



"For the record, prejudices can kill and suspicion can destroy."  
- Rod Sterling

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## Authority Disassembled: How to Fix Wildstorm by Matt Springer



In case you haven't noticed, the Wildstorm Universe is in a bit of a shambles, and has been for a while. This latest tailspin seems to have been precipitated, oh irony of ironies, by the most recent attempt at a star-studded "re-launch," which saw Grant Morrison putting out a grand total of TWO comic books before his entire involvement vanished. Meanwhile, the few titles that did actually hit the scene were left standing out in the marketplace virtually naked.

It's a mess. I'd like to see it cleaned up.

1) Just end it. Now. Stop whatever is happening as soon as possible. If you have to finish miniseries or wrap up ongoings, fine; just get it over with and done.

2) Hire an "executive producer" to handle the overall creative direction of the WU. I think this person has to have some kind of established name in the entertainment world, but obviously isn't going to be one of the BIG names in the comics industry, since they all frankly have better things to do. You also need someone who has the potential, if not the reputation, to deliver edgy stories that walk the fine line between mainstream superheroics and whatever offends the delicate sensibilities of Pretty Boy Paul Levitz.

3) Bring in a pack of young turk renegades to work with the "executive producer." When Dan DiDio announced the creative team on Countdown, I was kind of excited. You had a proven "showrunner" in Paul Dini paired with a team of versatile writers, some with experience, all of them relatively "hungry" in terms of their spot in the DC pecking order. Of course, Countdown turned out like shit, but I'd like to see what COULD have been actually become REALITY for my fantasy Wildstorm relaunch.

There's a lot of young creators working on the fringes of the mainstream, for publishers like Boom! and Red 5 and their own home-brewed outfits, that would be great choices to work cheap and crank

out edgy material—they'd be hungry, and they'd know that delivering big-time on a Wildstorm book could provide an instant ticket to bigger and better things. A partial list: Brian Clevinger (Atomic Robo), Kevin Church (Cover Girl), Jonathan Hickman (Nightly News, Pax Romana, Transhuman), Kieron Gillen (Phonogram), Ivan Brandon (NYC Mech), Rick Remender (Fear Agent), Fred Van Lente (Action Philosophers). That's a shitload of crazy brains, right there. Imagine just three of them let loose under a mad genius to play in the Wildstorm Universe, anything goes, no holds barred (as long as it doesn't make Paul Levitz blush like a little schoolgirl).

4) Keep it simple; keep it small. I believe Wildstorm requires three ongoing titles: The Authority, Stormwatch, and WildCATS. Those are the go-forward "brands." The exec producer would write Stormwatch, and that would be the "core" Wildstorm title. Each title has its own core identity, whatever the EP determines that to be.

Everything that doesn't fit into those titles is a miniseries. Everything Wildstorm puts out is collected quickly into trade paperbacks—not bullshit \$25 hardcovers, but slick tight little packages retailing no more than \$15. (\$9.99 would be even better.)

The "continuity" would be just enough to give the universe a cohesive feel, but not so much that a reader couldn't pick up any given title by itself and get a complete experience. There would be plentiful recap pages.

5) Distribute using unproven, shocking schemes. If I were the King of Time-Warner, or if Paul Levitz had any balls, he'd put together this plan or something like it and then LAUNCH IT EXCLUSIVELY ONLINE. Build a quick flashy website with an easy user interface and provide downloadable files, either for free or for a small fee. (Can you imagine the buzz if Wildstorm relaunched with a promise of "quarter comics"? New titles, delivered monthly via download, for a quarter apiece?) Every six months, collect the latest storyline in trade and sell it in bookstores and comic shops.

Or go all manga on our nation's collective ass and put out the books as monthly fat digests, \$6.95 a pop, with one or two issues' worth of content per "title." Again, collect up the storylines and sell them in trades.

Read the entire article here - <http://tinyurl.com/5nr7ex>

### TO THE ANONYMOUS GENIUS BEHIND THE FOLLOWING... THANK YOU.



redshift  
awesome!



- The Soup - Joel Mchale FTW!  
- Doctor Horrible's Sing-Along Blog.  
- Jonathan Coulton - Code Monkey.  
- Alert Nerd's new zine, Grok!  
Wanna write for it?

blueshift  
boring.



- DC versus Mortal Kombat. No no no.  
- Amy Winehouse. Awesome voice.  
Awful meltdown. Shame really.  
- Cory Doctorow's commentary on comics continues unchecked.