the tricks of the encounter and master the tactics. Once you know the tactics they have also said that you should be able to win the fight with less than the max of 40 people that you can bring.

So raiding is all about the tactics. Pay attention. When do the adds spawn? Does the mob do different things at different health percentages? Are certain resistances needed? Where should you position your tank? Where do you position the raid?   Even if you lose the fight, if you learn something then its not a waste of an effort. If you repeatedly rush in and die and learn nothing, then don't even bother raiding. Learn, especially from your defeats and refine your tactics as you go. Tactics are the key.

Communications

Communications for a raiding guild are critical. This is a natural extension of tactics being the key to success since if your guild doesn't know the tactics, it isn't relevant if the raid leader is an expert in them. You need to pick raid leaders who can clearly communicate. You shouldn't expect your members to magically know their role in a raid tactic until you have told them or shown them. There can sometimes be a fair amount of elitism among the top end raiders where they assume that since they know something, everyone else must know it else they are stupid n00bs who can't raid. In reality, you will have a lot of very skilled people in your guild that haven't yet learned or fought an encounter. They will know how to play their classes well and how to work within a raid well, but don't yet know

their classes specific role for the new raid you are about to embark upon. Communicate clearly and effectively to them and you will save yourself many headaches.

You should probably setup a guild posting forum on the web somewhere. Use that to communicate raid dates/times as well as raid tactics. Use that for people to ask questions about their role and encourage open discussion. Discourage people belittling members for asking questions and foster an atmosphere where people like to ask questions and learn. It's far better for them to learn a tactic on your posting forum before the raid than during the raid when they can screw it up and end up killing everyone.

Ensure, during your raids, that your raid leaders are clearly communicating what is going on. Sometimes your leaders may get discussing something in officer chat or in tells and forget there are 35+ other people standing around not hearing anything and wondering what is going on. You need to keep them informed not only so they can be successful at the raid but also so they aren't bored. If your raids are boring engagements where most members stand around in silence for 90% of the time punctuated by short intense battles, you will soon fine people going to other guilds where the overall raid experience is more entertaining.

4.1.4.   <u>Do Other Guilds Matter To You?</u>

No, they should not matter. WoW is an MMORPG but the high end content is almost all instanced. That means you exist basically within your own world playing your own high end game and what other guilds do has no bearing on you and your guild unless you let it. You shouldn't feel like you have to "keep up" with other guilds. Progress at your own pace. Kill the mobs you wish to kill. Learn the encounters and have fun doing it. A good amount of the fun of gaming is learning how to overcome the puzzles and challenges. If you feel like it is a footrace between you and other guilds then you will lose site of the "fun" aspect and the game will become all about getting to see certain pixels before someone else. Remember this is gaming and it is completely irrelevant how much or how little another guild achieves. They cannot take your kills. They cannot prevent you from killing something. They cannot slow your progress. They cannot train you. They cannot block your progress by hogging a key spawn. It is a game of instanced high end content. Find the pace that suits your guild's style and don't waste any time or energy worrying about other guilds.

4.2.   <u>Fun Guild Events</u>

For some guilds, MMORPGs are all about Raiding. However, there are other things you can do with your gaming experience (both in game and out of game) to keep things fresh and fun. In The Syndicate, one of the chief comments I hear from people joining our guild is that their old guild was boring. It never did anything. Or it only raided. So if your guild isn't simply a "raid raid raid!!" type guild then you may find some of these events to your liking:

Guild Dinners: Few things bind a guild together like a real life encounter. If you have members that live locally near you, setup some guild dinners and get together. Have dinner, drink a beer and talk about the game and the guild. Ultimately your guild will be stronger for it. Certainly this isn't possible for every guild to do but it is very effective. The Syndicate, for example, as a 15 to 25 person guild dinner in Northern Virginia every month and a 100-200 person real life conference every year somewhere in the US. If your guild has the resources to do those things, they are powerful tools to bind you together as a stronger, longer lasting team. Remember that no matter how motivated you are today, 99.999% of the guilds that form today will not be around in a year or two. Most will be gone within 3 months. As such, anything you can do to swing the odds more in your favor is value added.

Craftsman Day: Long ago, in Ultima Online, The Syndicate started a tradition called Craftsman Day. The event was so popular that it spread to most UO servers and eventually spread to other games. Today it exists in the WoW world and it is a great event for your guild. First of all, it's free to host. All you need is your time. Second, it is of great value to anyone in the gaming community that doesn't have a craftsman. Third, it's a great way to meet people and other guilds.   The event is very simple: Gather your craftsman together in a central spot (like Orgimaar bank for the Horde or the Stormwind bank for the alliance) and offer your services, for free, to anyone who wants them. Offer to create any item for them that they wish, if they supply the ingredients for it. Since you cannot 'fail' in the creation of an item in WoW, the person risks nothing unless you steal their resources. That can only happen about one time before word spreads and your reputation is tarnished so only pick members you trust to represent your guild at those events. Craftsman Day lets people who could not normally make an item and don't wish to pay the huge auction house prices, get items created for the cost of the raw materials. If you make it a regular event, they can save up materials and plan to attend a future one to get your help.

Scavenger Hunt: The Scavenger Hunt is a great event for both the general public as well as for your guild to help keep members happy and give them something creative to do. There are a lot of interesting items in WoW whether its parrot droppings or troll sweat or wines that you can only buy in a specific location. With a little creativity you can easily come up with a list of 20 or 30 items. Pick a time and have your members online. Read off the list in guildsay and the first person or team of people to get back to you with all items (or the person or team with the most items when time expires) will win.

Fight Night: Fight Night and variations on it have become very popular events across online gaming. They can be private for your members only or they can be public contests. They can have persistent ladders that carry rankings from week to week or be fresh events every time. They can be solo or group events. The general premise remains the same: It is an organised pvp event where individuals or teams duel to determine a winner. From a guild standpoint they offer a change of pace and a good chance to practice pvp tactics and develop new ones with friends.

5.   Rules and Tools

5.1.   A Guild Website

If you wish your guild to have some basic level of credibility on the internet, then have a website. A guild without a website loses the ability to market itself effectively to people outside of the game itself. Most people spend more time at work surfing the internet than they do in the game itself. So you need to have a web presence to market yourself to that group.

Having a website is a double-edged sword, however. If you have an ugly site where clearly no effort was put into it then the site can actually backfire on you and tell the world that you are a cheesy guild that isn't very well run and probably not going to be around in a few months. A similar message is sent when you use some free webhosting service that is both slow and has annoying advertisements that pop up.

So you should have a guild website but when you go to set it up you should consider the following things:

- ➢ Register your own domain name www.yourguildname.com. It is very inexpensive to do

- ➢ Get a decent host for the site that doesn't have popup adds and has good response time

- ➢ Put some effort into designing your page. Poorly designed pages send the message that your guild is poorly organised.

- ➢ Pick a good color scheme. If you pick ugly colors then your page will not be enjoyable to read and people will not waste their time. Black text on a white background is the easiest on the eyes to read. White text no a black background is fairly easy to read. Red text on a bright purple background gives people a headache and screams 'newbie' when people see the site.

- ➢ Don't use copyrighted or trademarked material. People too often feel that since something is seen on the internet that it must be public domain and they can freely use it. That is false. A simple email to your ISP can get your account terminated and your site lost. So avoid stealing other people's intellectual property.

- ➢ Consider having a guild forum. This links back to the section on having good guild communications. A forum is important. You should at least have a private one

that only members can read and you may wish to have a public one that friends, recruits and perhaps even enemies can come post to.

You certainly do not need to rush out and spend hundreds of dollars on a website. However, you should have a web presence and it should be professional looking. You can make one for fairly low cost and it can look professional with fairly low effort. You can go with a pre-packaged look and use a tool like Postnuke (which is both free and professional looking) or you can design your own site.

The basic components that your site needs to include are:

- ➢ Your guild name
- ➢ What server you are located on
- ➢ What faction (alliance or horde) you support
- ➢ Are you recruiting? If so, how does someone join?
- ➢ What is your basic guild philosophy?
- ➢ What are your core guild rules members must follow?
- ➢ Any current news you wish to share

Here are some basic resources to help you get started, if you don't know where to look for hosting or registering your domain name.

Domain Name Registration: www.godaddy.com you can register your domain with them for $8.95/year and they even offer hosting at good rates. www.netsol.com is another registration company if for some reason you don't like godaddy

Hosting: Hosting companies are a dime a dozen. There are so many out there I won't do them justice by trying to give you a comprehensive listing. Some that you may wish to look at include: www.dreamhost.com and www.1and1.com (which does have European servers as well like 1und1.com)

5.2. Should You Support PvP In Your Guild?

World of Warcraft offers pvp in two flavors. First you can play on a pvp server where you can kill or be killed anywhere at any time. Clearly if you chose that server then the answer

to supporting pvp is YES by default. However if you chose a "normal" server then you can chose not to support pvp with your guild.

I would like to make the case that you SHOULD participate in pvp to some extent with your guild even on a normal server. I make the following case as to why pvp will make your guild stronger and add value to the guild.

➢ Raiding monsters day in and day out, even if the monsters and zones change, will eventually lead to boredom. No matter how creative the designers are, once you know the tactics, you will beat the encounter most every time. When the challenge is lost then things get boring. And eventually you will get so good at figuring out the tactics that you will rapidly master new content. PvP in WoW pits humans against humans. It is much more difficult to figure out another human and they are far from predictable especially when taken as a whole. That constant challenge, for some of your members, will keep the game fresh and fun.

➢ You get to chose when to pvp on the 'normal' servers. So you can chose to have a "battleground" (battlegrounds are instanced areas with specific goals and missions where alliance forces face off against horde forces) raid day where you gather your guild, pick a battleground and go work as a team, along with others of your faction, to achieve that mission or goal. You are, in essence, "raiding" other players instead of raiding monsters.

➢ There are rewards for honorable pvp that you cannot achieve any other way in WoW. By killing players that are near, at or above your level you will gain honor points. Those points in turn will grant you access to special NPCs selling special items that you cannot obtain through any other part of the game. And areas within the battleground instances have monsters that drop high end items that are only found in the battlegrounds.

➢ There is no penalty to pvping meaning you do not lose items and you lose very little time running from the graveyard back to your corpse. One of the biggest heartburns a lot of players had in UO was the loss of items and the loss of time. There was a penalty for losing in pvp instead of simply rewarding winning. In WoW there really is no penalty for losing. Instead the focus is all on the reward for doing well.

➢ First Person Shooter (FPS) games are very popular. Odds are many of your members enjoy FPS games. PvP in WoW is very much like playing a FPS game with swords and spells instead of rocket launchers and machineguns. Battlegrounds have goals to achieve and you earn "honor" for killing honorably (a

lot like in playing Americas Army, a free FPS that more than 2million online gamers play regularly). PvP is more like an FPS than in previous games and as such it finally puts the "fun" factor back into pvp that is missing in some games.

I would argue that you lose nothing by pvping but you stand to gain a lot. You have yet one more tool in your guilds toolbox to keep your members happy, motivated and not bored with the game. You have another outlet for their energy and an outlet to let stress out. Who doesn't like to see gnomes running around on fire screaming? Well, except the gnomes of course. You open yourself up to another type of online gamer that may now find a home in your guild. And you even have the ability to earn rewards that you cannot earn any other way.

5.3.   <u>Should You Use Chat Channels For Your Guild?</u>

Everyone guild gets a GUILDSAY and an OFFICER chat to use. However, even with 40 or 50 members, guildsay can get quite active and lose some of its usefulness in communicating information to members. With the guild Message of the Day being limited to 60 characters, should you consider using chat channels to supplement your communications?

If you are having communications and spam issues, to the point guildsay is becoming less useful, then I would say YES you should consider using chat channels. However, before you dive right into them, you need to understand the limitations of WoW chat rooms at the time of writing this article.

Here are the good points of using chat rooms:
- ➢ Anyone can make one
- ➢ You can let nonguild members into them if you chose
- ➢ You can password protect them
- ➢ You can create multiple 'tabs' in your user interface and assign chat windows to those tabs
- ➢ You can create rooms by subject area and use them to divide up chatter (for example having one room to get quest help and one room to offer up items in etc..)
- ➢ When you join a room and then logoff, WoW remembers what you were in the room and tries to autojoin the room when you next login

Here are some of the limitations of chat rooms as of the writing of this article:

➢ If everyone leaves the room, the room is closed. Unlike IRC or the chatroom systems in some other games (like Everquest) there is no memory of the room once the last person leaves. This makes it very difficult to have a persistent room with a persistent password since you likely wont have someone online 24hours a day, every single day, for all time to come. And if you don't, someone can steal your room very easily.

➢ If you password protect the room, when you next login, WoW will try to autojoin and fail to join the room and return a message since it does not remember the password used to login.

➢ If you leave your own room, even if the room stays open and active, it forgets you are the owner of the room. The room effectively becomes ownerless and no functions that require a room owner to perform, can't be performed.

➢ If you make someone a moderator and they leave the room, the room forgets that they were a moderator.

So chat rooms are useful tools for some things. But they fall well short of an IRC level of robustness at the time of writing this article. They don't have persistent access lists, moderator lists or even a persistent lifespan. So you could make rooms without a password to avoid those issues but then you lose the protection of keeping unwanted people out of the room.

Chatrooms can offer value. But understand the limitations of them and use them where they offer you value but not where they cause you more problems than they solve.

5.4. <u>What Are Guild Halls? Do I Need One?</u>

At the time of writing this article, guild halls are not implemented but have been talked about by the developers. The general principle is that it is housing, for the guild, within the game. It would be a place that only your members could get into and hang out. In some games you can furnish them or rent NPCs (like bankers, trainers etc..) to work there or perhaps add in portals to other locations or message boards to leave notes to friends.

In some sense, guildhalls are a status symbol. The Blizzard developers have said that

guildhalls will be VERY expensive. So at least initially, only the larger guilds will have them and thus denote their "uberness" by having a guildhall. Eventually though, even smaller guilds could pool funds and obtain one.

If you are a smaller guild, you might consider one of two options. The first option would be to setup a banker mule for the guild on your GM account. A level 1 char that you don't mess with. Everyone mails donations of gold to that character. Once in awhile you login and collect the donations out of your game mailbox. In this way you keep your personal stash separate from the guilds and you can tell what your total guild treasury is. The second option would be to implement guild dues. If you had fair and recurring dues then you have a guaranteed revenue source every so often and you can add that into your guild bank account and build up over time. You can, of course, do a combination of both.

It is too early to say if guildhalls will be worth it or not. They are, in other games, so it is something to think about and perhaps start banking your gold for.

5.5. <u>What Are Some Basic Guild Rules That Are Good To Have?</u>

In one of the earlier sections in this document, we talked about the need to establish guild rules that everyone has to follow. What rules you pick really are totally up to you and are based around the kind of guild you wish to have. Since most gaming guilds are friendly, social ones who's underlying goals are to have fun and play the game together, some basic rules/decision points you may wish to consider implementing include:

➢ No abusive language in guildsay. No personal attacks on other members in guildsay. If you want friendships to form then keeping guildsay a friendly place will foster that. Since every member has access to the channel, and you need it to communicate, you don't want people to be afraid to speak up in guildsay or even to dislike logging in due to the content they see there. Also bear in mind that some of your members may be younger and offensive or adult topics might cause them issues if their parents walk by and see them on their kids screen.

➢ Acceptable Guildsay use policy: Above and beyond offensive language and personal attacks, you should define what is an acceptable way to use guildsay. Since everyone has to share one channel, if it becomes a massive partyline, does that serve your purposes? Maybe it does. If it doesn't then you need rules to handle that.

➢ Acceptable Public Image policy: What is an acceptable public image for you? Is it ok to use bugs and exploits and be known for that? Is it ok to scam other players? Is it ok to raid newbie towns of the opposing faction? Is it ok to engage in flame wars on the public posting forums or insult or attack the developers on Blizzards forum? Depending on how you answer those questions, you need to craft a policy on what members can and cannot do, in the public eye, so that their actions grow your public image in the way you wish it to grow.

➢ Your internal chatzone/posting forum policy: What is acceptable use of your forums? Can members post links to other guilds they are a member of? Can they post pornography or obscene content? Can they rant and rave at you, the guild or other members? Define that policy. Post it. Sticky topic it and make sure everyone knows it

➢ Can members be in guilds other than yours? Define that up front and let everyone know as they join if they can or cannot be in someone elses guild

➢ Do you have a requirement to attend a certain number of raids per week/month? To be online a certain number of hours? To login your char within a certain number of days or get removed? If you do, define those limits and make sure all members know them.

➢ Is it ok to disagree with you, the guildmaster? To challenge your decisions publically? To disobey a guild policy or decision you make? Decide on those topics and make that clear.

➢ What is your recruiting policy? Do members refer new people? Can they guild anyone they meet? Make sure everyone knows that

➢ What is your policy going to be about Alt characters? Can members guild them? Is there a limit to how many? Do they need to be a certain level first?

➢ Can members be in both the Horde and Alliance factions? If so, can a member on the alliance side kill a member on the horde side if they face off in pvp somewhere?

➢ Is it ok for members to use guildsay (or your posting forum) to sell items to other members? If they can sell to other members, is there a limit to how much profit they can make?

➢ If members have an issue or problem, how do they get it resolved?

➢ Is there a guild heirarchy? If so, how does each member fit into it? Who do they have to take orders from? What does each title mean? How can a member move up the ranks?

Clearly defining as many of your rules, as early in your guilds lifespan as you can, will help you avoid problems in the future. Whatever the rules you set down, you need to enforce them fairly and within the spirit of your rules. If you let one member get away with breaking a rule but then enforce it on another member, you will lose credibility with your guild and it may cost you members or the guild may implode. Be fair. Be consistent. And remain within the spirit of your rules, or modify the rule to fit the new reality of the guild.

5.6. <u>Are There Official Shard Forums To Advertise My Guild In?</u>

There are a number of places you can advertise your guild. I wish to avoid listing too many websites since they do come and go pretty rapidly but I do want to give you some of the more static ones and some ways to find other places to advertise your guild.

The primary place is on Blizzards site. They offer two methods to get your guild name out to the WoW community. The first is the Guild Recruitment Forum located here:

http://forums.worldofwarcraft.com/board.aspx?fn=wow-guild-recruitment You can post a link to your site and information about your guild and how to contact you.

The second method is that each server has its own server specific forum. The complete list of them is located here: http://forums.worldofwarcraft.com/realmforums.shtml Find the one for your server and bookmark it and post your guild information there as well.

In addition to Blizzards site, most major news sites also have a Guild forum. WoW Stratics (http://wow.stratics.com), Warcry's WoW site and the Vault Networks WoW (http://wowvault.ign.com) site are three big ones. There are many many others. If you use google and search on World of Warcraft Fan Sites or News Sites you will return a number of hits. Many of them will have forums that include a guild recruiting forum.

And finally, there are a good number of "Top 100 Sites" lists out there that you can register your guild to. You can get your members to click on the link, once a day (in most cases) and vote for your site. Once again, go to goggle and search on World of Warcraft Top 100 and you will get back several hits of sites you can register to.

6. The Sky Is Falling! What Do I Do?

Every guild is going to have problems. Members will break rules. Your authority will be challenged. Challenges in game will come up. People will freak out over something, that is probably pretty minor, and scream that the sky is falling. Your ability to handle those challenges effectively and correctly will determine if your guild fails sooner than you plan for it too.

Here are some guiding principles that you may find useful when dealing with the crisis that will come up:

> You are the guildmaster. Ultimately you have to make a decision and ultimately you are responsible for it. If you make a mistake, take responsibility. But you need to make a decision. Few things ruin a guild faster than a wishy washy GM who can't decide on a course of action.

> Be fair and be consistent. If you change your mind constantly or make decisions that aren't in line with past decisions. Or if you show favoritism to friends. Or if you are not fair in your decisions... then you will ultimately cause more problems than you fix. Perhaps you can solve the immediate problem but you will be sowing the seeds of discord that will cause issues in the long run.

> Listen to all involved. Be open-minded. Just because you like one person more than the other doesn't necessarily mean they are correct. Listen to what is said. Think about it. Then decide. Sometimes simply listening is all you need to do since once people have had a chance to vent and be heard and really believe you did listen to them and hear them, the problem will resolve itself. That doesn't happen in all cases but just listening can be a value problem solver in and of itself.

> Do not let yourself be pushed around. You do need to be a friend to your guild members. You do need to be fair and open minded. But there is a line between being open minded and being pushed around. You are the GM and you need to maintain control of your guild. If you cannot control someone then you need to remove them or turn the guild over to them and quit yourself. Control the situation. Don't let it control you.

> Do not make special rules to keep whiners happy. Do not try to make everyone happy. It is impossible. If you make up custom rules or try to magically keep everyone happy then ultimately you will anger more people than you keep happy and your guild will implode. Have one set of rules, for all members, and enforce it fairly on all members.

> ➢ Most online crisis are short term and not really that major. They may seem big and overwhelming at first but within a few days they are often forgotten or are seen in a different, much less daunting, light. So try not to get overwhelmed by a crisis. Take it one problem at a time and work through it.

> ➢ Leave your emotions at the door when dealing with a crisis. You are the leader and you need to act like one. If you act like a baby or a whiner or if you can't control your temper or get offended and mad, then you aren't a good candidate to be a guildmaster. Check the emotions at the door and be impartial and able to look at decisions with a big picture view. If you view them only as to how they affect you OR if you can't view them without getting mad or sad or upset by the process of reaching a decision then you won't reach the best decision possible.

> ➢ Remember your guild rules. If there is one that applies to a situation, then apply it and that should be the solution/answer you go with. If you don't have a rule that covers that scenario then once you reach a resolution, create one so the next time the issue comes up you will have a clear path to follow

One thing is certain, you will have crisis as a guildmaster. You need to learn from them. Apply the lessons of the past to the future ones. And you need to keep control of your guild. Don't let the crisis take control of you. You take control of the crisis.