Mostafa Hafez

Timeline Interactive

“ I saw an opportunity to pioneer the video game industry in the Middle East. ”

COUNTRY	Egypt
INDUSTRY	Technology
EMPLOYEES	35
YEAR SELECTED	2010
WEBSITE	www.timelineinteractive.com

COMPANY SNAPSHOT

Timeline Interactive is a game changer in one of the world's fastest growing industries. Founded in 2005 by Mostafa Hafez, Timeline develops video games that can be purchased and downloaded online instead of from a physical store. In 2009, after several years of smaller releases, **Timeline released *CellFactor: Psychokinetic Wars,***
the first downloadable game in the industry to use sophisticated 3D visuals and game play physics – priced at just US$10. To date, Mostafa's personal talents coupled with Egypt's low overhead costs have enabled Timeline to secure globally recognized partners and clients. In fact, Timeline is the first and only video game studio in the Middle East certified by Microsoft and Sony to develop games for Xbox360 and PS3. Playable on these consoles, and purchasable through the click of a button, CellFactor showcased Timeline's development prowess to the international gaming community and sold over 100,000 downloads. As the global video game industry evolves, Timeline's past successes and geographic location make it uniquely positioned to grow with the market.

Mostafa Hafez dreamed of making video games long before the tools were available in Egypt. When he finally got his first computer in high school, he worked tirelessly to complete a single role playing game called Journey's End, which he sold to Crystal Interactive for worldwide distribution before he graduated from high school. Mostafa went on to attend Ain Shams University in Cairo, where he majored in computer science. While at school, co-founded Artificial Studios with some friends, a small video game development studio in the US. Over his last two years of college, Mostafa and Artificial developed the Reality Engine, a video game engine for game development which was acquired by Epic Games in 2005. That same year, Mostafa graduated from Ain Shams and founded Timeline Interactive in Egypt.

Though Timeline grew out of Mostafa's passion for development and connections to other small-scale development studios, the business quickly became more than a contracted side project. **From 2005 to 2007, Mostafa and his small team focused on the development of CellFactor,** a sci-fi war game conceived of by one of Artificial Studio's previous clients (Immersion Studios). Ageia, now a world leader in visual technologies NVIDIA, bought *CellFactor: Combat Training* in 2006 and *CellFactor: Revolution* in 2007. Both games were released as free downloads to showcase Ageia's PhysX, a hardware acceleration card for Physics engines that enhances the gaming experience.

Mostafa was quick to capitalize on the successful sales of CellFactor games and Timeline's growing reputation. In 2007, Timeline secured its first round of financing from the Egyptian government's Technology Development Fund (TDF). Through TDF, Mostafa met Ahmed Metwally, who had over 10 years of experience as a developer, consultant and CTO at a variety of start-ups and Fortune 500 firms, including a senior position at Microsoft. Mostafa brought him on board as Chairman and CEO to help secure financing, and structure and scale the business in Egypt. Mostafa remained the Technical Director, leading game development and design. With Ahmed's strategic guidance, Mostafa began to create *CellFactor: Psychokinetic Wars* – a more complex version of previous CellFactor titles. Timeline ultimately licensed *CellFactor: Psychokinetic Wars* to UBISOFT for a US$500,000 advance on royalties in 2008.

The global video game industry is expected to reach US$68 billion in 2012, with online sales expected to account for US$14.4 billion of this total. Timeline has already pushed the envelope for downloadable games. Going forward, Timeline aims to increase profitability by creating and self-publishing games that are truly innovative across multiple platforms, with a vision to continue to release games for a worldwide rather than solely Middle Eastern audience.

ENDEAVOR AND TIMELINE INTERACTIVE

Endeavor selected Mostafa and Ahmed in March 2010 and is helping Timeline to become a leading studio in an industry projected to reach US$68 billion in 2012. Currently Ahmed and Mostafa are receiving support in areas including financing.