

Gawker editors quit after controversial article pulled

July 20 2015



Gawker, which bills itself "the source for daily Manhattan media news and gossip," announced the resignation of Tommy Craggs, the executive editor of Gawker Media, and Max Read, editor-in-chief of Gawker.com

The top two editors of the New York-based gossip site Gawker resigned Monday, protesting the removal of an article about a media executive's private life.

Gawker, which bills itself "the source for daily Manhattan media news and gossip," announced the resignation of Tommy Craggs, the executive editor of Gawker Media, and Max Read, editor-in-chief of Gawker.com.

The pair said they were quitting because of the site's managing partners' decision to delete the controversial post.

"The decision to remove (the article) is an unacceptable and unprecedented breach of the editorial firewall, and turns Gawker's claim to be the world's largest independent media company into, essentially, a joke," Read said in a letter to staff.

The decision to delete the article, which purportedly exposed a senior executive of another firm's efforts to contact a high-priced escort, had provoked protests from Gawker staff last week.

"Our opinions on the post are not unanimous but we are united in objecting to editorial decisions being made by a majority of non-editorial managers," a staff statement said last week.

"Disagreements about editorial judgment are matters to be resolved by editorial employees. We condemn the takedown in the strongest possible terms."

Gawker made news earlier this year when staffers voted to unionize, making it possibly the first among the digital news media to do so.

Gawker Media, which is believed to be one of the larger online news organizations, also publishes Deadspin, Gizmodo and other news sites.

On Friday, Gawker Media chief executive Nick Denton defended the decision to delete the article, saying Gawker needs "greater editorial restraint" in a [media](#) environment which has evolved. He reiterated that

in a blog post Monday.

"This is the company I built. I was ashamed to have my name and Gawker's associated with a story on the private life of a closeted gay man who some felt had done nothing to warrant the attention," Denton said.

"We believe we were within our legal right to publish, but it defied the 2015 editorial mandate to do stories that inspire pride, and made impossible the jobs of those most committed to defending such journalism."

Denton said the organization needs to reconsider its editorial standards.

"Stories need to be true and interesting," he said.

"Everybody has a private life, even a C-level executive, at least unless they blab about it. We do not seek to expose every personal secret—only those that reveal something interesting."

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Citation: Gawker editors quit after controversial article pulled (2015, July 20) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-07-gawker-editors-controversial-article.html>

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