



## Autodesk Launches Maya 8: Equips 3D Artists for Next-Generation Game and Film Production

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64-bit Technology Support and Multithreading Enhancements Offer New Levels of Scalability and Speed

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., July 31 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK) today launched Autodesk Maya 8 software, the newest version of its Academy Award-winning 3D modeling, animation and rendering solution. Maya has been used by a variety of clients, including BMW, CNN, Disney, Epic Games, Industrial Light & Magic, Midway Games and Weta Digital, to create breathtaking 3D imagery for feature films, interactive games, broadcast graphics and industrial design. Autodesk Maya 8 meets the demands of next-generation productions by addressing the real-world production challenges 3D artists are currently facing. Maya 8 will be showcased at the Autodesk booth #1706 at SIGGRAPH 2006, August 1-3 at the Boston Convention Center.

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

Marc Petit, Autodesk's Media & Entertainment vice president, said, "3D artists are tackling some overwhelming challenges right now, such as dealing with huge, increasingly complex data sets while moving to next-generation game development platforms and having to deliver even more photo-realistic imagery. Teams are getting bigger and require sophisticated collaboration and data management tools. Autodesk Maya 8 addresses these production hurdles by combining a flexible platform with a highly optimized software core, boosting productivity and improving pipeline efficiency."

Maya 8 offers a combination of 64-bit support, multithreading and algorithmic optimizations that enable artists to load massive datasets and interact with them more efficiently than ever before. Key areas of the software, including skinning, draw tessellation, and subdivided polygon proxy meshes, have been multi-threaded to scale with the number of processors or cores available, thereby accelerating formerly time-consuming tasks on today's workstations and those of the future.

"Autodesk Maya 8 software's 64-bit support has opened up a world of possibilities by allowing our artists to manage very large scenes," said Jack Brooks, VP Technology, Walt Disney. "Maya 8 is an integral element of our 64-bit pipeline. We used the beta in pre-production for an upcoming film. Being able to extend Maya's functionality through the API allowed us to customize it to meet our demanding requirements."

Maya 8 offers a host of productivity advancements, particularly for modeling and texturing. The Transfer Polygon Attributes feature enables modelers to transfer UVs, color per vertex (CPV), and vertex position information between surface meshes of differing topologies. This is particularly useful when working with two different versions of an object or character, e.g. one that is high-resolution and one that is low-resolution. In addition, new and improved workflows and tools such as Polygon Bridge, multiple edge loop insertion and enhanced UV layout help maximize productivity for the most common tasks.

Maya 8 enables artists to better manage data when using multiple 2D and 3D packages within the production pipeline. This is achieved through application programming interface (API) extensions, enhancements to Autodesk FBX file exchange technology, the addition of interchangeable geometry caching between Maya and Autodesk 3ds Max animation software, and new interoperability with Autodesk Toxik collaborative compositing software.

Emmanuel Valdez, chief creative officer at High Moon Studios in California, said, "At High Moon Studios, we have artists from all types of disciplines -- from animation to character modeling. They have to work together and share 3D data, regardless of the software they're using. That's why we've chosen to use Autodesk Maya, along with Autodesk 3ds Max and MotionBuilder. These products are open and offer the industry's best creative tools."

Autodesk helps 3D artists in game development, design visualization, film, television, broadcast and graphic design focus on realizing their ideas without being limited by production complexities. Autodesk's media and entertainment 3D product portfolio is comprised of Autodesk Maya 8, 3ds Max 9 (announced separately) and VIZ 2007 animation, modeling and rendering software, as well as Autodesk MotionBuilder 7.5 character animation software. Interoperability is achieved between these products via Autodesk FBX, a free 3D file exchange format.

### Autodesk Maya 8 Key Features

With Maya 8, Autodesk demonstrates its commitment to meeting the demands of next-generation productions by addressing the fundamental challenges artists face today. Maya 8 offers the following features to maximize productivity and pipeline efficiency:

- 64-bit support for Windows and Linux
- Scalable multithreading to improve performance on multiprocessor systems
- Ability to override viewports with a user-defined renderer, such as a game engine
- Optimized mental ray 3.5 core for superior rendering performance and memory usage
- Polygon Bridge and Transfer Polygon Attributes
- Support for high dynamic range (HDR) and floating-point images
- Support for interactive viewing of native and custom mental ray shaders
- Improved Autodesk FBX plug-in to provide tighter integration between Maya and applications such as 3ds Max and MotionBuilder
- Interchangeable geometry cache between Maya and 3ds Max, allowing for the exchange of complex data between the two packages
- Export of render layers to Autodesk Toxik software's database

For a complete list of new features in Maya 8, please visit [www.autodesk.com/maya](http://www.autodesk.com/maya).

With support from HP and Intel, a number of third-party developers in the Autodesk Developer Network (ADN) Sparks program have already produced 64-bit versions of their plug-ins to support Maya 8, giving users immediate access to a pool of 64-bit development tools.

#### Pricing and Availability

Autodesk anticipates that Maya 8 will be available in English in August 2006, and in additional languages in the future. The 64-bit version of Maya 8 will be supported on Windows and Linux. The 32-bit version will be supported on Windows, Linux and Mac OS X. For a complete list of supported operating systems, please visit [www.autodesk.com/maya](http://www.autodesk.com/maya) (Features & Specifications -- System Requirements).

Autodesk suggested retail pricing for Maya 8 is US \$1,999 for Maya Complete (Standalone) and US \$6,999 for Maya Unlimited (Standalone). The upgrade price from Maya 7 Complete to Maya 8 Complete is US \$899, and the upgrade price from Maya 7 Unlimited to Maya 8 Unlimited is US \$1,249.

#### Maya Platinum Membership

The Autodesk suggested retail price for Maya Platinum Membership starts at US \$1,299 per year and is available for purchase simultaneously with the product purchase. Platinum Membership customers qualify for access to the latest software updates, technical support case management, valuable product extensions and e-learning materials. For more information about Maya Platinum Membership, contact an Autodesk authorized reseller or visit <http://www.autodesk.com/maya-support>.

#### Maya Learning Tools

A variety of Learning Tools are available for Maya, ranging from introductory to advanced skill levels. Learning Autodesk Maya 8 | Foundation is a new book that enables users to quickly familiarize themselves with Maya 8. It offers a hands-on introduction to key Maya tools and techniques by enabling users to create and animate characters based on the Sony Pictures Animation feature film Open Season. Learning Autodesk Maya 8 | Foundation is priced at US \$69.99. For additional details, please visit [www.autodesk.com/learning-tools](http://www.autodesk.com/learning-tools).

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Maya 8 imagery is available on Autodesk's website at [www.autodesk.com/maya-pressimagery](http://www.autodesk.com/maya-pressimagery).

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