



Discreet Announces character studio 4 -- Revolutionary Advancements in Character Animation

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SAN ANTONIO, Jul 23, 2002 (BUSINESS WIRE) --

Latest Release Breaks New Ground Offering More Flexibility, Control and Better Ease of Use

Continuing to raise the bar in animation tools, Discreet--a division of Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq:ADSK)-- today announced character studio 4, the latest extension to the widely popular and award-winning 3ds max software. The newest release continues to advance character animation techniques and motion capture tools in ways never thought possible with the addition of a constraint-based animation mixer, an animation analyzer and fixer and Quaternion Function Curves. The software will be demonstrated for the first time at SIGGRAPH 2002.

"character studio 4 quite simply takes character animation to a new level. Just one example is quaternions--that have never before been implemented with complete f-curve functionality," said Chris Ford, animation product line manager, Discreet. "With an explicit focus on innovation, character studio 4 delivers many 'most-requested' additions such as the ability to add and support props like sport's equipment or weapons as well as animated, scalable bones for cartoon-like 3D animation."

character studio 4 software includes significant enhancements designed to provide animators an easy-to-use system that boasts flexibility, quick fixes and more control. The addition of a non-linear animation mixer is a highlight of the many new features. It allows for the smooth blending of multiple motion files that will help draw the most from existing motion libraries and also allow for the blending of motion capture with key-framed animations. Also, the new time warp ability helps animators to regain control over staging and changing animation timings including increasing or decreasing the speed of motion.

The addition of the animation analyzer provides for precise correction of discontinuities through a complete analysis of any animated limb. The animation fixer takes it a step further with suggested fixes or "most likely resolution" mode, an option that enables the system to tweak the data in a way that maintains tangencies and provides smoother character motions. Finally, the ability to view quaternion rotations as function curves is the first of its kind, enabling artists to combine the smoothest method of rotation with control finesse of function curves displayed in familiar X, Y and Z axes. Animators will now have a truly intuitive character animation system that is fully predictable and easy to understand.

"The memorable characters in movies like Cats and Dogs or in animated television commercials show how advanced character animation has become," continued Ford. "The new release of character studio 4 will enable animators an even greater palette of precision tools to fluid, lifelike and memorable animation."

Since its release in October 2000, character studio 3 has gained much popularity from 3ds max users as showcased by its use in many games, commercials and films including The Cathedral, winner of SIGGRAPH's 2002 "Best Animated Short" award.

For more information:

character studio 4 will be demonstrated in the Discreet booth at SIGGRAPH in San Antonio. Product availability information will be released at the ship date, Fall 2002. For additional details, please contact Discreet Sales at 800-869-3504 or 514-393-1616 or visit www.discreet.com.

About Discreet

Discreet empowers moving media professionals to realize the visual experience, transforming their most evocative and ambitious visions into reality. Its range of award-winning systems and software is developed for digital media creation, management and delivery--across all disciplines from visual effects and editing to animation, game development, web and interactive. Discreet is based in Montreal, Quebec and is a division of Autodesk, Inc., the world's leading design and digital media creation, management, and distribution company. Product and corporate information is located on the Internet at www.discreet.com.

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