Bleszinski: Industry Doesn't Properly Value Visionaries

The games industry doesn't always properly recognize the contributions of individual influential developers, Epic Games design director Cliff Bleszinski told Gamasutra during a recent interview.

"I don't think the industry values visionaries as much as it could. I really don't," said Bleszinksi, who recently completed work on *Gears of War 2*. His comments came as part of a more extensive discussion set to appear on Gamasutra at a later date.

The designer compared the games industry's attitude towards creative talent to that of the film industry. "As sad as it is, you're only as good as your last game, in many ways," he said. "In Hollywood, at least, you get movie jail for like a year, and you're out, and you get to try and make another good movie. In games, you screw up once, and no one ever wants to hear from you again. It's pretty sad."

Bleszinkski singled out a few designer examples -- admittedly ones more recognized than most. "Look at a guy like Ken Levine or [Peter] Molyneux or Chris Taylor or [Hideo] Kojima. I mean, we all need to celebrate these people," he said.

While Bleszinksi was sure to state that game development is a heavily-collaborative process, he noted that other creative industries more willing to acknowledge individual creators gain associated marketing benefits.

He pointed to his current role as executive producer on the upcoming *Gears of War* film as having given him more perspective on the distinctions between the two industries. "It's a very structured, yet organic, process in Hollywood," he said, "where in games it's still the Wild Wild West in some ways right now."

"It absolutely is very much a team effort, and I'm nothing without the 100-plus people who worked on *Gears*," he acknowledged, "but if I can go out there and evangelize the game and help sell the vision of it, that's a very useful thing, and we're all able to put gas in our gas tanks as a result of it, right?"

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