

# EXPLODING KITTENS

## HAS A GAME TRADE MAGAZINE ARTICLE!

Back in 2014, before the words “Exploding Kittens” were ever spoken out loud, Elan Lee (XBOX, ARGs) and Matt Inman (The Oatmeal) had a dream: to have a feature article in Game Trade Magazine. But how could a brilliant game designer and a successful online cartoonist achieve such a feat? Together they decided that the best way to reach their goal was to create a game that editors would want to write about.

They had a game idea and some really hilarious art. What’s more, Elan was thoroughly obsessed with crowdfunding. Put these all together and you have yourself the makings of “Exploding Kittens,” a now international favorite tabletop card game that, *literally*, exploded the internet.



When the game launched in 2015, their crowdfunding campaign succeeded by raising a whopping \$9M and ranked at the time as the highest funded project Kickstarter. To this day, it is the *most backed* project ever, with 220,000 backers.

### SURELY, THEY THOUGHT, THAT WOULD OPEN THE DOOR TO GET AN ARTICLE IN GTM, RIGHT?

Well... not exactly. As enticing as Exploding Kittens was, there was still no phone call. No email. Bewildered, Elan turned to Matt and exclaimed “you’ve got to be Kitten’ me!”

So, the duo returned to the drawing board to think up new ways to catch the eye of the GTM editors. “I know! We’ll make an expansion pack!” said Matt. “Yes!” enthused Elan, “and it will come with a human sized cone of shame! That’s got to get their attention!” The two were sure adding 20 cards to the core deck and increasing the fun from 5 to 6 players with a ridiculous prop would work.

In July, 2016, they released Imploding Kittens: The First (furst?) Expansion Pack. It was a huge hit, selling like hotcakes on Amazon. People were even taking shameful photos of themselves with the cone on, and sharing it all over the web.

But still, there was no phone call. No email. Perplexed that their chart topping game hadn’t piqued the interest of the GTM editors, Elan thought, “what if we create an *entirely new game?*”



And so, driven by an intense need to catch the eye of the GTM editorial staff, in October, 2016, the team launched a crowdfunding campaign for “Bears vs Babies”, a monster building game in which players create magnificent monster armies that battle armies of despicable babies. With over \$3M raised and 85,000 backers, they were confident that GTM would be impressed this time around.

But alas, no phone call. No email... Even the NSFW Expansion Pack that came with an *actual* condom, dubbed *bearth* control by the clever-if-immature design team, didn’t grab the attention of anyone at GTM.

Truly befuddled, and growing increasingly defeated by the day, Matt and Elan shuffled to the studio and began designing again. This time around, they knew they were onto something. Their newest game had just the right amount of ridiculous humor and interactive fun; their dream was just in reach.

On Valentine’s Day, 2018, “You’ve Got Crabs,” a partner based, social deduction game that plays 4 to 10 players, launched online to resounding acclaim and audience excitement.

More than just your average card game, the Expansion Kit even included an Imitation Crab Card, which shuffled into the deck, allowed players to force their friends to wear human size crab claw mitts while they played.

All of their effort and tireless dedication was not in vain. Four years, three games, three expansion packs, and two crowdfunding campaigns later, there it was - the email they’d been waiting for.

### MATT AND ELAN HAD FINALLY DONE IT. THEY GOT THEIR ARTICLE.

As it turns out, the jumbo crab hands were all it took for the editors of GTM to come calling. Perhaps if the team had created enormous kitten mittens with their first game, they would have landed the feature story they so desired sooner.

But alas, they never would have made those other games, without the burning desire to make it into the magazine’s pages.

