

BW-E-2 Anima System

The Anima System is an advanced mind-machine interface that allows a user to 'become' the device they are interfacing with. The result is something similar to the [Geist Advanced Interfacing Implant](#)'s remote control abilities, but much easier to use and with a much deeper connection.

The system also carries a few notable drawbacks in exchange for this ease of use, including a complete loss of use of the user's original body.

Development began in [YE 40](#) after the success of the [Geist Advanced Interfacing Implant](#). A finalized, 'safe' version of the system was completed for public use in [YE 42](#).

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| Designer: | New Dusk Conclave , Black Wing Enterprises |
| Nomenclature: | BW-E-2 |
| Manufacturer: | Black Wing Enterprises |
| Fielded by: | Civilians and Military Forces within the New Dusk Conclave |

History

The [Geist implant](#) very quickly became a crucial component of how [Section 6](#) operated after its initial introduction. The integrated HUD elements were a notable boon to S6's combat capabilities. Its ability to allow the remote operation of military technologies, such as vehicles and weapons, was a second major boon.

It was the performance of users who showed an exceptionally high aptitude when using the Geist that sparked the Anima Project. These users could go a step beyond mere 'operation' of the vehicles and practically 'become' the vehicles themselves. Such users were anomalies, but their level of control while in this state was exceptional.

The Anima Project was initiated to find a way to consistently allow users that level of control, even if they lacked the special aptitude for doing so through the Geist. An enhancement to the Geist, known as the [G1-N2 "Geist" Advanced Interfacing Implant 2.0](#), was developed, but at best it was a minor upgrade to the original and did not sufficiently expand its users' capabilities. A new route had to be pursued.

That new route was an advanced quantum entanglement system. Early testing was disastrous, but promising. As the years went by, mental models were improved and a highly malleable digital medium was developed. The final, production version is easy enough for anyone to use with only mild training.

Better still, it was small enough and cheap enough to become widespread within the NDC's civilian sector.

Function and Design

The Anima System creates a quantum entanglement state between a user's brain and an Anima-equipped machine, effectively allowing the user to 'become' the machine. For both the Anima System and the [Geist](#), this is called 'Possession'.

A set of simple discs, located on either side of the user's head, perform the initial scan and entanglement process. A complimentary system within the Anima System, the mind matrix 'host unit', becomes a true, sync'd copy of the user's mind at this point. The system then eases the user out of their original body's sensory information and other biological feedbacks and replaces it with a synthesized version from the machine they now 'possess'. It is also at this point that motor control to the user's original body is suborned by the Anima System and 'switched' to the machine. Without these two elements, a user would simultaneously experience all inputs and provide motor control to both 'bodies'. Users with a [Geist](#) can initiate this process without requiring the Anima System's headset.

Once the Possession process is complete, the user is fully the machine that their mind has occupied. The user's original body is still intact, but no longer under their active control. Their mind is simultaneously operating within their original body and their machine body, in perfect sync.

In many cases, a machine may not perfectly mirror the human body's anatomy. The Anima System acts as a translation layer in these cases, simplifying the process of operating an unfamiliar body by reading the user's intentions. Just as a human spends little time thinking about how it walks, a human mind in a [Hydra Variable Tank](#) would not need to focus on the specifics of how they walk and move.

This translation of [conscious control](#) is surprisingly easy to get used to. Fine control of a machine's systems, especially those that don't have a normal analog on the user's body, could take years to truly master.

As the connection between mind and machine is a quantum one, it is possible to Possess a machine that is not physically near the user's body. Despite this, most conventional uses of the Anima System place the user and system both within the same machine.

A Familiar Body

While the Anima System does an excellent job of translating a user's intentions into actions, it is still much easier for users to become accustomed to a body similar to their own. For this reason, machines with a humanoid body type or human-like features are the preferred form factor for Anima System-controlled devices.

In the cases where the form factor is not sufficiently humanoid, the Anima System will do its best to approximate things so that the user's mind will feel natural in the Possessed body. Additionally, if a Possessed body would perform an action that would be uncomfortable or painful for a user to experience, the Anima System will adjust the sensation so that it is only weird and not actively harmful.

Anima and Synthetic Intelligences

Synthetic Intelligences are able to utilize the Anima System by fully shifting their consciousness into it. This transfer is similar in result to when performed by an organic operator, with all the benefits and drawbacks therein.

Machine Intelligences, including those with vastly superior capabilities, and organics whose minds are too dissimilar in thought process or composition, cannot use the Anima System.

Body Transfers

In some cases, [Permanent Possession](#) can be a desirable outcome. The NDC makes little distinction between Biosynth and Intsynth; a mind operating a machine is treated the same as a mind operating an organic body. For individuals whose body is heavily injured or who simply no longer wish to be organic, permanently transferring into a machine form is a strong option.

The Anima System can also be used to move a user from one organic body into another, specially prepared, body. The new host body must be free of prior life experiences and have a suitably malleable mind. This process is notably more complicated than a machine Possession.


The process of an organic to organic body transfer using the Anima System is as follows:

- The user's original body and new body are entangled through the Possession process.
- The user's original body does *not* have its motor control and sensory information shut off; this is applied to the destination body, instead.
- Over the course of around two weeks, the two bodies become fully sync'd.
- The user's control over their original body is disabled in favor of their new body.
- The Anima System ends the entanglement, destroying the mind in the original body and allowing the new body to become the user's true body.

While this transfer is much more sophisticated than a simple copy, minute differences in the host and destination medium can, rarely, cause personality deviations. In most cases, these changes can be easily mistaken as a side effect of the user adjusting to their new body. As such, a *noticeably significant* personality change due to an Anima System body transfer is very rare.

Why use Anima Possession over Geist Possession?

Issuing simple orders via the Geist implant is not a difficult matter. The user makes a mental command and the Geist handles the rest. Only a truly excellent user, however, can consistently use the Geist to remotely control a machine as though it were their own body.

Full possession of a machine offers a wide range of benefits, including a vastly reduced training period. Users who are able to fully possess a machine quickly become excellent operators of those machines and understand its capabilities on an innate level. They have a level of  [proprioception](#) that a traditional pilot may never achieve. For civilian operators, this level of control allows them to perform the type of intricate work with a machine that would be nigh-impossible without such a deep integration.

The Anima System allows users who are not Geist savants to achieve this level of full possession, albeit

at an increased risk to themselves.

Drawbacks, Concerns, and Considerations

The Anima System, despite its benefits and safety systems, is not without its drawbacks. Most prominent among these drawbacks are the risks of permanent Possession and real death.

Compatibility

The process of entangling a mind with a remote medium is not a simple one. The Anima System's software relies on hundreds of brain scans to learn any given species' brain biology. For the NDC's incorporated species, all the pre-work to allow them to be Anima-compatible has been completed. For newly discovered species, however, the Anima System is likely to be unavailable for some months while scanning and testing is performed.

The Anima System was designed with humanoid species in mind. Species with brains that are distributed or significantly different in operation are likely to be incompatible with the Anima System, even after sufficient training of the system's models.

Software updates are periodically issued to improve the Anima System's accuracy and capability, especially in regards to new species.

One Life, One Mind

The design of the Anima System makes it impossible to 'copy' a user's mind into multiple bodies. Whenever a Possession ends, the system makes a determination about which side it will be terminating the entanglement on. Whichever side is terminated is effectively erased.

For the Anima System's mental matrix, this simply means that it is ready for the next user. For an organic mind, this results in the elimination of all higher brain function, leaving their body in a permanent, coma-like state that cannot be recovered from.

Similarly, it is not possible to 'store' an individual's mind for later use without maintaining an active connection to an Anima System. Even in this connected state, the version 'stored' by the Anima is an active, constantly-updating mirror of the person's mind - up to and including their death, which would invalidate the copy.

It is possible, even desirable in some cases, for a user to reside solely within an Anima System's host unit for some time. While they lack a physical body, their mind is still able to access virtual spaces, read messages, and so on. As such, a dedicated VR space that is fully under the occupant's control is always available to a host unit's 'resident'.

Permanent Possession

The Anima System's entanglement is not 100% perfect over an extended period of time. Similar to a regularly updated code fork, the mind's original 'code' remains perfectly in sync, but new experiences, thoughts, personality changes, and so on are not always in perfect parity. The mind matrix and the user's organic mind handle these changes in small, but statistically significant, ways. The technical term for this process is "Divergence".

As such, a user who spends multiple days within a machine may find it difficult, or impossible, to 'return' to their body. Their consciousness Diverges to such a point that it is not fully compatible with their original brain, which lacks the elasticity to accommodate a significantly changed mind. Their 'true' body is now that of the machine. It is possible for such a user to transfer into *other* Anima Systems, but their original body is no longer compatible with their 'true' mind.

Civilian use of the Anima System features time limits to prevent users from experiencing Permanent Possession accidentally. Some civilian users, either by intent or accident, still find ways to bypass these time limits. The most common causes are situations in which ending the Possession would be actively harmful to the user or the machine they are Possessing.

In testing, the maximum amount of time a user could Possess a machine varied. The shortest recorded time before a user began to show signs of Divergence was three days. The longest recorded time before Divergence was ten days.

Complex activity, physical trauma, and life-threatening scenarios seem to have the greatest impact on Divergence. As such, it is recommended that military pilots Possess a machine for no more than three days and take at least two days in between Possessions to avoid risk.

Machines that do not match the user's normal body shape, such as a tank or fighter, see a consistently shorter window before Divergence than those with a humanoid form. This is one reason why humanoid machines are becoming increasingly common within New Dusk Conclave space.

Mental Trauma and Real Death

Damage caused to a Possessed machine is translated to the user as though it were damage to their true body. While this pain is quickly dulled, the initial sensation of having a major part of your body crushed or of losing access to a limb entirely can have a lasting effect on a user. This is amplified when it is a regular occurrence, such as for military operators. The mental trauma from this experience can be very real and lasting for some users.

Real death is a very significant concern for operators using the Anima System. The destruction of the Anima System, and its mental matrix, also completely destroys the user's 'true' mind. For users operating a machine from within, this is not that dissimilar from a pilot who might be worried about going down with their fighter. For remote operators, however, the potential of dying while in a body far from their own is a real concern.

While safety systems are in place to quickly break the entanglement before death occurs, it is recommended that pilots treat their machine's body with the same care that they would treat their own.

Appearance

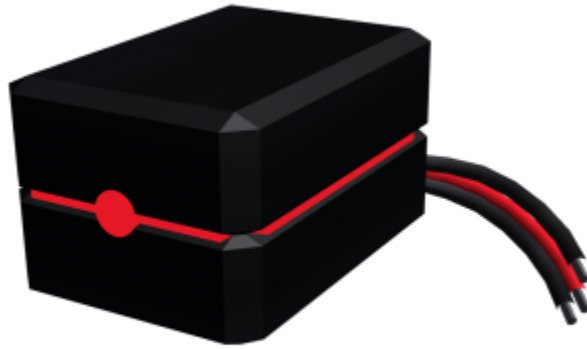
The Anima System has two primary components. These components are not always co-located with each other.

The user 'side' of the Anima System is a simple detection device consisting of two discs, located to either side of a user's head, and the supporting electronics, typically built into a chair or cockpit. As a user will not be in direct control of their body while Possessing a machine, a harness or other support system is usually included to keep the user's body in a comfortable, stable position.



A user equipped with a [G1-N2 "Geist" Advanced Interfacing Implant 2.0](#) does not require a chair of this type, though it is recommended to find somewhere secure to sit if residing within the Possessed machine.

The machine 'side', or 'host unit', of the Anima System is a shiny black box split by a glowing red line surrounding its middle. It is approximately the size of an average human head. Its glossy surface is only marred by an activity indicator light and the necessary cables to wire it into the machine it will be controlling.



Availability

Due to the necessary calibration and synchronization requirements, the Anima System is only sold within the New Dusk Conclave as part of products originating from the NDC or corporations under its wing.

OOC Notes

[whisper](#) created this article on 2020/04/22 13:22.

Approved by [Syaoran](#) on 05/23/20202

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<https://wiki.stararmy.com/> - **STAR ARMY**

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Last update: **2023/12/21 01:54**

