Autodesk Solutions Help Transport Gamers to Distant Galaxies, Medieval Times and More With This Season's Hottest New Titles

December 20, 2007

SAN RAFAEL, Calif., Dec. 20 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Autodesk, Inc. (Nasdaq: ADSK) announced today that its end-to-end game development software solutions were used to create most of the top titles hitting the shelves this holiday season. Holiday games created with Autodesk products include Ubisoft's Assassin's Creed, BioWare's Mass Effect, Flagship's Hellgate: London, Infinity Ward's Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare, Insomniac Games' Ratchet and Clank Future: Tools of Destruction, Sony Computer Entertainment Europe's Heavenly Sword and Naughty Dog's Uncharted: Drake's Fortune.

Ubisoft's Assassin's Creed is one of the most highly anticipated games of the season for PLAYSTATION 3, Xbox 360, Nintendo DS and the PC. The game involves intuitive, free-form, third-person adventure play that entails running up and along walls. Players can climb every building, ledge, path and platform in the game. This complex character navigation was realized with a pipeline that included Autodesk 3ds Max modeling, animation and rendering software, and Autodesk MotionBuilder character animation software. As well, Autodesk HumanIK middleware was integrated into the game engine. 3ds Max was used to create 3D character and environment models, both 3ds Max and MotionBuilder were used for in-game character animation, and HumanIK provided a full inverse kinematics system for characters.

"For games that use a lot of motion capture -- like Assassin's Creed -- the MotionBuilder to 3ds Max pipeline is a really efficient one," said Elspeth Tory, Ubisoft's project manager for animation. "We captured data on our motion capture stage, tweaked and cleaned up that animation in MotionBuilder and brought it into 3ds Max. 3ds Max is perfectly designed for game development and the production of tons of assets at a breakneck pace. HumanIK helped us make the game look real, and enabled us to accomplish our goal of allowing the main character to have total freedom to move anywhere within the game's environments."

Infinity Ward relied on Autodesk Maya modeling, animation and rendering software for the modeling and texturing of all props, vehicles and characters in Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare. Call of Duty 4 is the first game in the Call of Duty series that is not set in World War II. Infinity Ward used Maya to create the PC, Xbox 360 and PLAYSTATION 3 versions of this first-person shooter game, which is set in various treacherous hotspots around the world. Players take on a rogue enemy group as a US Marine or a British SAS soldier.

"Call of Duty 4 required that we re-imagine the Call of Duty franchise. The art team drew on their experience with Maya from the previous Call of Duty games and built a realistic modern world from the ground up," explained Joel Emslie, lead character artist. "We made full use of the Maya software's strengths, from polygonal modeling to our very first attempt at motion capture animation. The Maya Surface Sampler also proved to be the best solution for projecting robust normal maps onto our geometry. Nothing else compared to its flexibility in this area."

Mass Effect, an action role-playing game developed by BioWare (http://www.bioware.com) for the Xbox 360, was created with 3ds Max and Autodesk Mudbox digital sculpting software. In Mass Effect, gamers take on the role of Commander Shepard, and are tasked with saving all civilized life in the galaxy from an ancient machine race. Adrien Cho, lead technical artist on the game, said, "We built all of the game's characters, weapons, interactive objects and environments in 3ds Max. Characters modeled in 3ds Max were detailed in Mudbox to create a more believable look and feel, with realistic emotions." 3ds Max was also used to animate the characters and create the game's cinematics.

Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (SCEE) used Autodesk Maya in the creation of Heavenly Sword, a game based on a tale of revenge, courage and self-discovery for the PLAYSTATION 3. For SCEE, the introduction of Ambient Occlusion maps was a crucial part of the groundbreaking graphics within this next-generation game. The ability to add soft contact shadows to all of the objects and environments was instrumental in defining the look of Heavenly Sword. Maya and the mental ray map baking functionality provided every artist with a quick and extremely effective method for creating these maps. The Maya software's Transfer Maps tool also allowed artists to bake and transfer Ambient Occlusion from high to low polygon models, which further enhanced the quality of their work.

3ds Max was the backbone of Flagship's production chain for Hellgate: London, a PC action role-playing game based in post-apocalyptic London. The studio used 3ds Max to model the majority of the game's terrifying demons and dauntless human survivors, as well as a scorched and desolate London. "3ds Max provides a powerful, flexible, open environment that excels at all aspects of game development," said Phil Shink, art director and co-founder of Flagship Studios. "It's equally suited to level creation, character modeling and animation; and MAXscript makes it possible to build a lot of our art tools directly inside the application."

Insomniac Games used Maya to create Ratchet and Clank Future: Tools of Destruction. Available for the PLAYSTATION 3, the game is the latest addition to the series, which is based on the misadventures of Ratchet, a furry Lombax, and his robot companion Clank. Artists at the studio used Maya to model character and environment assets, set up UVS, assign shaders and pre-compute dynamics for large, destructible objects.

During the production of Uncharted: Drake's Fortune, Naughty Dog used Maya in nearly every aspect of its art pipeline. The in-game animators relied on the Maya software's intuitive animation interface to generate thousands of character and enemy animations quickly, while the cinematics team produced nearly an hour of real-time movies in less than a year. The environment modelers created highly detailed backgrounds by using a combination of custom-made tools and Maya file referencing. They were able to create levels that were hundreds of times more dense than those in their previous titles.

Autodesk for Games

Autodesk's end-to-end solutions for game development include: Autodesk 3ds Max modeling, animation and rendering software; Autodesk Maya 3D modeling, animation and rendering software; Autodesk MotionBuilder character animation software; Autodesk Mudbox digital sculpting software; and Autodesk HumanIK middleware.

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 http://www.autodesk.com.

Roohi Saeed,
514-961-7296,
Karen Raz,
310-450-1482,
Brittany Bonhomme,
514-954-7419

Email: roohi.saeed@autodesk.com; karen@razpr.com; brittany.bonhomme@autodesk.com

SOURCE Autodesk, Inc. Web site: http://www.autodesk.com