



**BRIDGE TOUR** Axanar producer Alec Peters (center) slugs down some water while Axacon attendees enter the U.S.S. Ares bridge in November 2018. Despite Peters’ assurances, shooting on the bridge set for Axanar remains iffy. *Image/Axanar YouTube channel*

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**Fact Check**

# Axanar Film Must Wait for Patches' Delivery to Donors

***New Contradiction: Peters Claims He's Paid for Warehouse Costs for Two Years***

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By  **Carlos Pedraza**

In the middle of his [Patreon campaign](#) to get fans to give him almost \$50,000 a year to pay rent and expenses for the Georgia warehouse he calls Ares Studios, Axanar producer [Alec Peters](#) says some more hurdles remain before he can begin to raise another \$200,000 for the two long-promised Axanar short films.

**See also: [Peters Launches Patreon to Keep Georgia Studio Afloat and Patreon Progress Slows Precipitously and Contradictions Arise in Patreon, OWC Studios' Sponsorship](#)**

## Self-Funded Studio

In the video, “[Axanar Update # 3 The Road to Production](#),” posted January 29, 2019, on the Axanar YouTube channel, Peters also claimed he had been paying all Axanar-related costs, including for Ares Studios, for the two years since the settlement of the [copyright suit](#) against him by [CBS](#) and [Paramount Pictures](#).

This in the midst of a Patreon campaign in which he has claimed that high tech company, Other World Computing, had sponsored the costs for the warehouse for more than a year before [mysteriously withdrawing](#) its support. In the video, Peters said:

I’ve been funding *Axanar*, I’ve been funding the studio, myself, for the past two years.<sup>1)</sup>

### **Watch**



## Axanar Production Update #3

**ROAD TO PRODUCTION** In this *Axanar Update* on YouTube, producer Alec Peters explains the path the project must take before he can deliver the two long-promised short films to waiting donors. *Video/Axanar YouTube channel*

## Changing Studio Story

Since the launch of the Patreon campaign two weeks prior, Peters' account has changed several times regarding when the OWC sponsorship ended for the warehouse. He has claimed the sponsorship was always time-limited, and then said it was [extended](#) for six months.<sup>2)</sup>

In the scope of just a week, he said he'd been paying the warehouse costs for four months, then six months, then five months. The two year figure was Peters' most recent claim.

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**« We really want you to see that we're making progress. We have stakes in the ground and we're hitting our milestones moving toward production. » — Axanar producer Alec Peters**

## Milestones

Peters laid out the milestones he believes he must meet in order to get *Axanar* into production as soon as possible, but he was unable to commit to a timeline to do so.



### Beta Testing



**UPDATE** Five days late, on February 1, 2019, Alec Peters announced on the [Axanar blog](#) that the beta version of Ares Digital 3.0b was completed and ready for testing.

The blog advertised for volunteer testers and technologists to help in the beta test.

Peters did not lay out a road map for formally launching the platform, nor did he explain how it would affect *Axanar's* production, since the short films depend on Ares Digital for raising their budget.

## 1. Ares Digital Launch February 1?

The first thing he must accomplish, Peters said, is the launch of Ares Digital 3.0, the [troubled proprietary software](#) platform that must serve double duty — manage fulfillment of [perks still owed](#) to donors in three separate crowdfunding campaigns over four years.

Barred by the lawsuit [settlement](#) from using public [crowdfunding\\_platforms](#) to raise money for the Axanar shorts, Peters said he must rely on Ares Digital to manage transactions donations from Axanar supporters.

However, that fundraising effort, and by extension the Axanar shorts themselves, cannot proceed until Ares Digital is up and running. On his January 27 live chat, Peters said the software is only 75 percent done.

Two days later he said the new system would be operational by February 1, and he would notify donors by email.<sup>3)</sup>



**LONG-DELAYED** patches from Axanar's Indiegogo campaign previously existed only as prototypes sold through Axanar's now-shuttered Donor Store years before they were to be shipped to waiting donors.

## 2. Shipping Patches

The next milestone is shipping patches that are owed as perks to donors to the aborted [2015 Indiegogo](#) campaign for the *Axanar* feature film.

**AxaMonitor** reported nearly three years ago those patches had not been manufactured, apart from a small number of prototypes. Peters told viewers the promised patches — five thousand of them — had just been shipped from China and were now available for shipment to donors<sup>4)</sup> — almost four years after the campaign.

The patches cannot be shipped until people update their shipping and contact information in Ares Digital. That may pose a problem for meeting Peters' third milestone, however.

## 3. Axanar Fundraiser

Before now, Peters had not committed to a timeline for raising the \$200,000 he expects the two Axanar shorts to cost, and for moving into production. His promises have slipped from 2017 to, most recently, spring 2019.



**THE PLAN** In his YouTube update, producer Alec Peters explains what it will take to move *Axanar* into production. *Image/Axanar YouTube*

### 'We're Making Progress'

But this new information throws even that estimate into doubt, as he made scheduling production contingent upon the fundraiser, itself contingent upon shipping the Indiegogo patches, and that contingent on the launch and use by donors of Ares Digital 3.0:

We really want you to see that we're making progress. That's what this video blog is about. ... We have stakes in the ground and we're hitting our milestones moving toward production.<sup>5)</sup>

### The 'Final Step'

Peters called the fundraiser "the final step" toward production. But the process he outlined appeared to be completely dependent on launching Ares Digital 3.0 and then donors registering. He offered no guarantee about when he expected that to happen:

The fundraiser is the final step. How much will we raise? We don't know. Obviously, it's been a while since we raised a lot of money.<sup>6)</sup>

Peters laid the blame on CBS for a protracted lawsuit that drained Axanar's coffers thanks to \$15,000 a month he was spending because of a three-year lease he had signed on a studio he never used to shoot a single frame of *Axanar*.

"Sadly, CBS cost donors a lot of money," he said. "We were 30 days away from shooting the first third of *Axanar*."<sup>7)</sup>



**U.S.S. ARES** The recently completed *Axanar* bridge set stands in the Lawrenceville, Ga., warehouse called Ares Studios.

## Production Estimate

Should Axanar surmount the obstacles he described, Peters outlined a four-day schedule for the Axanar shorts' principal photography:

1. Two to three days in a rented soundstage in Los Angeles, where most of the featured cast live.
2. One to two days at a rented soundstage in Atlanta (**not** Ares Studios) for shooting the rest of the cast.
3. One more "location day" to accommodate appearances promised to high-value donors as extras or in small roles.

## Shooting the Bridge

Up in the air is the question of whether the bridge set Peters worked so hard to have ready for display at [Axacon](#) in November 2018 will appear in the Axanar shorts.

Despite his claim, "Not sure why people think we won't use the bridge set for the next two episodes. I clearly state it will be,"<sup>8)</sup> Peters' story has continually shifted regarding shooting any part of *Axanar* on the bridge set.

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« **Our plan is to shoot on the bridge but it all depends on funding.** » — *Axanar producer Alec Peters*

In a January 22 interview on the Fan Film Factor blog, Peters made shooting on the bridge conditional rather than guaranteed:

If we do shoot at all on the bridge for the two 15-minute films, it will be for some flashback scenes.<sup>9)</sup>

But the general public won't get to see any of those flashbacks, said Axanar surrogate Jonathan Lane. Those scenes, if they are ever shot, are not part of the current screenplay for the 30-minute shorts. Lane explained to one complaining fan:

The bridge set WILL be used, even if it's primarily to make "bonus" scenes available exclusively to donors. Let me repeat that ... "bonus" scenes available exclusively to donors. Wanna get more donors? How about encouraging their donations with special scenes that will appear only on the special edition Blu-ray (and/or DVD)? Now you might understand the power of finishing the bridge.<sup>10)</sup>

The bridge flashbacks can only appear in donors' private Blu-rays because the settlement prohibits any public release of *Axanar* from being longer than 30 minutes, which is the current expected length based on the screenplay.

## 'Depends on Funding'

Despite Peters' and Lane's assurance, Peters continued to refuse to guarantee the set would be used:

Our plan is to shoot on the bridge **but it all depends on funding**. It will be much more expensive for a day on the bridge due to the size of the cast and it that means [*sic*].<sup>11)</sup>

Peters had previously estimated the cost of shooting on the bridge at \$40,000. That amount would be **in addition** to the \$200,000 budget just for the half-hour shorts. And that \$240,000 is **in addition** to the \$48,000 yearly cost just to keep the lights on at Ares Studios. 🇪🇺



### COMMENTS

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## Keywords

[studio](#), [Patreon](#), [fact check](#), [Axanar](#), [Axanar Lite](#), [Ares Digital](#), [perks](#), [patches](#)

1) 3) 4) 5) 6) 7)

▶ [Axanar Update # 3 The Road to Production](#), Axanar YouTube channel, 1/29/19.

2)

▶ ["Ares Studios Patreon Promo"](#), Axanar YouTube channel, 1/18/19.

8) 11)

[Alec Peters Facebook post](#), retrieved 1/31/19.

9)

["Ares Studios Launches a New Patreon: Interview with Alec Peters, Part 1,"](#) Fan Film Factor blog, 1/22/19.

10)

Jonathan Lane comment, ["Ares Studios Launches New Patreon: Interview with Alec Peters, Part 2,"](#) 1/29/19.

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