

DARK MAGENTA

He's more machine now than man...

Or: Building a better Tech-Priest

By Dave Knowles

Over the last year I've spent a lot of time building up an Explorator warband which includes Tech-Priests, Skitarii, Servitors, a Calculus-Logi and even their very own Arvus Lighter transport. While writing up the profiles for these characters I found myself a little disappointed by the range of bionic implants and augmentations on offer in the Inquisitor rules. While the existing rules seemed fine for characters with the odd replacement limb or organ, they weren't really sufficient to represent a fully-fledged Tech-Priest as seen in novels like Graham McNeill's Mechanicum or Matthew Farrers's excellent Legacy.

At the same time, I was reading through the Dark Heresy source books and I soon saw that these included a far more comprehensive set of bionics, augmentations and implants which could be used to create a Tech-Priest character; and I started to include items and equipment from Dark Heresy on my characters for Inquisitor - for example, my Tech-Priestess wielding a Sollex-Aegis Energy Blade as featured in The Inquisitor's Handbook.

These facts, combined with the positive reception that the article on Space Marine implants received inspired me to go away and write an article that would enable Inquisitor players to better represent Tech-Priests in the game using the bionics and implants in Dark Heresy as a starting point.

+++ Children of the Ommissiah +++

The Cult Mechanicus was born many thousands of years ago, before the birth of the Imperium, during the time now known as the Age of Strife. While Earth fell to disease, famine and war, events on Mars took a different turn. When the radiation shields were destroyed, only those with sufficient technical knowledge were able to build the sealed shelters, repair radiation shields, oxygen generators and food processing machines necessary to survive. Perhaps inevitably, given the chaos surrounding them on all sides, these few survivors came to venerate the machines that gave them life and the Cult Mechanicus was born. On the red sands of Mars, cultists built vast temples to the Machine God and people came to worship at the High Altar of Technology. The ruling caste of the Cult Mechanicus became known as the Tech-Priests – Techno-Magi with access to ancient knowledge.

Every child born within the domains of the Adeptus Mechanicus is measured, tested and graded to discover how best they might serve the Ommissiah. The most promising will be inducted into the mysteries of the Cult Mechanicus and find their place within the ranks of the Tech-Priests. Of the others, those who are physically able may find themselves undergoing the trials necessary to join the ranks of the Skitarii, but the vast majority will serve in the Ommissiah's manufactories and production lines as menials or 'labour units'. Those who are mentally or physically incapable of properly serving the Ommissiah are still put to use – there is no shortage in demand for organic servitor components and labour-helots.

The few who are deemed to be intelligent enough to join the ranks of the Tech-Priests will, when they come of age, be inducted into the lowest mysteries of the Machine God as a Tech-Acolyte. Tech-Acolytes are known by many different names, often depending on which Forge World they are from or their position within the Mechanicum. For example, a Tech-Acolyte apprenticed to a senior Tech-Priest is often known as a Famulous. Should they prove themselves worthy, the Tech-Acolyte will advance into the

priesthood proper, perhaps becoming a Technographer, Enginseer, Electro-Priest, or maybe even rising to become a member of the ruling elite such as a Magos, Mech-Deacon or even an Arch-Magos.

+++ Magos Croll Steiner +++



Like many high-ranking Tech-Priests, all of Steiner's visible flesh has been replaced with bionics and implants; but while his appearance is fairly conventional for a member of the Mechanicum, it can be terrifying to those unused to dealing with Tech-Priests. Steiner is extremely skilled in the use of mehadendrites and his Cyber-Mantle is fitted with six, including ones with optical, medical and manipulator functionality. His only overt weaponry is a shoulder-mounted bolt pistol which is supported by his Cyber-Mantle and linked to his Cranial Circuitry via an MIU; however both of Steiner's arms have been replaced with advanced bionics incorporating concealed weaponry – hidden within his right hand are a number of digital weapons, and his left hand is fitted with retractable agonizer blades.

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+++ Tech-Adept Profiles +++

The profiles below are only rough indications of appropriate levels for various ranks of Tech-Adept. However, any given Tech-Adept's profile is likely to vary from these based on his background, experience, position within the Cult Mechanicum or his chosen specialisation. For example, a Magos-Biologis may well have upgraded his body making himself stronger and tougher without using any of the implants listed later in this article; an Explorer could have learned to better defend himself during his explorations and thus may have a higher WS and BS; or a Magos-Militant may be more used to being in combat situations and could have a higher Nv characteristic.

	WS	BS	S	T	I	Wp	Sg	Nv	Ld
Tech-Acolyte	40	45	45	50	50	55	60	40	50
Tech-Priest	50	55	45	50	65	70	75	50	60
Magos	50	55	45	50	75	80	85	60	85

The profiles given differ slightly from those in the *Inquisitor* rulebook as they are designed to work in conjunction with the implants and augmentations listed later in this article. For example, rather than a Magos having a Weapon Skill of 70, almost that of a master swordsman – he has been given a more moderate one of just 50, however this can be upgraded using an electro-graft. After all, it makes more sense for a Techno-Magi to just download combat skills straight into his brain rather than spending time training, time that could be better used in pursuit of the Quest for Knowledge.

Note that it is possible for some of the upgrades to result in a Tech-Adept having one or more statistics that exceed 100. This is because the 1-100 scale is used to represent unaltered humans; and almost all Tech-Adepts are 'altered' in some way; therefore they, along with aliens, daemons and Space Marines, can have statistics that far exceed 100. It is worth remembering that statistics greater than 100 can pose problems in the game and you are advised to not let them become commonplace in your games.

The knowledge imparted to Tech-Acolytes during their training gives them a 5% bonus to any tests involving interacting with technology, for example cracking a digital lock or accessing a cogitator. Tech-Priests get a 10% bonus to such tests and a Magos will get a 15% bonus. These bonuses may be further augmented by skills, tools or implants.

+++ Initiation and Implants +++

These implants are gifted to the acolyte during the arcane rituals which mark their initiation into the Cult Mechanicum, and it is unheard of for the Mechanicum to implant them into non-cult members. In the event that a cult member is excommunicated, his implants will be ritually removed from his flesh. This usually results in the death of the heretic, but should he survive it is regarded as a far worse fate as his connection to the Omnissiah is permanently severed. There are some hereteks who are willing to implant these implants for a price, however this procedure is not without risk and the implantee will often find himself lumbered with only partially functioning implants and facing a life of taking immuno-suppressants and painkillers as his body tries to reject the augmentations.

The standard versions of these implants have no in-game effects, they merely allow an Adeptus Mechanicus character to function in the same manner as a flesh and blood character. For example, the potentia coil implanted within a Tech-Adept's chest will power his implants, but cannot be used to power other technology unless the character has additional augmentations; similarly a hit to the chest will be just as debilitating for a Tech-Adept character as for a normal one, but the damage may be to his potentia coil and cyber-mantle as well as his organic internal organs – in either case, the effects are the same.

Cyber-Mantle – usually the first implant to be attached to a Tech-Acolyte's flesh. The cyber-mantle is a metal framework attached to the spine and lower ribcage with neural-impulse transmitters and acts as a sub-dermal anchorage point for future implants.

Potentia Coil – the potentia coil is a compact power source and field generator implanted deep within the cyber-mantle which acts as the Tech-Acolyte's power source and energy store. Over

time a Tech-Adept can learn to modulate his potentia coil to produce various types of field.

Electoo Inductors – *electoo inductors are metal skin grafts usually attached to the hands and wired into the Tech-Acolyte's nervous system where they derive power from the body's bio-electrical emanations and potentia coil. With sufficient training, a Tech-Adept can learn to use them to emit or siphon power to or from external devices, allowing the adept to resurrect inactive machinery without the need for an auxiliary power generator.*

Cranial Circuitry – *this is a series of implants, some attached to the outside of the skull, others deep within the brain tissue. The processors, data-stores, synaptic flow maps, synthetic synapses, and cortical circuits enhance the Tech-Acolyte's mental capabilities and provide the basic hardware on which future cranial augmentation is built.*

Electro-Graft Port – *the electro-graft port is implanted into the Tech-Acolyte and interfaces with his nervous system. As the acolyte progresses through his training he will learn to use the port to interface with machine data ports and cogitator networks. The electro-graft port can also be used to download skills directly into the acolyte's brain via memo chips or ingrams, although using it in this way is not without risks. Electro-graft ports come in many forms including spine jacks, finger probes and skull shunts.*

As the Tech-Acolyte progresses to become a Tech-Prest, he will upgrade and enhance these implants adding additional capabilities depending on his specialisation and field of study. In addition, many Tech-Priests will upgrade and replace many of their organic body parts including limbs and internal systems, and so bringing themselves closer to the Machine God. Body parts that can be upgraded include; senses, arms and hands, legs and feet, and the respiratory and circulatory systems.

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+++ Future Augmentations +++

The vast majority of the implants described below rely on interfaces with the implants fitted to the acolyte during his initiation, and therefore cannot usually be fitted to non-cult members or lay members of the Mechanicus (such as Skitarii, Menials or Servitors). In particular, highly advanced augmentations such as cranial circuitry, electro-grafts, potentia coils and electro inductors are all but unknown outside the Mechanicum. While it is entirely possible for characters who are not initiated into the Cult Mechanicus to be fitted with replacement limbs, organs or senses (as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook), the method of implantation is generally far cruder than that practised by the Mechanicus on their inducted members; so while the bionic may function in an identical manner to those below in game terms, however it is likely to be less capable in other ways. For example, a bionic eye fitted to a Skitarii Officer may need to be recharged on a regular basis, whereas an eye with similar functionality fitted to a Tech-Priest will be able to draw power from his Potentia Coil and thus will never need recharging.

+++ Cranial Circuitry Upgrades +++

A Tech-Adept's cranial circuitry can be fitted with all manner of implants and devices to augment his or her mental capabilities.

Logis Circuit – the Tech-Adept has upgraded his cranial circuitry to better enable him to perform complex calculations and extrapolate from incomplete data. If called upon to make a Sagacity test, the adept may spend actions concentrating beforehand as he brings his considerable powers of logic and deduction to bear on the problem, gaining a +10% bonus to the Sg test for each action.

Ballistic Logis Programming – the Tech-Adept's logis circuit has been upgraded to aid in the calculation of trajectories and firing patterns. This gives the adept an additional +10% To Hit bonus for each aim action he makes (for a total of 30%).

Orthoproxy – the Tech-Adept has fitted a liturgical circuit deep within his skull. He can attempt to 'tune out' mind control attempts by concentrating on the prayers to the Ommissiah recited by the proxy unit. The adept gets a 20% bonus to his Willpower when testing to see whether he is affected by, or can resist, mind control or interrogation attempts.

Rite of Pure Thought – the creative, emotional, illogical right hemisphere of the brain is replaced with a cogitator linked directly to the left hemisphere. This gives the Tech-Adept pure thought, clear of distraction from annoying emotions or any sense of self-preservation. The Rite of Pure Thought upgrade functions as described in the *Explorator Warbands* article.

Emotional Repressive Surgery – chemical and surgical procedures have been performed on the Tech-Adept's brain to reduce the hold his emotions have over his conscious and unconscious mind. The adept's Nv and/or Wp characteristics are increased by between 5 and 25%, depending on the procedures that have been performed.

Mind Impulse Unit – a Mind Impulse Unit, or MIU, is a neural link-up between a character and a piece of equipment, allowing him to operate the machine with thought alone. The MIU operates exactly as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

+++ Explorator-Magos Vaal Kryzak +++



As befits a high ranking Explorator, the majority of Kryzak's body has been replaced with bionics, however his outward appearance is still ostensibly quite human. Unusually for a Tech-Priest, and even more so for one of his rank, his face appears to be mainly flesh and bone - however this is not quite the case. His face is still his original flesh, but stretched over an adamantium skull fitted with extensive cranial circuitry. Connected to his Cyber-Mantle is a bulky servo-arm backpack which also incorporates a number of tools including a plasma cutter. His legs are advanced bionics which easily allow him unimpeded use of the servo-arms despite their weight; whereas his arms and hands are fitted with numerous tools, data-plugs and power-linkages so he can interface with almost any technological artefact.

Psi-Booster – psi-boosters are commonly used by the Machina-Mentors and other psychic Tech-Adepts to increase activity in the part of the brain responsible for controlling psychic powers. The psi-booster operates exactly as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Synthetic Synapses – much of the Tech-Adept's brain has been replaced with artificial synapses greatly increasing their processing speed and decision making ability. The character declares a number of actions equal to their Speed as normal, but then gets to roll an extra dice to determine the number of actions they get to perform. All dice rolled count when determining whether any *Risky Actions* are failed.

Memory Coils – the character's memory has been greatly upgraded increasing the knowledge available to their conscious mind. The character's Sagacity is increased by between 5 and 20% depending on the quality of the implant.

Binary Cortex – when two Tech-Adepts find their thinking coincides entirely, it is not uncommon for them to decide to literally link both their brains in a single body so they can work together more efficiently. Unfortunately, the two personalities may not always agree on the best course of action and the Tech-Adept may seem indecisive as the two personalities argue amongst themselves. The Binary Cortex functions as described in the *Explorator Warbands* article.

Auxiliary Neural Processor – the Tech-Adept has upgraded his

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central nervous system with an inbuilt auxiliary cogitator capable of making microsecond decisions. Should something unexpected happen, the auxiliary cogitator kicks in augmenting the Tech-Adept's ability to react. These are usually fitted to Tech-Adepts working on complex and delicate experiments, however they also have applications in the military sphere. An adept fitted with such a device can assess a situation and come up with the best course of action in moments. The adept may carry out their actions at any time during the turn, even going before characters with higher Speed values. Additionally, if more than one adept has an equal Speed value then the one with an Auxiliary Neural Processor may go first, (if both have the same augmentation, or one has *Lightning Reflexes* then use Initiative as normal).

+++ Calculus-Logi Zurek Nabokov +++



At a young age, Nabokov was marked out to become a Lexmechanic and he is happy to serve as savant and advisor to others. Much of his body is still organic, although his left arm was replaced some years ago to enable him to hold his customised rifle in a more stable firing position. The vast majority of his implants are upgrades to his Cranial Circuitry, including a Logis Circuit and Ballistic Logis Programming. Connected directly to Nabokov's Cyber-Mantle and Cranial Circuitry is a backpack fitted with all manner of ranging and sighting equipment - this equipment is also linked to his rifle and when combined it allows him to project targeting and trajectory information on his sighting monacles making him an exceptional shot.

+++ Quality of Cranial Circuits +++

Although the Cult Mechanicus has millennia of experience in fitting cranial circuitry, it is still an inexact science and the correct functioning of the implants will depend greatly on the skill of the engineer who built them and the adept who fitted them. All Tech-Adepts must take one of the following;

Crude Circuitry – the character's cranial circuitry is crude, inefficient, damaged or otherwise functioning far from properly.

Circuitry of this quality is often fitted to those Tech-Acolytes who show little promise during their initial assessments. The character suffers -1 Speed, and between -5 and -20 from all mental characteristics, Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill (decided when the character is created).

Standard-fit Circuitry – as with almost all cranial circuitry, that fitted to the Tech-Adept suffers from the occasional glitch, particularly when in a stressful situation such as combat. The malfunction has between a 1 and 10% chance of occurring (decided when the character is created). Test at the start of each turn and if failed the character suffers the penalties for crude cranial circuitry (I.e. -1 Speed and -20 from mental characteristics, WS and BS) for the whole of that turn.

Advanced Circuitry – cranial circuitry of this quality is generally only fitted to the best and brightest Tech-Acolytes, however many Tech-Priests will upgrade their circuitry over the course of their career but only the most influential Techno-Magi will be able to procure and fit cranial circuitry that functions perfectly. The Tech-Adept suffers no penalties as a result of their cranial circuitry.

+++ Bionic Senses +++

Many Tech-Adepts will choose to upgrade their senses, most commonly fitting bionic eyes and/or ears, although some may choose to enhance their sense of smell or taste if that is relevant to their field of study.

Standard fit Auto-Sense – the Tech-Adept has replaced the relevant sensory organs with bionic versions that closely replicate the function of the original organic component. The character suffers no penalties but gains no benefits to awareness tests. In most cases, an implant such as this will be implanted as a base onto which additional capabilities can be fitted.

Advanced Auto-Sense – the Tech-Adept has fitted a high quality augmentation in place of his organic sensory organ. The adept has +20% to any relevant awareness tests using the upgraded sense.

Auto-cutout – the Tech-Adept has upgraded his bionic sense to provide an auto-cutout facility that will prevent it being overloaded by high intensity input. The adept gets a 20% bonus to his chances of avoiding the effects of sensory overload. For example, being blinded by a photon flash flares or deafened by an explosion.

Sensorium – the Tech-Adept has been upgraded with an auspex linked to his own senses. This is usually fitted to bionic eyes, but it is not unknown for it to be linked to an adept's aural receptors. The auspex functions exactly as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Gunsight Overlay – the bionic eye has been fitted with a gunsight (as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook) which projects targeting information on his field of vision, thus enhancing his combat capabilities. Unlike a gunsight fitted to a weapon, the adept does not need to first make an aim action to use the gunsight in their bionic eye.

Memorance Implant – a datavault and pict-capture array linked to the Tech-Adept's bionic sense(s) and cranial circuitry. This upgrade automatically records everything 'seen' by the adept's bionic sense giving him an exact record of events that he can later refer to. Most uses of this implant will be determined by the GM as appropriate for the scenario, however the Memorance

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Implant can also be used in the same manner as the Sacred Writ described in the *Thorian Sourcebook*.

Prey-Sense – the Tech-Adept has upgraded his bionic eye to enable him to see in even the poorest lighting conditions. This upgrade gives the adept the Nightsight ability as described in *The Sons of Khaine* article.

Baleful Eye – a tiny miniaturized weapon has been concealed within the Tech-Adept's bionic eye. This functions as the equivalent of a Digital weapon as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

+++ Respirator Unit Upgrades +++

Tech-Adepts commonly fit a face mask and respirator unit to cover their face and give them an inhuman appearance. In most cases, these incorporate some form of filtration system and a standard vox-synthesiser capable of transmitting the adept's voice in a variety of ways including normal speech and machine cant.

Comm-link – the Tech-Adept's face mask incorporates a comm-link or micro-bead system which functions as per the rules in the article on *Major Jaxon*.

Vox-Caster – the Tech-Adept has fitted a highly amplified vox-caster to his face mask. The adept can project speech much louder than a normal human can shout; he can choose to make his shouting heard at up to 60 yards and understood at up to 40 yards.

Feedback Screech – the Tech-Adept can emit a screeching blast of noise from his vox synthesiser circuits shocking and distracting those nearby. To use this ability takes an action; all characters (except daemonic or machine-based ones) within 12 yards must pass a Willpower test or act at -1 Speed for their next turn as they shudder, cover their ears or otherwise react to the horrid noise. Once used, it takes D6 turns for the adept's vox circuits to reset before he can project another feedback screech.

Rite of Awe – the Tech-Adept may spend an action reciting an infrasonic liturgy that causes awe and fear in everyone in the vicinity. All humans within a 15 yard radius must pass a Willpower test, if failed they suffer a 10% penalty to the next characteristic test they make as they attempt to shrug off their feelings of dread and religious guilt.

Rite of Fear – the Tech-Adept can spend an action reciting an infrasonic dirge which causes fear and terror in the weak-willed. The adept counts as *Fearsome* until his next turn.

Filtration Plugs – the Tech-Adept's face mask is fitted with filtration plugs, which function in exactly the same way as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Gas Filter – the Tech-Adept's face mask is fitted with an adaptable filtration device, which functions in exactly the same ways as the gas mask described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Re-breather – the Tech-Adept's face mask is fitted with a re-breather, which functions in exactly the same way as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

+++ Electro-graft Port Upgrades +++

A Tech-Adept can fit memo chips or ingrams to his Electro-graft port to allow him to interface with data sources and instantaneously acquire skills. Unfortunately, using the

electro-graft port in this way makes it vulnerable to hard knocks and shocks - a character who uses their electro-graft port to do this reduces their Toughness by 10 when making a system shock test.

Skill Graft – the Tech-Adept uses his electro-graft port to acquire a skill such as *Feint*, *Gunfighter* or *Hipshooting*.

Profile Graft – the Tech-Adept uses his electro-graft port to enhance one of his mental characteristics statistics, Weapon Skill or Ballistic Skill. The enhancement is usually between 10 and 20%.

A Tech-Adept usually only has a single electro-graft port and can therefore only learn one skill or enhance one statistic in this way.

+++ Bionic Circulatory System Upgrades +++

Tech-Adepts often upgrade elements of the circulatory system whether by fitting additional elements or by replacing some component, or in extreme cases, their entire circulatory system.

Circulatory Filtration – filtration systems fitted to the Tech-Adept's circulatory system mean that the adept has +10% to all gas and toxin Resistance tests.

Detox Implant – a Detox Implant is used to flush toxins from the Tech-Adept's system. It functions exactly like the Detox Gland described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Stimm Injector – a Stimm Injector may be implanted as part of the Tech-Adept's circulatory system. Stimm Injectors function exactly as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Auto-Sanguination – the Tech-Adept's blood is replaced with a more efficient medium which can sooth pain, plug holes and rebuild torn flesh with remarkable efficiency. Auto-Sanguination functions as described in the *Explorer Warbands* article.

Nathicarthurm – also known as a pharmacopoeia, this is a small implant containing drugs, and other chemicals that can be released into the Tech-Adept's enhanced body to aid healing and recovery. The Nathicarthurm functions like the Medi-pak in the *Inquisitor* rulebook, but can only be used on the Tech-Adept.

Hermetic Infusion – the Tech-Adept has replaced his blood with a biomechanical serum containing a multitude of microscopic machines in place of organic blood cells. As well as replacing the function of the adept's original blood, these homuncultic machines are able to rapidly repair damage at the cellular level. The adept adds +20 to his Toughness when rolling for Recovery (the bonus applies to both the chance of success and to the amount of damage recovered).

+++ Bionic Respiratory System Upgrades +++

Another common augmentation performed by Tech-Adepts is to upgrade their respiratory system to enable them to survive in hostile environments by filtering out harmful toxins and gases.

Adsorption Filter – the adsorption filter fitted to the Tech-Adept's respiratory system provides a degree of protection against airborne toxins. The adept gains a +5% bonus to resistance tests against gas weapons.

Synthetic Membranes – the Tech-Adept has fitted synthetic

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membranes to his respiratory system giving a great degree of protection against hostile atmospheres. The adept gains a +20% bonus to resistance tests against gas weapons.

Cryogenic Distillation – advanced cryogenic distillation techniques are used by the Tech-Adept to enable him to survive in almost any atmospheric conditions. The adept gains a +40% bonus to resistance tests against gas weapons.

+++ Tech-Acolyte Alaia Katenka +++



Katenka is still an acolyte of the Machine God and has not yet joined the priesthood proper. She currently functions as Magos Vaal Kryzak's famulous, his intermediary to other adepts. Usually an apprentice Tech-Adept would have only the initial implants fitted during their training, however to aid Katenka in her duties Kryzak has gifted her with a multi-function eyepiece allowing her to see in a wider spectrum, and has attached a pair of mehadendrites to her cyber-mantle. Her skill with a chain-axe is not, as some have supposed, due to an electro-graft but is rather a result of long hours of training.

+++ Cyber-Mantle Upgrades +++

The primary purpose of the cyber-mantle fitted to all Tech-Acolytes is to act as a mounting point for additional upgrades. The most common cyber-mantle upgrade used by Tech-Adepts are mehadendrites – a catch-all name for a variety of tendril-like prosthetics used by Tech-Adepts to perform a variety of tasks such as construction, research and maintenance.

Medicae Mehadendrite – a flexible mehadendrite fitted with drug injectors, flesh-staplers and chain-scalpels, used to provide surgical and medical assistance in the field. The Tech-Adept counts as carrying a Medi-pak as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Manipulator Mehadendrite – a sturdy mehadendrite used for lifting and manipulating industrial machinery. The Tech-Adept essentially gains an additional hand which they can use for tasks such as carrying objects or reloading weapons. The manipulator does not have sufficient dexterity for tasks requiring fine manipulation (such as using a keypad or firing a weapon) and cannot be used to perform any action that requires a characteristic check other than a Strength test (at Strength 50) or an Improvised close combat action.

Utility Mehadendrite – a flexible mehadendrite fitted with combi-tools, injector pistons, cutting blades and the like. For each utility mehadendrite, a Tech-Adept adds +10% to tests taken when trying to interact with machinery (up to a maximum of +20).

A Tech-Adept with one or more medicae, manipulator or utility mehadendrites gains a free improvised close combat attack action once a turn.

Ballistic Mehadendrite – a sturdy mehadendrite mounting a compact weapon and designed for self-defence. The mehadendrite can be fitted with any pistol weapon, but is most commonly fitted with an energy weapon such as a laspistol. The weapon is fired as normal at the cost of a single action.

Optical Mehadendrite – a highly flexible mehadendrite fitted with cameras, infra-red torches and fibre-optic tendrils which can be used by a Tech-Adept to look under doors, through keyholes, into crates or around corners. The Tech-Adept can spend actions examining the feed from the optical mehadendrite; after which their visual feed switches back to normal. When using the optical mehadendrite the Tech-Adept counts as having the Nightsight ability.

Servo-Arm – a crude but powerful lifting arm often used when repairing heavy machinery or for simple tasks such as lifting and carrying. The servo-arm counts as having Strength 90 when used to perform tasks such as lifting, carrying, dragging, breaking doors and so on. The servo-arm can also be used in combat; for each servo-arm fitted, an adept gains a free close-combat attack action each turn with the following profile;

Reach: 1 Damage: D3+6 Parry Penalty: -30

Servo-Harness – an articulated armature used by Tech-Adepts when undertaking arduous rites in plasma reactors or the maintenance of substantial Machine Spirits such as those in large vehicles. The Servo-Harness functions as described in the *Explorator Warbands* article.

Shoulder Weapon Mount – the Tech-Adept has attached a weapon mount to his cyber-mantle which sits above one of his shoulders and is usually controlled by an MIU-link. The mount can be fitted with almost any of the pistol and less bulky basic weapon types described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

+++ Potentia Coil Upgrades +++

A potentia coil is more than just a power source for the Tech-Adept; it is also a compact field generator that can be modulated to emit various types of field given sufficient training and upgrades.

MagLev Grace – after long years of training, the Tech-Adept has learnt to use his potentia coil to generate a magnetic-levitation field that enables him to hover 8-10 inches above the ground. Activating or deactivating MagLev Grace costs an action. When active, the adept can only move at walking pace, but can move perfectly silently and can move over any terrain, even floating over water. Also, the adept may automatically activate the rite whilst falling to slow his rate of descent which has the same effect as the Catfall skill.

Energy Field – the Tech-Adept can modulate his potentia coil to project an energy field to protect him from incoming fire. Activating or deactivating the Energy Field costs an action. When active the adept is protected by an additional D6 force field armour to all locations.

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Sensor Cloaking – the Tech-Adept can use his potentia coil to project an phased-interference field that masks the output signature of his bionic and organic systems. Activating or deactivating the Cloaking Field costs an action; and while the field is active, the adept is undetectable by auspexes such as bio-scanners, psi-trackers, electrical-scanner and motion-trackers. The interference field also resonates into the aether, disrupting the character's warp signature and thus conceals the adepts from psychic powers such as Detection and Psi-track.

Aegis Barrier – the Tech-Adept has mastered the ability to modulate his potentia coil to project an energy field capable of disrupting aetheric assault. Activating or deactivating the Aegis Barrier costs an action; and while active, the adept counts as being protected by Hexagrammic wards as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Null Field – the Tech-Adept has learned one of the great mysteries, how to use his potentia coil to disrupt the flow of aetheric energy in the region. Activating or deactivating the Null Field costs an action; and while active, the adept counts as being equipped with a Psychic Dampener as described in the *Thorian Sourcebook*.

Fields generated by a Potentia Coil can be activated for a number of turns dependent on their quality. After being used, the Potentia Coil must recharge for D3 turns before it can be used again.

Crude – e.g. Salvaged Electrical Galvinator: D3
Standard – e.g. Hydrogen Fusion Generator: D3+1
Advanced – e.g. Crystal Stack Batteries: D3+2

+++ Bionic Arms +++

A bionic arm usually replaces the arm as far as the shoulder joint, but can also include parts of the shoulder, neck and ribcage. The interface between the bionic and organic components that control the limb usually replicates the performance of the original; therefore a replacement arm counts as the character's 'off' hand only if replacing the character's original 'off' hand.

Strength Augmentation – the arm is fitted with powerful pistons and servo-motors which greatly enhance the character's strength. In the case of an arm designed to replicate the size and shape of the original, this strength bonus will only be modest (+10% to the strength of the arm), however larger arms can be fitted with more powerful systems which can enhance a character's strength to inhuman proportions (up to a maximum of +40% to the strength of the arm).

Concealed Weapon – the most common version of this upgrade is a variation on the Concealed Cavity upgrade whereby a cut-down pistol or small close-combat weapon is concealed in the arm and can be reached quickly. This weapon may be deployed as if the adept had the *Fast Draw* or *First Strike* ability (as appropriate). With more advanced versions, the weapon is mounted on the arm itself rather than being hand-held, and can be deployed almost instantaneously. Again, the adept count as having either *Fast Draw* or *First Strike* when deploying this weapon, but they can do so while already carrying something. Should someone search for the concealed weapon, discovering it will take a Sagacity test with a -30% modifier.

Implant Weapon – rather than fitting a hand to his bionic arm, the Tech-Adept has implanted a weapon system; or in some cases this could be a piece of industrial machinery that can be adapted

to also function as a weapon such as a breacher, servo-claw or las-cutter. The implant weapon functions as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Enhanced Neural Interface – the additional neural links and synthetic synapses mean that the arm no longer counts as the character's 'off' hand. An adept who has replaced their 'off' hand with a bionic with this upgrade, will count as *Ambidextrous*.

Exo-armour Vambraces – the exo-armour plates mean that the arm may be used to parry when the character is unarmed.

Micro-Power Field Vambraces – extremely rare micro power field generators are fitted to the character's forearm. The arm may be used to parry when the character is unarmed, but cannot be destroyed by parrying a power weapon.

+++ Bionic Hands +++

Most bionic arms are fitted with hands, or similar appendages, that give comparable dexterity to the Tech-Adept's original organic hand, however some will upgrade their hands fitting tools or concealed weapons.

Recoil Dampers – the Tech-Adept's hands are made up of interlocking plates connected with memory wire; these lock together around a weapon and minimise the effects of recoil when the weapon discharges. The adept counts as firing half as many shots on semi or full-auto when determining the modifier for firing multiple shots.

Combi-tool – the Tech-Adept's fingers have been augmented with data-plugs, micro-drills, power-leads, sonic-screwdrivers, micro-saws and all manner of other miniature tools. The adept adds +5% to tests taken when trying to interact with machinery.

Digital Weapon – the Tech-Adept's finger conceals a miniaturised weapon such as a micro-flamer, digi-laser or dart launcher. This upgrade functions as per the Digital weapons listed in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Implanted Weapon – rather than a hand, the Tech-Adept has a weapon system implanted at the end of their forearm. This weapon can be any type of pistol or small close-combat weapon and is often combined with the interchangeable hands upgrade below. The implant weapon functions as described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Interchangeable – the arm is equipped with quick-release neural and servo-connectors in the forearm allowing alternative hands to be attached. The adept may take a number of different bionic hands or implant weapons and switch between them during the game. Removing a hand takes one action, as does fitting a new one; however a third action may be necessary to retrieve the replacement hand from the adept's belt or backpack.

+++ Electoo Inductor Upgrades +++

The standard electoo inductors fitted to a Tech-Acolyte are sufficient to interface with small pieces of technology, but many Tech-Adepts will later upgrade their electoo inductors to grant additional functionality.

Electrical Succour – the Tech-Adept can draw power from a functioning machine, through his electoo inductors to replenish his body. An adept attempting a recovery action while in contact with an appropriate piece of machinery counts his Toughness as 20% higher both for the Toughness test and the amount of damage recovered.

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Ferric Lure – the Tech-Adept can focus his electro-inductors and potentia coil to call an unsecured metal object into his hand. The ability can be used to summon an object weighing up to about Weight 15 (or 2 pounds) within 10 yards. Using the ability takes an action, and the adept must pass a Willpower test to summon the object – if failed, the object either fails to move or scatters randomly as determined by the GM.

Luminen Blast – the Tech-Adept can focus a crackling ball of bio-electrical energy through his electro inductors which he can fling at his foes. The luminen blast has the following profile;

Range: E Mode: Semi(2/4) Acc.: -5 Damage: D10

All of the hits on a character from a luminen blast combine their damage together against a single location – roll once for location, roll all of the damage and then make deductions (ie, 2 hits causes 2D10 damage against a single location). The luminen blast is extremely draining to the Tech-Adept; each time the ability is used the adept must pass a Toughness test or add D6 to his injury total.

Luminen Shock – by focusing power through his electro inductors the Tech-Adept is able to use bio-electrical energy to cripple his enemies. Any close combat attack made by the adept when unarmed or using a weapon made of a conductive material counts as a shock weapon.

Luminen Charge – the Tech-Adept is able to draw power from his potentia coil and direct it through his electro inductors to power inactive technology. Most uses of this ability are up to the GM – if the technology is too damaged, arcane or power-hungry the GM may simply rule that the adept is unable to power it. In other cases, the adept may spend actions attempting to power or recharge an object, with a Willpower test being necessary for each one to be successful. For example, a GM may determine that four actions are necessary to fully recharge a lasgun powerpack; or six actions are needed to revive an inactive cogitator.

+++ Bionic Legs/Hips/Pelvis +++

Bionic locomotion systems can be as simple as a replacement leg replicating the function of the original, but it is not uncommon for members of the Mechanicus to further augment their bionic legs to allow them to move more efficiently.

Augmented Speed – add 1 yard to all Movement rates except crawling and climbing. If the character has two such bionic legs they add 2 yards to all Movement rates except crawling and climbing.

Jump Pistons – the Tech-Adept's legs are fitted with spring loaded pistons giving the character the ability to jump further than is normally possible. The character adds 50% to the distance they can jump, so a Strength 80 character can therefore jump $4+2=6$ yards. If the character spends an action sprinting he can add an additional 50% to the distance; therefore a Strength 80 character can jump $(4+2)+3=9$ yards. This augmentation can only be fitted to a character with two bionic legs.

+++ External Systems +++

The following systems are tethered servitors and familiars 'wired-in' to the Tech-Adept's augmentations and offer functionality that cannot be miniaturised to fit within the Tech-Adept's own body. These systems all follow the rules for Familiars as given in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

+++ Electro-Priest Larissa Teunis +++



Like all Electro-Priests, Teunis has been fitted with a powerful Potentia Coil, one which can supply far more power than is necessary to power her augmentations. In addition, her Electro Inductors have been upgraded and fitted with a number of capacitors allowing her to store large amounts of electrical energy which can be discharged in combat causing immense damage to her foes. Channelling such vast amounts of energy can cause interference with her Cranial Circuitry, causing her to act in a frenzied manner – this effect is considered to be far from undesirable and, like many Electro-Priests, Teunis is known to actively invite it.

Tethered Utility Servitor – these small servitors accompany the Tech-Adept where ever he goes and are attached to him via umbilical cords through which they draw power and sustenance, performing tasks such as carrying his equipment, recording the results of experiments and numerous other non-combative functions. In extremis however, these tethered servitors will fight to defend their master. The servitors can always keep pace with their master, regardless of how fast he moves. They otherwise get no actions, other than passing anything they might be carrying to their master. Should the Tech-Adept be attacked in close combat, the servitors will fight to defend him using the following profile;

WS: 25 BS: 0 S: 25 T: 30 I: 25 Wp: 70 Sg: 5 Nv: 100 Ld: 5

The servitor counts as having two points of armour due to its extensive bionics and the following injury results;

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Superficial – *no effect.*

Serious – *the servitor is stunned for one turn. An adept with a stunned servitor reduces his movement rates by 1 yard as he is forced to drag his dazed servant along with him. The effect is cumulative, so an adept with two stunned servitors reduces his movement rates by 2 yards (and so on).*

Crippled – *the umbilical cords automatically detach the critically damaged servitor from its master and if not already dead, it will soon expire.*

Haemoncolyte – a vat-grown creature cloned from the Tech-Adept's own flesh. They are usually used to cleanse the adept's organic systems of poisons and tumours; any such imperfections are passed along an umbilical cord to the haemoncolyte and are absorbed into its flesh. A haemoncolyte functions as described in the *Explorator Warbands* article.

Techno-mat – a tethered servitor designed to attend to the functions of the Tech-Adept's organic components, freeing them from the frailties of the flesh in the pursuit of knowledge. A techno-mat functions as described in the *Explorator Warbands* article.

+++ Skitarii Centurion Saphentis +++



While most Skitarii are lay members of the Cult Mechanicus, as a high ranking commander Saphentis has been inducted into some of the lower mysteries of the Omnissiah. Saphentis's entire body is fitted with thick carapace plating that conceals the full extent of his augmentations, but which include replacement limbs, an upgraded respiratory system, and enhanced senses. Both of Saphentis's arms are equipped with quick-release inter-changable hands; in combat situations he normally replaces his right hand with a rapid-firing autogun and his left with a powerful breacher. A single manipulator mechadendrite is attached to his cyber-mantle, and proves especially useful when his hands have been replaced with weaponry.

+++ Generic Upgrades +++

The following upgrades could be fitted to many different parts of the Tech-Adept's body and in some cases can take very different forms.

Auger Array – these are implanted devices that duplicate the effects of an auspex and can take many forms including sensor arrays, scanning devices, or arrays of small servo-skulls. An Auger Array functions exactly as the auspex described in the *Inquisitor* rulebook.

Concealed Cavity – hidden within one of the Tech-Adept's cybernetic implants is a small compartment which can be used to conceal a small item. Discovering the concealed cavity will take a Sagacity test with a -30% modifier.

Haywire Pulse – the Tech-Adept has concealed a small haywire pulse generator within his augmented torso. The pulse can be activated once per game at a cost of one action, and has the same effects as a haywire grenade being set off centred on the adept's location – if the adept moves while the pulse is active, the field will move with him. The Tech-Adept has hardened his systems against the effects of the haywire pulse and will only be affected by the pulse for a maximum of one turn (the hardening is only effective against the haywire pulse emitted by the character's own haywire pulse generator).

Armoured Exo-Skeleton – all cybernetic body parts including limbs, heads and torsos can be fitted with armour plating. In most cases this will be 1 to 2 points worth of armour plating riveted to the bionics; however some high ranking Tech-Priests cover themselves in tough carapace armour, bulky ceramite plating, gleaming fitted bronze armour, or in extreme cases full-suits of powered armour. Therefore, Tech-Adepts may fit themselves with any of the armour types featured in the *Inquisitor* rulebook, however when it comes to personal protection many Tech-Adepts prefer flak-gowns and/or force field projectors.

Active Counter-measures – The Tech-Adept is fitted with active counter-measure systems which sense and protect from incoming attacks. The counter-measures are designed to thwart a wide range of targeting devices and can take many forms from chaff-pellets and electronic jammers designed to interfere with or fool electronic targetters, to close-in micro-lasers programmed to shoot down or deflect incoming projectiles. As these devices are programmed to detect and react to attempts to target the Tech-Adept using technological means, they are of no use against 'dumb' shots.

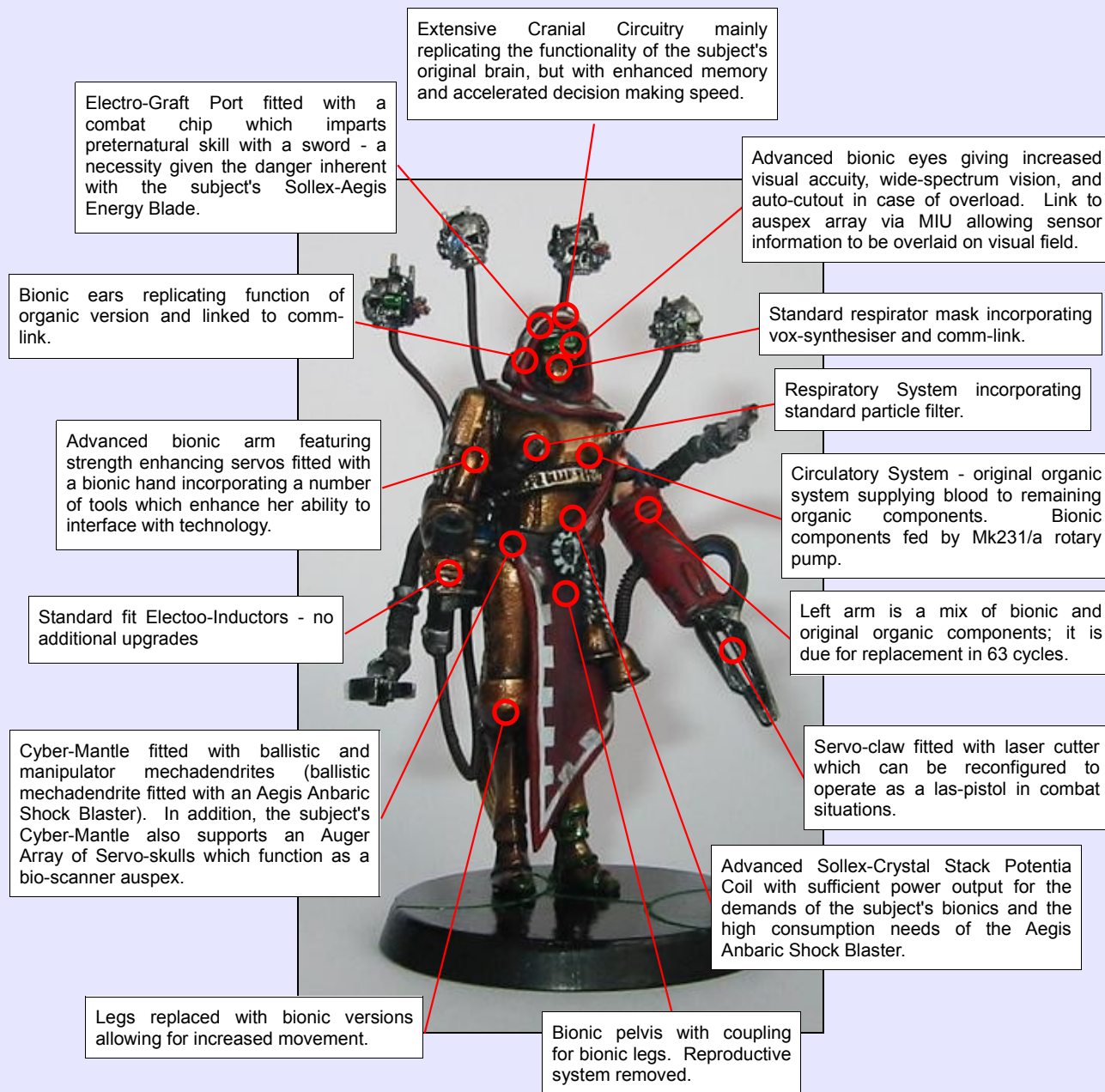
When attacked by either a guided weapon, such as a missile or Executioner shell, or by a weapon fitted with an electronic gunsight (such as a range-finder, motion predictor or laser sight), the Tech-Adept may activate his counter-measures. These will affect all shots from a single shooting action. Declare that the adept is using his counter-measures before the enemy makes his To-Hit roll. The adept must make a Sagacity test to see if his systems can analyse the threat and react in time; if successful, the amount the test is passed by is a further negative modifier to the firer's chances of hitting. A character cannot use both counter-measures and Dodge or Deflect Shot against the same attack.

Fire Suppression System – The Tech-Adept has installed sophisticated fire extinguishers which can be used either on himself or another character. The adept increases his chance of putting out a burning location from 25% to 75%.

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+++ Report Reference: ADM-8173-64-S +++
 +++ Subject Name: Riall, Orla +++
 +++ Subject Rank: Tech-Priestess, Adeptus Mechanicus +++
 +++ Author: Adept Landeman +++

Biographical Summary: Orla Riall was recently seconded to Explorator Magus Vaal Kryzak's expedition to the Gaugtel Stars as a way to further her career in the Mechanicum. We know little of Riall's background prior to this, but it is assumed that she originates from Sollex (as evidenced by her energy blade which is of a type manufactured exclusively by the Sect of Sollex).



Augmentations: Orla Riall is a rising star within the Mechanicus, and has been gradually upgrading her bionics to reflect her increased status. The most obvious sign of this is that almost all of her visible flesh has been replaced with brass-plated bionics, but underneath her metal skin is a suite of implants that both replicate and enhance the capabilities of her original organic body.

Known Associates: Explorator-Magos Vaal Kryzak, Calculus-Logi Zurek Nabokov, Skitarii Centurion Saphentis, Tech-Acolyte Alaia Katenta, Skitarii-Provost Vir Dmitrich, Cybernetic Guard Sokol Lazarus.

Threat Assessment: Riall displays a preternatural skill with a blade (suggesting the use of one or more electro-grafts) making her an extremely dangerous opponent. Additionally, her extensive contacts within the Mechanicum mean that she has ever increasing political power. Approach with caution.

+++ File Ends +++

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+++ Hacking and Interface Battles +++

All Tech-Adepts are equipped with interface systems which connect them to the outside world, to the systems of their Forge World or ship, and ultimately, to the Ommissiah. These interfaces include such things as high-speed auditory vox-channels, binaric fields, tight-beam coders, noospheric interfaces, wireless frequency networks and aethernet links. When the disagreements and arguments between Tech-Adepts descend into outright combat, the battles are not just on the physical plane (and, in the case of the machina-mentors, on the aetheric plane) but also across these technological interfaces as the adepts attempt to hack into one another's systems and either take control of, or shut down, their opponent's internal systems.

The vast majority of bionics issued to characters such as Imperial Guardsmen, Rogue Traders and even Inquisitors are not susceptible to this form of attack as they have no interfaces to the outside world. However, servitors and other characters who can be controlled from a distance (such as arco-flagellants, servo-skulls and cyber-mastiffs) can be attacked in this way as the MIU links, vox-pickups or comm-interfaces that allow their master to control them also act as conduits through which a determined attacker can hack.

A Tech-Adept character can spend actions attempting to hack into the systems of an opposing Tech-Adept, servitor or similar character as long as the target is within 25 yards and in line-of-sight. As with shooting, close combat and psychic powers, a test is required to successfully hack an opponent's systems. The basic percentage chance of a successful hack is based upon the character's Sagacity. This chance is modified by the difficulty rating of the hack as listed below.

If a Tech-Adept fails a *hacking* test, the feedback is likely to damage his cranial circuitry. For every full 10% that an adept fails a *hacking* test by, he loses D10 from his Sagacity characteristic.

The character who is the target of the hacking attempt is unlikely to be defenceless when it comes to this form of attack and will be protected by all manner of encryption systems, intrusion countermeasure electronics, security lock-outs and data-seals. The target character may attempt to defeat the hacking attempt by taking a Sagacity test. The amount he passes the test by is a negative modifier to the attacking Tech-Adept's *hacking* test. The target character's defences will however be weakened by the hacking attempt; and should he fail his Sagacity test he will lose D10 from his Sagacity characteristic for every full 10% the test was failed by.

System Paralysis – *Difficulty: 10* – The Tech-Adept attempts to access systems such as the target's power source or respiratory system with the intention of temporarily shutting them down and thus rendering the target helpless. The target is *stunned* for one turn for every 10%, or part thereof, that the *hacking* test is passed by. The target may spend actions attempting to restart the disabled systems at the start of each turn and will succeed in restoring full functionality if he can pass a Sagacity test.

System Overload – *Difficulty: 5* – The adept attempts to cause as much damage to the target as possible by burning out power relays, overloading data channels or shredding neural links. The target adds D6 to his injury total for every 10%, or part thereof, that the *hacking* test is passed by. This damage can be repaired using the normal rules for recovery.

Shut-down System – *Difficulty: 10* – The adept attempts to shut-down specific systems within the target's body; for example disabling mehadendrites, shutting off stimm injectors or crippling bionic legs. The precise effect may need to be determined by the GM but in general the system effected is unusable for one turn for every 10%, or part thereof, that the *hacking* test is failed by. If the system is a life-critical one, such

as a bionic respiratory system, then the effect is the same as the System Paralysis hack above. The target may spend actions attempting to restart the affected system, and will need to pass a Sagacity test to be successful.

Dominate – *Difficulty: 20* – The adept attempts to breach the target's control systems and take control himself. The target counts as being on the same side as the Tech-Adept for one turn for every 10%, or part thereof, that the *hacking* test is passed by. However, the control is not complete and the target deducts 1 from his Speed and has an additional -25% from any rolls required to perform actions whilst under the adept's control. The target may attempt to re-establish control over his systems at the start of every subsequent turn and will succeed if he can pass a Sagacity test.

Where the target is a servitor-type character controlled by an opposing Tech-Adept, he may make a Sagacity test to attempt to disrupt the attempt to hack into his servitor's systems as long as he is within 15 yards and line-of-sight of the servitor. If successful, he can use his Sagacity to fight off the hacking attempt rather than the servitor's. If the target of the attack has no Sagacity characteristics, a servo-skull or cyber-mastiff for example, then use a standard value of 15 when resolving this form of attack.

No Tech-Adept would go so far as to disable his interface systems in order to make himself immune to this form of assault; to do so would cut-off him from the Ommissiah and severely hamper his ability to interface with technology – a Tech-Adept who does try this will lose any bonus to interacting with technology due to his rank, and suffer a -10% penalty on top as his technological 'senses' are inoperative.

In addition to using these remote interface systems to hack the systems of an opposing character, a Tech-Adept will be able to remotely access any technology that has a compatible interface. If the GM declares that the systems are compatible, then the Tech-Adept does not have to move into base to base contact with the machine in order to access it's systems, but can do so as long as it is within 25 yards and in line-of-sight.

There are two ways in which these rules can be used; either you can assume that all Tech-Adepts are capable of employing the above forms of attack and their proficiency with them is denoted by their Sagacity; or a Tech-Adept may be capable of some, all, or none of these attacks, and any he is capable of performing are listed in his profile in much the same way as psychic powers. Which way you

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choose is entirely up to you, your GM and the rest of your gaming group.

Collanex Interface Dart Gun – a compact single shot pistol which fires a small dart containing a miniature wide-spectrum transponder designed to give a Tech-Adept a conduit through which he can hack into a system that is otherwise closed to him. The darts are only really useful when it comes to target who do not already have such interfaces. If the dart hits the target, then it does no damage but leaves the target open to a hacking attempt. The darts are designed to be difficult to extract, and contain a small electro-shock generator to discourage any attempts to do so. Removing the dart takes one action, but the character must make a Sagacity test and if failed, the electro-shock generator is activated and the character is stunned for one turn.

Type: Pistol Range: E Mode: Single Acc.: +5 Dam: - Shots: 1 Rld: (1) Wt: 20

Servitor Data Seal – servitors, with their low levels of intelligence, are generally unable to fight off hacking attempts and so their creator may choose to build in data-seals and other security systems to protect them from attack. Depending on their strength, these systems can give the servitor a bonus of between 10% and 40% to their Sagacity when attempting to defend against a hacking attempt (decided when the character is created). Data-seals fitted to a servitor cannot increase its effective sagacity when defending against a hacking attempt beyond the sagacity of the controlling Tech-Adept. A Tech-Adept will already be fitted with data-seals and other defences, and so cannot add more to further increase his sagacity when defending against this form of attack.



+++ Tech-Priest Gormax Laekon +++
+++ Collegium Biologis +++



As a member of the Collegium Biologis, Laekon is an expert in combining organic and inorganic technology and this is reflected in the augmentations to his own body. Perhaps the most prominent augmentation is Laekon's surgeon backpack which incorporates versatile medicae mechadendrites, stimm injectors and two biological manipulator dendrites - the first bears a facimile of a human hand, while the second is tipped with a dexterous tentacle. Laekon's left arm has been removed and instead he has hard-wired himself to an ancient piece of archeotech which he calls the Bio-Rhythm Manipulator. The device appears to be an ancient piece of medical equipment, and although Laekon has yet to discover the full extent of its capabilities, he is able to use it to perform remarkable acts of healing or to overload an enemy's circulatory system causing their blood to boil in their veins.

About the Author

Dave has been playing GW games for far more years than he'd care to reveal, and moved onto Inquisitor about five years ago. Since then he's built up an impressive collection of 54mm models (some of which featured in the very first issue of Dark Magenta), and always has more in the pipeline. When not battling for the Emperor's soul, he works as a software engineer in sunny Preston where he lives with his girlfriend and a tank full of tropical fishes.