



GeoSWAG

FUNDamentals

by

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Hosted in Anchorage

10 June 2010

Outline



- **SWAG (trade goods) -- Not trackable**
- Trackable Travelers -- Groundspeak
- Other Trackables
- Signature Items

SWAG?



- A slang term for free promotional items
- Referring to a thief or pirate's treasure
- Backronym for *Software and Giveaways, Stuff We All Get, or Souvenirs, Wearables, and Gifts.*
- Geocaching "TREASURE" of little or no intrinsic value
- Not trackable

Cache Owner



- Theme
- Size (container:SWAG)
- Material (waterproof, durability)
- Value (possible FTF exception)
- No perishables
- No scented items
- Housekeeping/Restocking by Owner

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Cache Finder



- Trade – even or better
- Especially demonstrating this to children and newbies
- Exceptions:
 - Overstuffed container
 - Damaged contents
 - Remove any perishables or scented objects
- Report problems to Cache Owner via e-mail (not in the log)
- Collected items
 - Not trackable (unless annotated as such OR has what appears to be a serial number – if so, it is probably not SWAG)
 - For Finder/Trader to keep or add to another cache's contents

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Groundspeak



- Trackable at www.geocaching.com (Groundspeak)
- Four basic types:
 - Geocoins
 - Travel Bugs
 - Cachekinz
 - Geotags
- General objective is to **TRAVEL** (specific objective by Owner)
- Belongs to the "Owner"
- Not to be kept without Owner's permission – Stealing
- Can be placed on your watchlist if you have an interest in following the item's adventures

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Geocoins



- Custom metallic "coin"
- From simple design to complex art
- Thematic or signature
- Includes an engraved serial/tracking number
- \$5+
- Collectible (when purchased or received as a gift)
- Clubs are available
- Events centered around
- Expensive to have custom design made



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Geocoin Anatomy



Pennsylvania 2009 (Stourbridge Lion) Geocoin Design
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Travel Bugs



- Dog tag attached to an object that has meaning to the Owner
- Usually attached with a ball chain
- Object can be absolutely anything (or nothing), including backpacks, cars, and pets!!
- Item is meant to **TRAVEL**
- \$5-6 each



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Cachekinzs



- Similar to a Travel Bug
- Metallic (stamped or enameled)
- \$6 each



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Geotags



- In between a Geocoin and a Travel Bug
- About the size of a half dollar
- Front is customizable
- Back is a standard imprint
- <\$1 when purchased in quantity



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Owner



- Activate
 - Groundspeak
 - Producer's activation code
- Clear Objective if other than just to travel from cache to cache (include WITH the object or it may be delayed or waylaid)
- Protect the trackable (if necessary)
- Note: Large trackables have more limited mobility

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Owner



- Owned tags can be "Inventory" or "Collection"
- Adoption
- Don't be afraid to "encourage" the last logged holder of your trackable hasn't moved for a long period
- Mark as "Missing" if certain of a loss (Cache Owner can as well)

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Dropping



- Consider:
 - Owner's objective for item
 - Cache's probable traffic pattern
 - Cache Age (recently published caches have a higher find rate)
 - Cache D/T rating
 - Seasonal Attributes
- Make note of the serial number in the event there are logging issues
- Make note of the cache (GC number) in which it is dropped

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Dropping (cont)



- Will show in your inventory on website
 - click to drop when logging the cache
 - no separate log required for the trackable
- Log the movement as soon as possible (even if delayed on logging a cache find)
- Respect the Owner
 - Ask permission if intending something off-normal
 - Communicate periodically with Owner if holding the trackables
 - Try to move a trackable within two weeks as a guide

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Retrieving



- Can be retrieved from a cache or grabbed from someone/somewhere
- Occasionally will be found at a location other than the last logged location
- Will appear in your inventory

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Retrieving (cont)



- Considerations:
 - **IF you encounter a trackable, MOVE IT** – The Owner does not want it to remain stagnant
 - End of season; pending hibernation
 - Try and make the log interesting if possible (observations on found location, photos, etc.)
- IF a trackable is shown in a cache inventory AND it is not there, WRITE a note to the item Owner AND the Cache Owner to let them know. (The tracking number is not required to write a note.)

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Dipping



- This is for when the trackable's objective is logged miles/locations AND you wish to retain physical possession
- Dipping maintains item activity until a suitable dropping place is located
- Requires a 2-step process of Dropping and Retrieving

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Discovery



- This is when you "SEE" a trackable and wish to have it show in your profile
- Trackables with a unique icon will show in your profile
- Discovery also allows owners to know that their trackable is not lost

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Adoption



- Transfer ownership of a listing to another user
- Go to www.geocaching.com/adopt/ and follow the instructions.

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Miscellaney



- Event Tables
 - Make certain you are aware of the difference between a “Discovery” trackable and one that can be collected for further movement.
 - Personal collections (or portions of them) are sometimes brought for others to discover
- Rogues – These are objects with Groundspeak tracking numbers that have been hijacked for an object other than the original
- Laminated Substitutes (geocoins) – Used by Owners that want to reduce the risk of loss

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Pathtags



- Custom signature item
- Trackable on www.pathtags.com (not Groundspeak)
- Personal design on one side
- Trade item; collectible
- Meant to be kept if finder so opts
- About \$1 each
- Clubs are available
- Events (sub-events) for pathtags



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Other Trackables



- Personal website tracking
- Third-party tracking websites
- More difficult to get cachers to participate in logging/tracking (not as universal)
- Examine SWAG for alphanumeric markings and instructions for logging

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Cache Calling Cards



- What?
 - NOT trackable
 - Personalized items left in a cache or presented to other cachers that say "I was here."
 - Generally unique and recognizable to the locals
- Types:
 - Trinkets
 - Swag of a style that speaks to the cacher's handle or reputation
 - Inexpensive when bought in bulk
 - Laminated business cards (or equivalent)
 - Wooden chips
 - Poker chips (<\$1 each)

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Cache Calling Cards



- Stock; Off-the-Shelf
 - SWAG of a style that speaks to the cacher's handle or reputation
 - Inexpensive when bought in bulk
 - Humorous or serious
 - Collectible
 - Pins, buttons, toys

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Cache Calling Cards



- Personal – Just about anything that can accept printing, labeling, or engraving.
 - Laminated business cards (or equivalent)
 - Wooden chips
 - Poker chips (<\$1 each)

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Examples



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Examples



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Examples



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Resources



- Basic Groundspeak Trackables
 - <http://forums.groundspeak.com/GC/index.php?showforum=9>
 - <http://forums.groundspeak.com/GC/index.php?showforum=44>
- Tracking
 - www.geocaching.com/track (Groundspeak tracking)
 - <http://log4.us/> (third-party tracking)
 - www.goldfish.net (private tracking)
- Purchase
 - www.geocachealaska.org/geoswagsources.com
 - <http://shop.groundspeak.com>
 - www.geocoinstore.com
 - www.pathtags.com
 - www.cacheaddict.com (geotag source)

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Resources (cont)



- Clubs
 - www.geocoinclub.com
 - www.usagecoins.com (offers poker chips, too)
 - [Pathtags is currently forming a Pathtag of the Month Club]
- SWAG
 - www.americangamingsupply.com (poker chips)
 - www.wooden-nickel.com
 - www.ituit.com (wooden nickels and plastic tokens)
 - www.heirloomwoodentoys.com
 - www.plastic-army-men.com
 - www.centurynovelty.com (plastic animals, rubber "ducks")

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