



Autodesk HumanIK Middleware Licensed to EA for Next-Generation Game Development

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Customized Middleware Helps EA Advance In-Game 3D Character Animation

SAN FRANCISCO, Game Developers Conference, Autodesk Booth #610, March 7 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK) has licensed HumanIK middleware to Electronic Arts (Nasdaq: ERTS), the world's leading game developer. Autodesk HumanIK is a customized development library that enables animated game characters to interact more realistically with digital environments. Dynamically and accurately porting animation data from the authoring environment into the game engine gives developers increased flexibility in animating the game with more realistic, real-time results. The HumanIK middleware has been used, along with Autodesk Maya 3D software and Autodesk MotionBuilder character animation software, in EA's DEF JAM: ICON(TM), FIFA Soccer 07 and NBA STREET Homecourt titles.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20050415/SFF034LOGO>)

"Through our partnership with Autodesk, we were able to achieve a new level of character animation in DEF JAM: ICON, FIFA Soccer 07 and NBA STREET Homecourt," said Glenn Entis, EA's chief visual and technical officer. "Part of the reason EA consistently delivers innovative hit game titles like these is because we rely on extensive internal and external R&D. Autodesk HumanIK middleware allowed efficient porting of game data to the various platforms on which we shipped our games. Autodesk R&D team was highly responsive, quickly providing us with customized builds of the HumanIK solution."

Built from the HumanIK character technology found in the Maya and MotionBuilder software, Autodesk HumanIK middleware provides an on-target intelligent inverse kinematics (IK) animation system. It lets game developers control the animation of a character's body and limbs at run-time, resulting in a much higher level of realism in the game. Artists are empowered within the game authoring environment, as HumanIK delivers a what-you-see-is-what-you-get (WYSIWYG) workflow. This also reduces artists' reliance on integration programmers, who typically port the game data into the game engine.

Acacia Research Group's annual Middleware for Interactive Entertainment market study forecasts that the market for interactive entertainment middleware will grow from \$718.4 million USD to nearly \$1.3 billion USD by 2010. "Middleware solutions, such as Autodesk HumanIK, are a key element in helping game developers create titles faster and more cost-effectively than ever before," said Michael Arrington, analyst at Acacia Research Group. "Instead of reinventing the wheel with each new title, game developers can use established middleware solutions as a foundation and focus their efforts on developing the innovative technologies and compelling content that will distinguish their games in the marketplace."

"EA's DEF JAM: ICON, FIFA Soccer 07 and NBA STREET Homecourt titles feature sophisticated animations that are impressing the industry and consumers with their realism and fluidity of motion," said Marc Petit, Autodesk's Media & Entertainment vice president. "Next-gen games are visually stunning. But, if a game's animation quality doesn't match the quality of the game's still elements, the illusion of realism is quickly shattered. With HumanIK, Autodesk is helping game developers add credibility to their games by offering a customizable solution for realistic human motion."

EA's Entis continued, "With HumanIK, the character behaviors we created remained intact when exported to the video game engine. That was a huge benefit; it eliminated the usual time-consuming and costly tweaking and toggling between the development software and the game engine. Autodesk HumanIK is the ideal solution for our next-generation game development."

Developed by EA Chicago, DEF JAM: ICON is now shipping. The hip-hop fighting game was designed to be more realistic than the franchise's previous titles, taking advantage of the increased capabilities of next-generation platforms. Players fight their way to the top of the game's social ladder while adding elements of realism via the latest hip-hop fashions and licensed gear.

Already available on Xbox 360 and will be in stores on PLAYSTATION 3 nationwide tomorrow. EA's NBA STREET Homecourt features the hometown courts of some of the NBA's biggest stars. Start your journey as an anonymous baller and earn a name for yourself as you go head-to-head with the NBA's best, and put your own hometown on the map. Also now available, FIFA Soccer 07 received praise for its realistic advanced animation.

About Autodesk

Autodesk, Inc. is the world leader in 2D and 3D design software for the manufacturing, building and construction, and media and entertainment markets. Since its introduction of AutoCAD software in 1982, Autodesk has developed the broadest portfolio of state-of-the-art digital prototyping solutions to help customers experience their ideas before they are real. Fortune 1000 companies rely on Autodesk for the tools to visualize, simulate and analyze real-world performance early in the design process to save time and money, enhance quality and foster innovation. For additional information about Autodesk, visit www.autodesk.com .

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DEF JAM: ICON is rated "M" (Mature), with descriptors, Blood, Strong Lyrics, Violence by the ESRB.

NBA STREET Homecourt is rated "E" (Everyone) by the ESRB.
FIFA Soccer 07 is rated "E" (Everyone) by the ESRB.

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