

Text-Only 2016 Top 10 Axanar Stories

No. 10

Star Trek-Horizon

Horizon made headlines throughout 2016 with its heralded premiere, rave reviews and YouTube views that quickly surpassed Prelude to Axanar by August. But CBS put a stop to creator Tommy Kraft's plan for a \$250,000 crowdfunded sequel, citing problems stemming from the Axanar lawsuit. Kraft contributed many visual effects to Prelude but Alec Peters struck out at him, claiming Kraft bought YouTube views in order to surpass Prelude's views. Horizon has racked up 4.8 million views; Prelude is at 2.7 million.

No. 9

Actor Tony Todd Departs Axanar

Tony Todd, who appeared in as Admiral Ramirez in Prelude to Axanar, left Axanar in September 2015, a move not acknowledged by Alec Peters for months while still using Todd's image to help raise money. After the lawsuit was filed, Todd said in a podcast interview that his departure was due in part to a lack of accountability for the money Peters raised from Star Trek fans. Meanwhile, Peters portrayed the departure as a dispute over pay.

No. 8

Review of Axanar Script

This review by independent writer-producer Jody Wheeler is based on the August 2015 script producer Alec Peters described as the "fully revised and locked" Axanar screenplay. AxaMonitor obtained the 105-page script from a source who provided it on condition of anonymity. Wheeler compared this version with a series of earlier drafts AxaMonitor had also obtained. Wheeler's verdict on the script that launched CBS/Paramount's lawsuit? It evolved less into the story of Garth's winning the Battle of Axanar and more into the Klingon, Kharn's, story of how he lost. Even Peters admitted recently that this version of the story will never be made.

No. 7

'Prelude' Director Christian Gossett

Director Christian Gossett left Axanar in May 2015 for work in New Zealand but once the lawsuit was filed it became clear his departure stemmed from simmering tensions caused by Alec Peters' management of the project once Axanar raised hundreds of thousands of dollars. Gossett (pictured second from left) gave revealing interviews to the Trek podcasters at the G&T Show and Australia's TrekZONE. He may well turn out to be the plaintiffs' star witness should the case proceed to trial.

No. 6

Shipping Perks to Donors Poses Problems

Amid reports from donors of unfulfilled perks from the Kickstarter and Indiegogo campaigns, AxaMonitor examined Axanar Productions' fulfillment efforts and spending — and discovered clues about heretofore undisclosed income from its other revenue streams. Meanwhile, Axanar struggled with a computerized fulfillment platform that didn't appear to be up to the task of delivering promised patches to Kickstarter donors waiting two years for what perks could be shipped without the movie being made.

No. 5

Who Really Owns Axanar's Studio?

With the formal opening of the for-profit studio Alec Peters built using money supporters donated to produce Axanar, AxaMonitor's investigation into the companies behind the studio revealed a complete

lack of transparency about who stands to financially benefit from the facility. Despite assurances the studio was being transferred to a secret investor group back when it was still called Ares Studios, there's no evidence that asset transfer ever happened. Somehow, Peters retains sufficient control to be able to offer percentages in the business to a former staff member in return for ownership of Axanar's troubled fulfillment software.

No. 4

Media Misconstrues Abrams-Lin Support

A vague comment by Star Trek producer J.J. Abrams at an event with director Justin Lin was widely misconstrued as CBS and Paramount backing down on their copyright suit. One business day later, though, Axanar countersued, so the case lives on.

No. 3

Fan Film Guidelines

In 2016, for the first time, fan productions gained the safety of making films without fear of copyright litigation, thanks to guidelines published by CBS in June 2016. But that safety came at a cost: Restrictions on length, crowdfunding and more. Alec Peters had tried to stave off such restrictions by trying to rally other fan productions behind his own proposed guidelines. That backfired, and most fan productions disavowed Axanar.

No. 2

Axanar is Broke

Axanar's finances have long been a point of contention since the release of its 2015 annual report, which, in an AxaMonitor analysis, raised red flags about Alec Peters' expenditures. Then, in leaked messages from May 2015, Peters privately admitted Axanar was out of cash, while his spokesman continued to say publicly Peters couldn't know his own company's financial status because an accountant was preparing comprehensive reports. But court documents showed no accountant had been working at that time and Axanar's financials weren't organized until months later when submitted to the court as part of the lawsuit. That report showed all \$1.4 million Peters raised for Axanar was gone — and then some.

No. 1

Lawsuit Moves to Trial

The road to Axanar's scheduled January 31, 2017, copyright infringement trial was a bumpy one. The defense's first motion to dismiss was made moot by an amended complaint from the plaintiffs. Their second dismissal motion was roundly rejected by U.S. District Judge R. Gary Klausner. Despite a potential settlement thanks to the intervention by Star Trek directors J.J. Abrams and Justin Lin, Axanar replied to the suit by countersuing CBS and Paramount. Discovery revealed new details about Alec Peters' management of Axanar, including his apparent failure to fully disclose all the emails subpoenaed by the plaintiffs. The year wound up with each side seeking a summary judgment from the judge while asking for key evidence to be excluded.

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