

## Welcome to Hell: Employees Describe Hellacious Work Environment at Trendy Entertainment

June 7, 2013 -



**Update:** The [International Game Developers Association](#) (IGDA) has issued a statement about the situation at Trendy Entertainment:

"While we have no direct knowledge of the situation, if the media reports on the working conditions at Trendy Entertainment are accurate, the IGDA's stance on this is very clear. We know, [as has been well documented](#), that extensive overtime is not only ineffective from the point of view of productivity, but it is also destructive to employee morale.

Studios engaging in excessive overtime injure the reputation of the entire game industry, preventing top talent from entering and remaining in game development, and harming the goodwill of other studios that work rigorously to ensure quality of life for their developers.

Further we believe that gender discrimination of any type has no place in the workplace and is completely unacceptable. As with excessive overtime, creating an environment that is hostile or discriminatory against anyone whether via race, gender, sexual orientation or other means only further reduces morale and creates an atmosphere that can hinder the successful retention of talent and creation of games that appeal to a wide variety of players.

The IGDA provides resources, education and information to individual developers and their employers who wish to create a better working environment for their employees. From our

 

**Forgot your password?**

Username :

Password :

### Poll

**The Wii U's price will drop to \$299 on Sept. 20. Your thoughts?:**

- ☐ That's more like it!
- ☐ Still too expensive.
- ☐ Who cares? Drop the price of the GAMES!

[2004 whitepaper](#) to our [Code of Ethics adopted in 2009](#) to our current work coordinating our resources with academics studying and working to help bring light and solutions to this issue at <http://gamegol.org>, we continue to be extremely concerned about addressing these types of issues for the developer community. We believe that when everyone from management down is educated and aware of the impact poor quality of life and a lack of diversity provides, they will make the choices that are in everyone's best interest."

**Original Story:** A scathing investigative report by Jason Schreier over at [Kotaku](#) describes the hellacious working environment at Florida-based game development studio Trendy Entertainment. The studio is best known for creating the popular Dungeon Defenders game, and is currently working on the sequel Dungeon Defenders II.

Most of the complaints about the toxicity of working for the studio seem to be related to Trendy president Jeremy Stieglitz, who former and current employees describe as sexist, combative, angry, and being generally responsible for creating a work environment where employees are afraid to speak their mind about anything for fear of reprisals or termination.

The report - which is based on internal communications, and interviews with current and former employees - paints a horrific picture of a management that hires women at a lower rate than men, fires senior development staff for disagreeing with the company's president, makes its employees work 12 hours a day and sometimes seven days a week, doesn't allow for pre-production, and - at the directive of the company's president - demands that features found in League of Legends be incorporated into its current development focus - Dungeon Defenders II. Worst of all, the very team that is developing the game is not allowed to provide input on game development. Instead the entire development team takes its direction and marching orders from the company's president.

Many of the employees that Kotaku spoke to said that they are seriously considering leaving if things don't change. Management knows this to be the case and recently called a meeting to talk about company morale, but there's no indication that the elephant in the room - the oppressiveness of Trendy's President - was not discussed.

Employees hope that by speaking out to the media it will help inspire management to make some serious changes and create a work environment that fosters creativity instead of fear and despair.

We've been vague on the particulars here because we really want you to read Jason Schreier's excellent reporting on [Kotaku](#). Clearly if any company ever needed to go on the new Fox reality show "Does Someone Have to Go?," it's this one.



Like

6

Tweet

6

1

1

## Comments

[Re: Welcome to Hell: Employees Describe Hellacious Work ...](#)

Submitted by grenaid on Fri, 06/07/2013 - 15:53.

"but there's no indication that the elephant in the room - the oppressiveness of Trendy's President - was not discussed."

That... is a double negative. #corrections?

[Re: Welcome to Hell: Employees Describe Hellacious Work ...](#)

Submitted by E. Zachary Knight on Sat, 06/08/2013 - 09:25.

That is not a double negative. The "no" is a adjective of the word indication with the meaning of "zero indication".

E. Zachary Knight

[Divine Knight Gaming](#)

[OK Game Devs](#)

[Random Tower](#)

<< Return To Top