

Truce in Activision legal war with 'Call of Duty' makers

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Copies of "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3" for the PlayStation 3 are displayed at a GameStop store in 2011. Activision Blizzard on Thursday announced a settlement in a legal war that began two years ago with developers behind the blockbuster "Call of Duty" videogame franchise.

Activision Blizzard on Thursday announced a settlement in a legal war that began two years ago with developers behind the blockbuster "Call of Duty" videogame franchise.

In a terse release, the Southern California-based videogame publisher said that all parties to the litigation have agreed to a truce, averting a trial that was to start on Friday.

Terms of the settlement were "strictly confidential," according to

Activision, which told investors that it didn't expect the arrangement to have a "material impact" on earnings in what was turning out to be a strong quarter.

The legal fight began in April of 2010 and grew to include a trio of suits and countersuits.

Infinity Ward studio developers behind "Modern Warfare" accused the videogame publisher of holding them "hostage" to complete a new installment of the multi-billion-dollar franchise.

A lawsuit filed in Los Angeles asked the state court to order Activision to pay from 75 million to 125 million dollars in promised bonus cash and then as much as a half-billion dollars in damages.

The team at Infinity Ward qualified for the bonus money by delivering "Modern Warfare 2" in time for a November 2009 launch as Activision had asked, according to the legal filing.

Activision had only come across with some of the bonus cash by the time it notified US regulators in early 2010 that it was firing Infinity Ward co-founders Jason West and Vince Zampella.

Attorney Bruce Isaacs, who filed the suit on behalf of an Infinity Ward Employees Group, said at the time that Activision was "holding the cash captive to hold the developers captive... They wanted people to stay so they would deliver 'Modern Warfare 3'."

In the wake of the departure by West and Zampella, a flood of developers deserted [Infinity Ward](#) to join the pair at a new studio called Respawn.

"Respawn" is a videogame term for a character coming back to life.

The legal battle grew to include charges by West and Zampella that they were wrongly ousted by [Activision](#) and a countersuit accusing the pair of betraying the publisher. The settlement put all of the cases to rest.

"[Modern Warfare 3](#)" racked up a [billion dollars](#) in sales in the 16 days after its release in November of 2011 and total revenue for the first-person shooter videogame franchise is reported to top seven billion dollars.

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