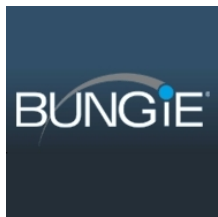


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By: Marius Oiaga, Technology News Editor



Bungie

Makers of Halo 3, Bungie Studios, Divorce from Microsoft

The Redmond company offers official confirmation

Microsoft has officially confirmed the divorce from Bungie Studios, the maker of Halo 3. However, the Redmond company downplayed the situation by revealing that the two companies will embark on a new long-term relationship. This detail does not change in any way the fact that Bungie will become an independent company. Rumors of the split between Microsoft and Bungie have been circulating for some time now, but Robbie Bach, president of Microsoft's Entertainment and Devices division refused either to confirm or to deny the course of action to be taken by the two companies, a couple of days ago. "Our collaboration with Bungie has resulted in 'Halo' becoming an enduring mainstream hit," said Shane Kim, corporate vice president of Microsoft Game Studios. "While we are supporting Bungie's desire to return to its independent roots, we will continue to invest in our 'Halo' entertainment property with Bungie and other partners, such as Peter Jackson, on a new interactive series set in the 'Halo' universe. We look forward to great success with Bungie as our long-term relationship continues to evolve through 'Halo'-related titles and new IP created by Bungie." Essentially, the developers of the Halo video-game franchise will regain their independence, with Microsoft still retaining an interest in Bungie. The Redmond company revealed that the two parties will remain connected by the co-ownership of the "Halo" intellectual property, and that the franchise will continue to unite them. Halo 3, recently launched exclusively for the Xbox 360 platform, sold in excess of \$300 million worth of copies in the first week worldwide. "This exciting evolution of our relationship with Microsoft will enable us to expand both creatively and organizationally in our mission to create world-class games," said Harold Ryan, studio head for Bungie. "We will continue to develop with our primary focus on Microsoft platforms; we greatly value our mutually prosperous relationship with our publisher, Microsoft Game Studios; and we look forward to continuing that affiliation through 'Halo' and beyond."