

Today is The Day There Died
by ArianeB

Ok, I had a hard day at work, the Cubs lost, and all
my fears about funzone ownership have been realized
'
so maybe I'm exaggerating.

It is the beginning of the end of There. Its been fun,
had a blast, made new friends, but it is only a matter
of time and my Lifetime Membership will become
worthless.

Don't worry, I'll still be around from time to time
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almost as much as I usually am in the beginning, but
my time in There during the coming months will
probably slowly be waning ever so slightly until,
like TSO, I cease to exist. When that day comes, I
will point to this day October 15th, as the beginning
of the end.

What brought me to this horrendous conclusion?

Well I believe that by renting out funzones to members
without giving them the resources to manage them well,
and without giving us funzoneless players the
resources to schedule our own events without going
through these new owners, it is a one two punch that
is going to kill (or at least seriously wound) the
innovation in the game.

And believe me, without the innovation of the playe

rs,

There WILL die a slow and very painful death!

I'm sure some of you are asking, "How does renting funzones to already proven good hosts ruin innovation?" and the answer is in the question: These

60 zone owners have been playing There for a while and they have been hosting for a while, which means they are likely running out of fresh ideas.

I know you 60 new owners will be reading this, and may take offense, but ask yourselves this question -- Are you planning any events in the near future that have not already been done dozens of times already by other people?

I remember working with Twiddler to create the first ever Sliding event with Ski lift. Now cliff sliding events are a regular feature hosted by many people. Neither Twiddler or I are funzone owners.

I recently attended one of Tammi and Artie's terrific Sumo Buggy events. Yes sumo buggy events have been around a while, but these two have made it into an art form. As far as I know, neither of them are funzone operators as well.

The point is, there are some very creative people out

there creating some very creative and never before seen events. The combined creativity of 10,000 thereans way exceeds the creativity of 60 funzone operators.

Before, if you have a weird idea for an activity, you could schedule a zone to experiment with right there and then, and if it worked you scheduled a bigger event and if it failed you noted the failure and moved on.

Now it is not so easy...

If we "have nots" get a real cool idea we want to try out, what will it take to get a zone to try it out in? First, we have to track down an operator, then we have to sell our idea, then book way in advance (if they let us) then get no more than an hour to experiment and set up, and if things do not go well because of some minor glitches your event gets cancelled and you are back to square one.

The truly original event is rare enough already, this move by There just makes it worse.

Add to that the high maintenance job these owners now have, most of whom will get all their TBucks sucked dry and never see a profit, because There inc. is not

giving them the tools to manage them properly.

I will wager that more than half of the current funzone owners will be out of the fun zone business by December. Then who will take control? Whoever can click on "rent" the fastest, that's who, and they are even less likely to be the innovative and creative funzone operators we have now.

Why is innovation so important? INNOVATION CREATES CONTENT and as I pointed out months before I even joined There IN AN AVATAR VIRTUAL WORLD GAME, NEW CONTENT IS THE A-#1-BEAT-ALL-END-ALL MOST IMPORTANT THING NEEDED TO BE SUCCESSFUL!!!!

(see <http://geocities.com/arianebarnes/metaverse.htm> for an essay I wrote before I joined There, but despite changes and improvements in TSO, There and Second Life, it still holds mostly true)

I hope I got the message across and as both a past game designer and game player going back to playing MUD's on a DEC VAX I know of what I speak.

Funzones were the best tool to user created innovative content in the game, even better than the designer program, and it is now effectively lost as a tool for new content.