

'GTA' video game publisher Take-Two cuts workforce

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'Grand Theft Auto' by Rockstar Games remains a bright spot for parent company Take-Two Interactive as it moves to improve profitability and growth.

Take-Two Interactive on Tuesday told US regulators it is trimming its workforce by five percent and eliminating some video games in production to cut costs.

About 600 jobs are expected to be eliminated by Take-Two, parent

company of studios including Rockstar Games, maker of the blockbuster "Grand Theft Auto" line-up.

Take-Two is "rationalizing its pipeline and eliminating several projects in development and streamlining its organizational structure, which will eliminate headcount and reduce future hiring needs," it said in a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Layoffs have hit video game companies large and small since the end of the pandemic, with over hiring and economic woes cited among reasons.

The New York-based company had put out word it was working on a plan to reduce costs after reporting disappointing earnings in the final three months of last year.

Take-Two lowered its financial outlook at the time, saying in an earnings release that the change reflected "softness" it was experiencing in [mobile advertising](#) and its "NBA 2K24" basketball video game.

Take-Two owns mobile game maker Zynga.

"Grand Theft Auto" and "Red Dead Redemption" exceeded Take-Two's expectations in the quarter, according to the earnings release.

Millions of video game fans got their first glimpse of "Grand Theft Auto VI" in December with the release of a trailer promising the first woman lead character and a 2025 release date for the latest installment of one of the world's biggest entertainment franchises.

Fans had waited a decade for news of a follow-up to 2013's GTA V, an industry phenomenon that has sold 190 million units and become the second-biggest game of all time after "Minecraft."

The GTA VI trailer focused on a character named Lucia, freshly freed from prison in a Florida-like setting—making her the first playable woman character in a franchise long criticized for its depiction of women, minorities and LGBTQ people.

The trailer features an alligator walking into a corner store, a woman twerking on the roof of a moving car, and the usual police raids and criminal goings-on that the game has long depicted.

Online forums lit up after the trailer hinted that Lucia would go on a crime spree with a male partner.

"Major Bonnie and Clyde vibes," a Reddit user posted, referencing the bank-robbing couple who reveled in their notoriety in the 1930s.

The GTA franchise has sold a mammoth 410 million units since its launch in 1997, according to Take-Two.

Release of the cost-cutting plan comes just weeks after Swedish video gaming group Embracer said it was selling Gearbox Entertainment, the developer of the popular first-person shooter franchise "Borderlands," to Take-Two for \$460 million.

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