

Angry Birds creator Rovio appoints woman CEO

HELSINKI, FINLAND: Rovio, the Finnish maker of the hugely popular Angry Birds mobile game, has appointed Kati Levoranta as its first woman chief executive officer, the company announced on Wednesday.



Levoranta, who has served as Rovio's legal director and head of European sales, will on 1 January replace Pekka Rantala, who will step down after just one year.

Under Rantala, the company underwent a major restructuring and deep job cuts. In 2014, the company fired one sixth of its employees and its overall sales fell by nine percent.

Angry Birds was a worldwide success after its release in 2009, becoming one of the most downloaded mobile apps of all time. But the game started losing its appeal in 2013 and Rovio is now trying to rebound from a sharp drop in profits.

Tero Kuittinen, an analyst at Cameo Capital, told AFP in November that Rovio had been late in adapting to a major shift that took place in the mobile game industry around 2012, when many companies began to rely on 'micro payments' or small purchases within the game as their main source of revenue.

Most games are now initially free and try to hook their players into making small payments within the game after they have downloaded it. "The logic of these in-app purchases was missing from the Angry Birds," Kuittinen said, adding Rovio had had difficulties in adding the feature to the game later on.

Rovio has pinned its hopes on the Angry Birds 3D movie, set to be released in May 2016. The film, directed with Sony Entertainment, has a budget of \$80 million, according to Finnish media.

Source: AFP

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