A ratings board wouldn’t let Valve release a trailer. It “leaked” it instead.

Back in 2009, Ars wrote about what was being reported as a leaked trailer for the then-upcoming *Left 4 Dead 2*, saying the footage “looks like it’s straight from a high-gloss action movie.” Today, we need to offer an important update to this crucial, 17-year-old story: The trailer “leak” was orchestrated by Valve itself.

That news comes courtesy of former Valve writer Chet Faliszek, who said in a newly posted video about cut lines in the game that “for *Left 4 Dead 2* with the ESRB… we leaked our trailer ahead of time because they wouldn’t let us release the trailer.”

Faliszek is referring to the Entertainment Software Rating Board, the self-regulating industry group that, since 1994, has offered sometimes questionable age-appropriateness ratings for thousands of games submitted to its purview. While many smaller and/or online-focused game makers skip out on getting those ratings these days, at the time, any publisher that wanted space on major retailers’ shelves needed to submit to the ESRB’s standards.

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