Softimage Announces Softimage|XSI 7 Powered by ICE

New Interactive Creative Environment will transform Softimage|XSI software from a 3D application to a highly extensible platform

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Softimage announced SOFTIMAGE|XSI 7, the latest version of its professional 3D animation software for games, film and television. SOFTIMAGE|XSI 7 software will introduce a transformative open platform called ICE, designed to capture the infinitely creative vision of content producers. With a visual interface and an easy-to-use node-based programming model, users will be able to quickly create complex visual effects. ICE will allow artists to explore, learn and modify the robust library of particle-based visual effects and deformation tools that will ship in SOFTIMAGE|XSI 7 software, or simply build new ones from scratch.

"High-quality 3D content plays an increasingly important role in today's films, games, and TV productions, and Softimage understands that content producers' visions are larger than any 3D package can deliver out-of-the box," said Marc Stevens, general manager of Softimage and vice president of Avid Technology, Inc. "Until today, trade-offs had to be made between fulfilling all creative intent and the cost of extending existing 3D packages via scripting and plug-in tools. The Softimage ICE platform will allow content producers to easily create, modify and deploy complex tools and effects more efficiently than ever before. Powered by our Gigacore II engine, ICE will utilize all the available processing power on today's multi-core workstations for ultimate scalability, maximizing the return on hardware investment."

Multi-Threaded GigaCore II

Powering the ICE platform in SOFTIMAGE|XSI 7 software will be the GigaCore II, a parallel processing engine that will deliver optimum performance on any modern workstation. Designed from the ground up to take advantage of multi-core workstations, the Softimage ICE platform will directly scale with the number and speed of processing cores available.

"The first time I built an ICE particle compound in SOFTIMAGE|XSI 7, I was amazed," said Fabio Leporelli, senior lighting and fur technical director at Peerless Camera Company, Ltd. (UK). "What used to take hours, or days of tedious scripting, I was able to create in minutes with the Softimage ICE platform. I never imagined it would be possible to create such complex particle simulations so easily, and I was only using about 5% of the processor power available. Thank you Softimage."

SOFTIMAGE ICE Particles and Deformations

Softimage will offer numerous pre-built, production-ready ICE 'compounds' for particle-based effects and deformations that will allow artists to jump right into production. Unlike tools in other 3D systems, these pre-built compounds are open, and will allow users to examine and learn how they work, and even modify them. Customers who create their own ICE compounds can share them in their facility or with the global

community on SOFTIMAGE|NET, in either an open XML format, or a locked binary file to protect their Intellectual Property (IP).

Other new features in SOFTIMAGE|XSI 7:

Support for mental ray v.3.6 with new rendering 'stand-ins' that will allow users to offload objects along with rigged and animated characters to the disk until render time, resulting in light-weight scene assembly for much larger rendered scenes, and optimized controls for final gathering and global illumination.

Delta II a major update to the lightweight referencing system in SOFTIMAGE|XSI, with enhanced support for clusters and cluster properties, including materials, textures and UVs.

RTS III - a new Real-Time Shading architecture that will allow fragment and vertex shaders to exist in one node, and will be programmable and controllable from any ICE attribute.

Streamlined licensing process dongle-less, with a new temporary licensing fail-safe feature.

Additionally, Softimage will include new features and enhancements specifically influenced and requested by customers during their production cycles. SOFTIMAGE|XSI 7 will ship with a FREE Training DVD with Official Softimage Training Material provided exclusively for this newest version by Digital-Tutors. Softimage will also offer many ICE tutorials and demonstration videos that will be posted on the SOFTIIMAGE|NET community training page.

Availability

SOFTIMAGE|XSI 7 is expected to be available in Q3 2008. Pricing for SOFTIMAGE|XSI 7 Essentials will be USMSRP $2,995. Pricing for SOFTIMAGE|XSI 7 Advanced will be USMSRP $4,995.

More Information at: http://www.softimage.com