

The man lived only by hacking online games for 20 years

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Manfred's virtual world on WildStar Online has been available since 2014. After a few seconds, the command line Manfred typed made virtual money up to 18 caps 18 times. Manfred has hacked video games for 20 years and turned it into a real career. His method varies slightly depending on the game, but it basically includes tricks to give him items and money in the game. He then sells them to other players (to get real money) or to wholesale on the online market like Internet Game Exchange and then retail to each player.

At the current rate, Manfred estimates that the value of gold on WildStar is now \$ 397 trillion. This number is huge, but his real income is still limited by the real market of money in the game.

Before the Def Con conference, Manfred said he wanted to give a demo video about hacking and disappearing 'like a ghost', as never heard of, the way he had lived for 20 years. He has found 100 unknown vulnerabilities in more than 20 online games, making hacking and trading of items on the game a full-time job. Unlike people who hack games just to overcome other gamers, Manfred hacks games to make a living.

'Hack is best when invisible because you change rules without anyone knowing what's going on. When hacking online games, the main purpose is invisible. You will not want to make players or game companies realize you are hacking them. You don't even want them to know what you're doing is possible.'

The only exception is in Shadowbane. Manfred says it is easy to hack, hackers only need to send to the game server any data and the game will believe. 'That was my last case. I then hacked it completely and didn't let anyone know,' Manfred said.

Starting with Ultima Online, one of the first MMOs, Manfred said he found a way to earn virtual money and items and then sell on eBay, then on Chinese online markets. Back then there were only dial-up connections, he was often killed by broadband players, so he thought of a way to hack them.



Manfred's character (dressed in purple) on Ultimate Online after he stole a house

Ultimate Online is just the beginning. For two decades since then, Manfred has found a way to hack and make money from Lineage 2 games, Shadowbane, Final Fantasy XI, Dark Age of Camelot, Lord of The Rings Online, RIFT, Age of Conan, Star Wars New Republic , Guild Wars 2 and many other games. 'I became a wholesaler for many of these games,' he said.

He refused to disclose the money he earned during his career but said he did not trick to beat other players who considered himself providing a service: bringing in-app purchases before it was born. . 'I don't like to call it a hack, but to find features that aren't known in the protocol,' he said. 'I can create as much money as I want. No player or game company can see it. It is my revenue for 12 years'.

Now, Manfred says he wants to show the world that video games need to be treated more securely. Most hacks he made over the past 20 years are based on the same bug. Manfred says now that he gave up because the video game business model has changed, many companies make progress with in-app purchases and he doesn't want to compete with them. He stopped hacking games from last year and now has a job at a consulting firm.

If you hack WildStar Online on stage, it will be Manfred's last hack but he refused. After the talk, he said he would report bugs to NCSOFT and help them fix bugs on this game.

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