

My Experience As A Buzzly Staff Member

Well, I can't say I didn't try to not have to come to this point. As many of you may know with Buzzly, there's been an uproar on the site as of 3/14/2022, because of a "community moral compass" poll that was posted.

About a week or two ago, staff members were given a google document. Within the document was around 37 poll questions that ChStark "Chris" and RedArcanine "Red" wanted to publish to gauge where the community stood. After some staff discussion, we felt this was going to be best done by shifting Buzzly.Art to be community-led on policy making. All of us on staff were excited for this, because we felt it was the best thing we could possibly do for ourselves. We were constantly confused on what members truly wanted, or if we were in an echo-chamber and only hearing one side. We thought with a well written, well thought out, and well curated series of poll questions it would be a viable way to determine what users more clearly wanted.

When they gave us a document with poll questions, staff combed through it. Both current staff members, and upcoming prospective staff members. We tore into that, because it was the most ridiculous thing any of us had ever read. It was written maliciously, with the intent of "making a jab" at users. Some of the original poll questions (that were removed before release), read as follows.

"37.- Buzzly is a platform that is being developed by 2 persons in their spare time and all staff members are volunteers.

- a) The work they are doing is amazing considering the team size.
- b) Meh, not a big deal.
- c) People should not take a responsibility this big if they can't handle it."

This stinks of someone who cannot accept criticism, and that's exactly what raised its face yesterday. Around 3PM, CST, we were informed of the poll dropping. I was excited, I genuinely was most eager to see what the poll looked like. You see, since we'd all spent hours discussing the poll and the questions, I was under the impression they would be changed. We were told they would be modified based on our feedback, but they weren't. There were a few questions, like the above, that read "too badly", and were removed. Otherwise, everything was kept relatively the same.

Staff was previously informed through information we received, that after we criticized Chris' poll questions to begin with, he never wanted to get our feedback ever again. From that point forward, he wanted to make Buzzly "What HR says goes, too bad if you do not like it. There's the door!" I suppose they didn't expect the entire staff team to support one another, as we are now.

There's always been issues within Staff with hierarchy. It always felt like the decisions were never up to us, and there was some whimsical 'room where it happens', that none of us had the entry to. We would share ideas, concepts, etc, but really we never always knew what was happening. We have never been totally in the loop, even one of the owners, Vaymutt, was out of the loop a lot of the time. Despite being an owner and founder, ChStark and RedArcanine would have private meetings totally leaving her out. Discussing matters of Buzzly.Art, business, decisions, and essentially sidelining her entirely as a secretary most days. "Answer emails", was what Vay's job had been reduced to.

When the polls dropped, me and Spark spent hours begging in the staff chat. We went around and around and around with Chris. We never imagined they'd have just published their original draft with a couple questions removed, it was not at all what staff had agreed on, or ever even talked about. We were met with "no we're not removing the poll," and then total silence for hours on end. Ironically enough, while me and spark were begging them to remove the poll, they *added* another question. The question they then added was at the end of the poll, which if you never finished you never got to see or vote on. "How do you feel about this poll?" They're not using the combined statistics from "neutral" and "it's going to help!" to say that 48% of the community are 'okay' with the poll, so it's 'okay'?

It's not even about the fact they ignore that's still a whopping over 50% mad, and it ignores that over a thousand people didn't even reach that point in the poll and left the second they saw the uncomfortable questions they were asking. But even outside of that, even with that aside too, the most upvoted site ticket is about that poll. Calling for it to be removed. That has more up-votes than anything has ever gotten on site prior to this. That is the most engagement a ticket has ever received, and they still refuse to admit they were wrong.

Staff started to network at this point. We were all aware of what was happening, and the users were confused and angry. We grouped together in private, and started figuring out what we wanted to do. Most of us, up until about an hour ago, were still totally hopeful we could come to a resolution.

Amid trying to talk to Chris and Red, Chris decided to shine more of his colors in the wind, his ableism. Boasting in the staff chat about how he's "never" affected by things online (while being 30+ years old and currently responding to everyone laughing at him on his Buzzly profile), and how he believed people with anxiety weren't suited for "this kind of work". Meanwhile, every single person reading that chat except him, including Red, has anxiety in some manner. He then also dunked on a previous staff member during this, saying something like "this week it's one thing, next week it's another! Just look at 'X' former staff."

At this point, most of us were discussing quitting and organizing a time to 3/15/2022. Nobody was getting a response, we were continuing to reach out and beg for one, just to be met with nothing. We were met with nothing of importance, outside Chris arguing with us why he was right and we were wrong. As the night went on, the silence drew on, and it felt deafening. Amid this, there were some issues with users harassing people in comment sections and making inflammatory comments. When I went to remove those comments, we came to the realization our staff powers had been frozen. We could not ban, cite, feature, remove, delete, anything. Nothing on our end works. We are glorified spectors now with a pretty blue badge next to our names.

Once morning had come around, Chris was no longer happy with being quiet. He took to his Buzzly.Art account and began responding to users, making cheeky comments like "they can't fire me", etc. All of these have been documented in screenshots both from staff and users watching the spectacle in public. They will be linked in a google drive document below all places this is posted. I'm sorry it has come to this, Red and Stark. Our hands have been forced.

Oh and, of course, despite this, boy prince Chris/Stark is still posting things like this on his account.

