

Animation Technology

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1. Introduction

Animation is one technology of interactive multimedia. From the first time animation software was created, a lot of new processes and tools have been developed. This paper describes the important general process of animation software, and compares the developing tools including Adobe Flash and Autodesk Maya. Animation is being adopted and adapted for education applications, web design, games, films and advertising.

2. Software tools

Adobe Flash was created by Macromedia, and now owned by Adobe. Flash can be used to create animation to website, e-cards and games. The Flash Player has a small install size, quick download time, and fast initialization time. Most Internet applications support flash player plug ins.

The Maya package software was originally developed by Alias Systems Corporation, but now owned by Autodesk. "The award-winning Autodesk® Maya® software is a powerful, integrated 3D modelling, animation, visual effects, and rendering solution." (Autodesk, 2009). It was used in the films King Kong and The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,

3. Animation used in IT projects

Animation is used in web pages to get and keep the users' focus. Having a web site presence is now very important for businesses. If users do not find the web sites immediately interesting they will go away in few moments. Web sites are designed to suit the aims of the business and must be designed to keep the users interest. Animations are designed for web sites to meet these business goals. New technologies are now available for animation and enable quick download speeds and do not require extra special plug-ins. Internet networking speed is now much faster however animations that are too big will slow down the response time from a web server. Web site designers and animation designers need to balance the use of animation and speed.

Animation is widely used in developing education software packages. The Virtual Patient was developed for nursing education at Monash University's School of Nursing." (Kiegaldie, 2006)

A study was carried out by Ellis, (2001) into using multimedia education products to promote Critical thinking in Adult Students. Data was collected and analysed to show that multimedia enhanced educational products is potentially more effective in developing critical thinking skills than traditional teaching. (Ellis 2001).

4. Conclusion

Animations are used in many fields for example games, films, advertising, education packages, and web sites. Animations bring us a colourful, dynamic, adventure world as it can give an illusion of something living. Animation is a multimedia technology and we can use animation to work for us, but we should balance the cost and benefit. When used in web site or advertising, animation should show the important information to the user not for the sake of the animation. Animations can do a very good job of making users focus or to show a virtual environment for users to enjoy or study.

5. References

Kiegaldie, D (2006). The Virtual Patient - Development, Implementation and Evaluation of an Innovative Computer Simulation for Postgraduate Nursing Students *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia* 15:1.

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