

October 10th 2016

## **25 years of Spiele-Autoren-Zunft: 25 years of successful representation of interests**

In October 1991, during the *Internationale Spieltage* in Essen, the founding of the *Spiele-Autoren-Zunft e.V. (SAZ)* took place. The realization that game designers have to organize themselves in order to better represent their interests had preceded the founding. A good example of this was the famous and successful beer coaster action of some well-known authors, in order to enforce the attribution of the authors on the covers of the boxes of board games.

The SAZ has more than 400 members in 20 countries by now. The exchange of experiences among each other as well as the assistance regarding, for example, contract problems is the major reasons to become and remain a member. In this context, a community of like-minded game-makers has become a more and more representation of interests that has to be taken seriously and which is committed to the rights of the game designers.

This is very necessary because unfortunately more and more frequently some publishers are trying to pass the competitive and cost pressure on to the authors in the form of poorer contractual conditions. There have also been repeated attempts to put aside all fairness towards the game designer and try to assume a dominant position. We like to see ourselves as partner - but that requires readiness to talk at eye level.

In addition to that, the SAZ is involved in the *Initiative Urheberrecht* (Copyright Initiative) for a fair copyright as well as in the *Deutscher Kulturrat / Rat für Soziokultur und kulturelle Bildung* (German Cultural Council / Council for Socioculture and Cultural Education) to strengthen the cultural assets of games in society. An important requirement, which has not yet been fulfilled, is the inclusion of games in the collection catalogue of the *Deutsche Nationalbibliothek* (German National Library).

The SAZ was recently able to obtain a legal distinction between copyright and industrial property rights in contracts relating to rules between foreign game authors and German publishers at the *Federal Ministry of Finance* and the *Federal Tax Office*. This prevents unnecessary tax deduction and minimizes the administrative burden on publishers and authors. All this lobbying is gaining in importance.

Furthermore, the SAZ will be involved as co-organizer of the *Göttinger Spieleautorentreffen* (Game Designer Convention in Goettingen) starting 2017 as well as sponsoring the *Deutsche Spieleautorentagung (German Game Designer Convention)* in Weilburg for the qualification of games authors.

The board of the SAZ sees the organisation well prepared for the upcoming tasks and is looking forward to new challenges despite sometimes rather strong headwind.