

"I've got a project on Kickstarter."

Is something I have seen an awful lot of lately; before deciding to do my own I was quite hesitant for many reasons. It seemed to me that 'everyone' was doing it. However, a closer look really narrowed down the who was doing it, and why.

Looking at the most popular Kickstarter campaigns within the miniature hobby most people will notice that the majority are not conducted by individuals needing help getting a business going. In fact they usually are part of a well-crafted advertising campaign ran by a miniature producer already in existence to create the illusion that the consumer is in fact taking part in a once-in-a-lifetime chance to shape the market and be part of the driving force on an a personal level. This facade is put out with all the works. Expensive and skilled advertising; systematic teamwork choreographed with specific dates to ensure product purchases ('rewards') seem to be organic actions taken by enlightened buyers.

Still, there are success stories that happen. I know of one personally, where a former co-worker of mine launched a toy-line and drew in over \$11,000 dollars well before funding came to an end. Granted, he had some serious help from within the industry, and enough connections to draw in the numbers. That experience does not seem to be the norm.

Instead my fears have seemingly been confirmed. Within the first day of my Kickstarter being launched I was spammed by both Kickstarter itself promoting its business, and others on Kickstarter who leech off others' campaigns with Mafia-style tactics. I've gotten many emails on the website from a myriad of different users spamming new projects with, "Donate to my Kickstarter to promote your page, and I'll donate to yours to do the same." I've even seen reviews where this is not only encouraged, but suggested to be the best way to enter into a Kickstarter.

So what is there to expect when you are a hardworking individual who has put in their own time, money, and passion to creating a project but need help producing the end result? I sure hope it is not nothing.

Myself, I have spent many years going over the story and universe in my head. In fact my miniature project started life as a video-game concept while I was attending college for video-game design! I have been working the best jobs I can to provide for my family, and trying my hardest to save money for this endeavor. But after years of struggling financially to get beyond the working-class, I realized this was not going to happen without me committing to the idea of crowd-funding and giving this a shot.

I sincerely hope this project gets funded. Not to make a profit off of people, but to bring my ideas and vision to life for once. I've had enough of back-stabbing (the artist I was working with to create a video-game at one point posted all of the artwork online for his employer's benefit) even when we had perspective funding and well-known names in the music industry willing to coordinate and put their songs on the game, and most recently with a gentleman who acted as a middleman after I'd paid him to sculpt models (thankfully I had found out and recouped my funds).

I think the idea of Kickstarter is to help those in the situation I am in, because it is a way of helping those who have no other means. Instead of being criticized for not having enough 'rewards', or being told to contribute to others' (I would have no problem doing this but you see I am le' poor), people should be willing to put faith in someone's vision and enjoy the thrill of helping them see it come to life.