AetherCon
GM Playbook

Available online at:
http://aethercon.com/GMPlaybook

The goal of this document is to assist Game Masters who are running game sessions during AetherCon.

Important Dates

- GM Early Bird Registration starts July 1 and ends July 31
- GM Registration starts Aug 1 and ends Sept 16
- Player Pre-Registration starts Sept 19 and ends Oct 2
- Player Registration starts Oct 3 and goes to the convention
- Convention starts Nov 11, 2016 and runs through Nov 13, 2016

Harassment Policy

AetherCon is dedicated to providing a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age or religion, nationality, or sports team affiliation. We do not tolerate harassment of convention participants in any form. Convention participants violating these rules may be sanctioned or expelled from the convention at the discretion of the convention organizers. Our anti-harassment policy can be found at:

http://aethercon.com/harassment

Event Slots

We have nine slots available for events. most are divided into five hour chunks.

Timeslot 1: Friday/November/11: 2 PM EST to 7 PM EST (GMT-5)
Timeslot 2: Friday/November/11: 7 PM EST to MIDNIGHT EST (GMT -5)
Timeslot 3: Saturday/November/12: MIDNIGHT EST to 5 AM EST (GMT-5)
Timeslot 4: Saturday/November/12: 9 AM EST to 2 PM EST (GMT -5)
Timeslot 5: Saturday/November/12: 2 PM EST to 7 PM EST (GMT-5)
Timeslot 6: Saturday/November/12: 7 PM EST to MIDNIGHT EST (GMT -5)
Timeslot 7: Saturday/November/13: MIDNIGHT EST to 5 AM EST (GMT -5)
Timeslot 8: Sunday/November/13: 9 AM EST to 2 PM EST (GMT-5)
Timeslot 9: Sunday/November/13: 2 PM EST to 7 PM EST (GMT -5)

Supported Virtual Tabletops (VTT)

At AetherCon we support two VTTs:

- Roll20.com
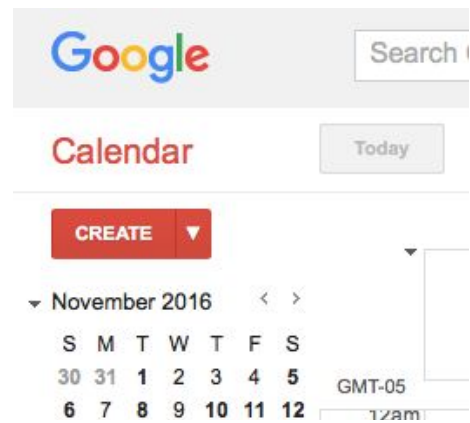- Google Hangouts

Roll20

For GMs new to online RPGing and Roll20, we will be offering live tutorials with experienced hands who can walk you through setting up and running your game. Contact our tutors at roll20tutor@aethercon.com or check out the tutoring schedule here:

http://aethercon.com/Roll20Tutoring

Google Hangouts

Setting up a Google Hangout is super easy once you have a Google account. There are several ways to do it, but perhaps the simplest is to create a calendar item on Google Calendar. Follow these steps:

1. Create a Google account or login to your existing account.
2. Go to Google Calendar at https://google.com/calendar.
3. Click the red "Create" button on the left.
4. Provide a title for your Calendar item (this is really just for your eyes).
5. Set the date, time, and timezone.
   a. Use your first choice's date and time here.
   b. If your first choice is unavailable, we will let you know. You can then come back and adjust the calendar item. However, this is strictly optional, as the date on the Hangout doesn't affect the link.
6. Click the "Add Video Call" text link; this is the action that establishes a URL for your Hangout.
7. Provide an optional description; again, this calendar info, apart from the Hangout link, is just for your eyes.
8. Do not add any guests.
9. Click the red "Save" button at the top; you will be returned to the main Calendar view.
10. Find the calendar event you just create and click to edit it.

11. Right-click the "Join Video Call" text link, and copy the URL.
12. This is the URL you use on your form. Don't lose it!

Note: Hangout URLs are permanent and can be used for multiple, successive Hangouts. If you are running ten games, at different times, you really only need the one Hangout URL.

GM Registration Form

You can find the GM Registration Form here:
http://aethercon.com/GMReg

This online form must be filled out for each event you will be running. It provides our system with the details of each game you'll be running, including a description, and the virtual tabletop (VTT) link to your session.

Organized Play

Remember if you want to run **Cthulhu Cult of Chaos, D&D Adventurers League, Pathfinder Society** or **Shadowrun Missions** you need to register by using the e-mails below and ***not*** the form above:

- Cthulhu Cult of Chaos: cocgmreg@aethercon.com
- D&D Adventurers League: dndalgmredg@aethercon.com
- Pathfinder Society: pfsgmreg@aethercon.com
- Shadowrun Missions: srmgmreg@aethercon.com

GM Table Count

Remember, your players are eligible for prizes! But we can't get their loot to them if we can't contact them. It's imperative that you fill out the GM Table Count Form during or immediately after **each game**.

You can find the GM Table Count Form here:
http://aethercon.com/GMTableCount

The form asks for your scenario's name, when it was played, how many players attended, and the contact info for your players.

Deciding to Run a Game at AetherCon

We are assuming you have a lot of experience with role playing and/or table top games. But you may be new to the online experience of gaming with others over computers using virtual tabletops. Some of our online players have remarked that online play can be similar in enjoyment to in-person games. Others felt that online play can allow the GM and players to focus more on the story compared to meeting in person.

Having to carry around loads of books, dice, pawns, etc... PHEW! Using online tools can be easier once you understand how to use the tools available. And then sometimes it's fun to teach your friends something new by using tools like Google Hangouts or Roll20.

Registering your Game at AetherCon

"What?"

Choose a game that people will want to sign up for and play. If your first thought is "I've always wanted to try running this game but couldn't find any players...", that should tell you something.

Naturally if you plan to run a home brewed game, beta-testing the game with players that you know personally is a recommended precursor to registration. That will help you formulate a great descriptor for your game. Consider using the characters your beta-testers made as pre-generated characters for your game at AetherCon.

While we welcome lesser known games and homebrews, keep in mind that they do not have the exposure of better known systems. For that reason, taking full advantage of this document is recommended.

"How?"

Put up a decent descriptor. If your descriptor reads "Dungeon crawl for five players," expect potential sign ups to treat your game with the same amount of enthusiasm you are.

For Open Games (which includes Publisher Run Games but not Organized Play), make sure you accentuate the fact that anyone playing in your game can win the Open Gaming Bundle by including the phrase "Players eligible for Open Gaming Bundle!" after your descriptor.

A Note to Publishers

Also remember if you are a Publisher running a new system, new edition of an existing system, or a new setting, a hardcover copy of your setting or rulebook puts you in the Innovators Bundle which is another way to attract players. Point this out to possible sign-ups by adding the phrase "Players eligible for Innovators Bundle!" beneath your descriptor. Games can be eligible for both the Open and Innovators bundles.

After Registering

After you register your event, it will be important to start developing the virtual tabletop (VTT) your game is running on to increase your chances at a full table. Here are some ideas to help.

Your Virtual Tabletop
Populate your Roll20 campaign with a cover sheet. If folks sign up for your game and see a blank white page they may wonder just how committed you are to running it and ask themselves why they should be more committed than you are. AetherCon logo graphics are available through our press kit found:

http://aethercon.com/MediaKit

In the case of homebrew games, the RPG rules or rules changes from the system you are basing your homebrew on should also be plainly spelled out in the journal section of Roll20 for player viewing **prior** to Player Pre-Registration starting.

Character Creation
We highly suggest that you supply characters for your players if you are running a non-Publisher Open Game. If you are a Publisher we suggest you either supply characters, or if you have a

new system, perhaps make the characters at the table with the players and use a shorter scenario.

If you are providing characters for the players we suggest creating an extra one for every two characters the scenario requires so as to give the players more options when it comes to selecting what kind of character they would like to play. Also, when making the characters, write a couple of sentences. Who are they? Why are they? Nothing fancy, just two or three sentences.

We also suggest that the characters be viewable in Roll20 by the players **prior** to Player Pre-Registration starting.

Start a Roll20 Forum Chat where your players can touch base with you **prior** to the big day. It will provide a way for them to ask questions about things they are uncertain about and help your session run smoother so that come game time you are playing and not explaining.

Get the Word Out!
Simply put: Advertise on Social Media! You know who your demographic is likely to be more than we do. Get the word out. AetherCon will always do its part to promote games on its schedule, but your effort here only improves the chances for a great time.

Remember: You will get out of your game what you put into it.

Final Thoughts

In closing, remember to have fun! :)

And don't forget to keep checking back with us as we roll out all of the other events happening during AetherCon Weekend, November 11-13, 2016!

http://www.aethercon.com
https://www.facebook.com/AetherConRPG
http://twitter.com/AetherCon
https://plus.google.com/+AetherconOnlineTabletopRPGCon

Thanks for being a part of the dice rolls heard 'round the world!

–AetherCon Staff