

Press Release / May 12th, 2017

NEXTPRESS by Karsten Adlung under Accusation of Plagiarism

In autumn of 2016, Adlung-Spiele published the game NEXTPRESS with the author name "Karsten Adlung" (the publisher himself) after the license agreement of EXPRESS by the well-known game designer Dr. Reiner Knizia had been terminated. EXPRESS had been part of Adlung's game programme since 2002.

Adlung-Spiele expressly describes NEXTPRESS as an advancement as well as "The New EXPRESS" - specifying "Karsten Adlung" as the author. The reason given is the expiry of the EXPRESS license. The wording of the game title and its graphical design underline the proximity of both games. The game rules are identical in large parts.

A cease-and-desist warning and solicitation by Dr. Reiner Knizia's lawyer to issue a corresponding declaration of injunction was rejected by Karsten Adlung's patent attorney, on the grounds of an allegedly insufficient level of creativity of the game's rules. In the licensing agreement between Adlung-Spiele and Dr. Reiner Knizia, however, the authorship is clearly defined and the return of all rights, including the title, is fixed at termination of the contract.

The legal assessment of the case has not yet been completed. However, the reputation of Adlung-Spiele will take serious damage for game authors, irrespectively. The risk of publishing a game with this publisher and later be confronted with a revised version for which the publisher himself declares to be the author, is, in our opinion, not to be dismissed.

The Board of the Game Designers Association (SAZ) supports its member Dr. Reiner Knizia in his efforts to come to his right, and strongly condemns the action of Karsten Adlung.