

Comparison of animation tools in multimedia development (Flash - Director)

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1. Introduction

Animation has many faces, as it covers any change of appearance or any visual effect that is time-based". Animation consist of motion, colour and shape changes according to a time frame, transparency and changes of the rendering technique.(CompuPhase, 2008) It has the ability to capture viewer's imagination by telling a story with special effects. When developing a traditional animation, drawn images, text or both were animated using a separate frame each time. Two types of animations are: Frame and Sprite. Frame animation uses set of rectangular frames and follows each other at a fast rate to make a motion which is similar to cartoon movies. Is it an internal animation method and non interactive. The rectangular frames are not transparent. The frame animation with transparency is needed and is referred as 'cel' animation. Sprite animation uses 2D graphic objects that move on the display. It is not restricted to rectangular shape and often can have transparent areas. This can be controlled by the user or an application program which is called external animation method. Sprite animation libraries and tool kits assist to change the appearance of the sprite which makes an internal animation. Interactivity is capable in this type of animation method.(CompuPhase, 2008)

2. Description

Adobe Director

Director is multimedia authoring tool which used to crate highly interactive multimedia applications with advanced programmatic controls which creates using Director's scripting language called Lingo. Wagstaff(1999)

Adobe Flash

Flash is multimedia authoring tool which used to create flash contents. It is concerned on creating very compact vector-based art work and greatly simplified plug-in based animations. Wagstaff(1999)

3. Comparison

Animation Style

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Director begins as a 2D animation tool and is equipped with two types of animation methods: key frame and scripted. Wagstaff(1999) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Flash is Vector based animation which is equipped with time based animation feature. * Playback will start before the whole flash movie has downloaded to the player. Wagstaff(1999) |
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Interface

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Director has friendly interface through it has strictly defined authoring metaphor of cast, stage and score. * Can import frames and into frames in the score and can animate objects with tweening. * Lingo is the scripting language of Director which is used for developing and controlling 2D games. Wagstaff(1999) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Flash has friendly environment that director and required less knowledge to use. * No cast for storing object. All objects are stored directly with the Flash score. Wagstaff(1999) |
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Main use

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Director is the perfect tool for rich interactive high performance merchandising, entertainment and learning multimedia applications.(Adobe, 2009) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Flash is an excellent tool for web based animation application which delivers excellent results for web based e-learning, interactive web marketing, web presentations, and web applications user interfaces. (Adobe, 2009) |
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Media support

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Director supports text, images (gif, jpeg, png, psd, bmp, etc.), sound (mp3, wav, aif, ra) and video (mov, avi, dv, rm, wmv, etc.). (Adobe, 2009) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Flash allows importing different multimedia formats such as text, images (gif, jpeg, png), sound (mp3, wav, aiff) and video (mov, avi, dv, etc). Flash generates Flash video file in flv format. (Adobe, 2009) |
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4. Conclusion

According g to the literature analysis of two tools, Flash is ideal for creating artistic and interactive websites and Director for creating interactive rich media applications like games, learning programmes, Kiosks. Adobe Flash and Director both have powerful programming features and ability to develop cross platform products.

5. References

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