

Spector, Warren

To: ML EVERYONE @ OSI, PO01
Subject: Seven Year Itch Scratched

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ORIGIN Systems, Inc.
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RIP

That's the short version for those of you who don't want to read the extended goodbye, below. Here's the long version:

I can't believe it's been seven years since I started here. I've learned so much in my time here and made so many good friends. There's a part of me that can't believe I'm actually leaving, but the time has come to move on to other things. This is not something I do lightly or without some regrets. I'll miss all of you.

However, LookingGlass finally came through with the offer I couldn't turn down -- the opportunity to create an Austin office, act as GM, and grow it into something really special. (Let this be a lesson in the value of persistence -- they've been calling me once a month for five years now. I had to give in just to get 'em off my back!)

So that's my future. Indulge me for a minute while I look back (or just press delete now if you're so inclined). Here are some ORIGIN things I'll always remember:

My nine hour interview with Dallas Snell (after which he handed me off to Chris Roberts...). Talk about exhausting. May you never have to live through something like this just to get a job...

Realizing that I'd been a subscriber to Car & Driver and Road & Track longer than Chris Roberts has been alive...

Two weeks locked in a room with Richard Garriott, designing Ultima VI. I don't think I've ever learned as much about game design (or eaten as much Chinese food).

Being in the office at 4 in the morning with Mike McShaffry while he tried to knock out a funky sound bug on Martian Dreams.

Being in the office at 4 in the morning with Mike McShaffry while he tried to knock out a funky barge bug on Martian Dreams.

Being in the office at 4 in the morning with Mike McShaffry while he tried to... you get the idea.

The way the Serpent Isle team -- all 30+ of them! -- came together toward the end of that project. There's nothing better than a committed team of talented people, all pulling for the same thing -- the result? One of the best rpg's ever. Thanks for letting me be a small part of it. If we'd been able to keep that team together we could have ruled the world.

The way the Wings of Glory team came together toward the end of THAT project. The last few months were, in some ways, pure hell (sorry about the ridiculous overtime) but, again, I'm glad to have been a part of it -- I will go to my grave believing that WoG is one of the most fun games I've ever been involved with.

The Technosaur team. Usually, teams come together at the end of a project, as a result of shared pain (see above). The T'saur guys came IN as a team, from day one. If there's a more talented, dedicated, committed, self-motivated team in the building... well, there just isn't. Let's not even talk about it. Technosaur is going to rock and roll. Of all the games in development at ORIGIN, T'saur's the one I can't wait to play.

Working with Creative Services on the Wings of Glory box -- a great, great box. The whole process was painless. Great stuff.

Working with Creative Services on the Crusader box -- painful beyond belief but the end result was an even better box than Wings of Glory. Amazing!

Wondering how I'd get on with the EA spy -- Mike Grajeda -- when he showed up to run finance. I shouldn't have worried. The guy's the best boss anyone could ever hope to have. Convince him to stay on as GM. Trust me...

There are a hundred other experiences and people I'd like to mention -- watching Kay Gilmore turn QA into the most effective department in the building (QA seriously rules the universe); watching David Ladyman build a department capable of creating docs so cool I want the games just to get the books; playing ping pong with Jeff Hillhouse and Alan Gardner when we should have been working; the new-found enthusiasm of the Marketing department (sorry I bitched at you guys so much...); Mississippi Mudslides with Dallas and the other producers ON THE CLOCK!; watching Tony Zurovec and Harvey Smith go from newbies to seasoned producer/directors. There are probably a thousand other people and experiences I should single out but it's time to go.

Hope you all do well, that ORIGIN remains the independent, creative force it has always been and that you'll still let me come around to play games and shoot the breeze once in a while...

Warren

Oh, by the way, I told Harvey Smith to take my office so don't give him a hard time about grabbing it, okay? (He's so sensitive...)