



## Introducing USAnimation V5

### See you there! NAB 2000

During NAB 2000, Toon Boom Technologies will have a suite at The Mirage for private demos and will be showcasing **USAnimation V5** as well as its **LightTable** and **LineTest Modules**. Major highlights include **USAnimation Multi-Format Output** in any aspect ratio, including HDTV/16:9, **support of the Macromedia® Flash™** format as well as the new interactive, real-time, multi-layer **3D Sceneplanning**. The new **LightTable** module introduces the concept of a **virtual drawings studio** while the **LineTest** Module allows the artists to preview in real-time their animation. **USAnimation V5** will be demonstrated

for several representatives from major animation studios.

While at the trade show in the SGI Theater, Kent McCormick, Head Technical Director at **Mercury FilmWorks**, will talk about their new episodic *Yvon from the Yukon* and the benefits of using **USAnimation V5's** new features, including: the ease of use, time savings, intuitive design and superior product results that **USAnimation V5** offered them during their production. In addition to the advanced features already built into **USAnimation**, the new 3D Sceneplanning provided their compositing artists with an

intuitive interface and natural environment for quick and efficient manipulation of elements. Combined with the instant gratification of real-time playback, their artists could spend their time concentrating on the more creative aspects of their job.

They were also in a better position to deal with the ever more demanding needs of their clients. This was saving them the costly delay of compositing and reviewing a scene multiple times before achieving the desired results.

Should you wish to schedule a demo, please contact [karina@toonboom.com](mailto:karina@toonboom.com) to confirm availability.

#### Technology News

### USAnimation V5 gets 3D-Y and Flashy



**U**SAnimation's new Real-Time 3D Sceneplanning module allows users to treat 2D elements in a 3D environment. Users can interactively position elements, create new 3D trajectories for the elements and the camera, and then let the software calculate the speed and perspective changes for each element separately. At the same time, users can playback the scene in real-time, with all its elements, without having to render it first. Moreover, **USAnimation V5** is the only system that offers the possibility to work simultaneously with multiple aspect ratios, including HDTV/16:9, as well as offering multiple views for better 3D sceneplanning, all in real-time. The software runs on both Windows NT and SGI/IRIX workstations. **V5** will not only save studios time and

**USAnimation V5's** unparalleled productivity can be appreciated in many ways:

- Any part of the scene can be edited, from the drawings to the animation sequence to the audio tracks, allowing for complete creative control over the project from start to finish.
- Complicated camera moves, such as multi-plane zooms, can be tested without waiting for the rendered results, thanks to the real-time preview.
- Line width for vector drawings can be controlled and customized as required.
- Repetitive Ink & Paint tasks such as auto-paint can be auto-applied to all drawings.

energy, it will also help increase the quality of their productions considerably.

To top it off, **USAnimation V5** now supports the Macromedia® Flash™ format, making **USAnimation** the first and only solution available in the market to include such a feature. Being a vector-based technology as well, **USAnimation V5** can easily compress movies without any quality loss to have them streamed over the Web.

It is now possible to save individual **USAnimation** vector drawings as Macromedia® Flash™ files (.swf) or render **USAnimation** scenes into a SWF movie. Users can benefit from all **USAnimation** features based on creativity, quality and productivity to create first-class animation and then convert it to SWF file format. Such a breakthrough allows the users to webcast high quality classical animation on the Web.

#### Port to Linux

More and more companies are turning to Linux as a cost-effective alternative to traditional UNIX workstations and servers. This mainstream operating system already had a market share of roughly 16% of the total business server market, in late 1998. International Data Corp., in Framingham, Mass, expects Linux sales to grow at twice the rate of all server operating systems combined - 25% versus 12% - each year until 2003 (Conjuring Linux Niches, Upside, September 1999). As Toon Boom Technologies Inc. wishes to bring maximum choice according to what the business hardware market has best to offer, the firm is proud to announce during NAB 2000, that **USAnimation V5** now supports Linux.

#### User Tip

You can jump from the first frame to the last one, back and forth, by holding the **Ctrl** key down and clicking on the time slider in the **Preview, Playback, Camera Editor**. This is very useful when doing a repeat pan and you want to match the first and last position of the pan.

#### LightTable and Linetest modules

**Toon Boom Technologies Inc.** released a **LightTable** and **LineTest** modules in March 2000. On one hand, users can hand-draw animation using the classical light table approach and use these vector drawings with all the other modules in **USAnimation**, while on the other, they are able to test animation through digital means and playback their drawings in real-time. Both modules run on Windows NT.

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### Customer Testimonials

Referring to **USAnimation** as the industry standard is a field-tried and test-proven statement. Such recognition by the animation industry is thanks to the fact that **USAnimation** offers unparalleled efficiency and performance to all its users, whatever their production is. Just read what three of our clients had to say about **USAnimation**.

"Again we were using **USAnimation** and again very nice results! What is nice about the software is that a smaller studio such as us can take smaller jobs we would normally pass up and not only turn out something that looks good but remain profitable without really sacrificing any of the traditional hand-done look, which is our forté (...). Usually, a 45-second piece has a production time of at least 3-4 weeks with 3-4 person production crew, especially for full-color spots with the kind of layering/effects some of them had. Even though they were admittedly 'limited animation', they were quite complex in other ways and would have virtually been undoable within that time frame without **USAnimation**. (...) We literally delivered one spot a week for five weeks using one NT workstation, one technical director and the animation director, although I was the only one operating the system".  
**Thom Waters, Technical Director at Reelworks**

"For a small digital production service like **King Camera** in London, the efficiency, productivity, and reliability of our mainstream software is a major issue. The speed, efficiency, and manageability of **USAnimation** let us complete our work usually within the deadlines that our customers set for us. Today's budgets and time scales are steadily shrinking, making productivity and speed very important. Having trained in traditional animation, **USAnimation's X-sheet** is very quick and easy to use, being almost identical to a standard animators Dope sheet. Similarly, the **Scan** module is simple and straightforward, regularly achieving good results. Whilst the **Paint** module can be understood quickly and easily by even first-time computer operators. In the **Camera** module, I have easy access to a comprehensive library of effects and compositing modules, meaning I can create complex networks swiftly and effectively. In one of my

most complicated Camera networks, I had about 850 modules in it; a testimony to the network's clarity and the freedom that Camera can give you. Having used quite a few high-end software packages, here at King Camera, I can confidently say that the network structure in Camera is the most logical, intuitive, and straight-forward. This means that I can create the most wonderful imagery on time and within the budget, yet I still have time for tea!".  
**Tim Barter, Senior Digital Artist at King Camera**

"The installation at studio **Conte pour tous** is worth mentioning due to its outstanding efficiency, speediness and professionalism. Within two weeks, thirteen seats were installed and the team was

operational at 99.99%, thanks to **Toon Boom!** (...) Knowing there are 400 plans per episode and that several episodes are produced at the same time, the management of drawings has to be nothing but excellent and user-friendly.

**USAnimation Manager** module greatly meets our needs and represents one of the major strenghts of the system. Moreover, as far as **Ink & Paint** is concerned, **USAnimation** is undoubtedly the fastest system available in the market. Indeed, we manage to ink and paint between 500 to 600 drawings per shift per person, which gives an average of 3 days of coloring per episode, when the scanning is well done. Such a performance relies not only on the team in place but also on **Toon Boom** and its software **USAnimation!**".

**Chantal Bédard, Director of production at Conte pour tous (Productions La Fête-Mimosa)**



### Booming with our customers!



#### News

**Film Roman**, best known for its animation work on the hit series *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill* for **20th Century Fox Television**, has introduced **Level 13.net** as the industry's first animated television network on the Internet.

The site is targeted at 18-28 year olds and features 13 channels of both originally produced and acquired animated short films. Some of the **Level 13** shorts were produced using **USAnimation** software. The focus on original and creative content for a world wide audience led **Film Roman** to conclude "that development of streaming video over the Internet offers a number of major opportunities to independent companies who are experts at creating content, but lack the distribution power of the major media companies. **Level 13** allows this creativity to be viewed on what could truly be the beginning of broadband television.

The flexibility and efficiency of the **USAnimation** package makes it the perfect tool for quick, cost effective, and high quality productions the web customer will demand."

#### Profile

**Hosem Animation Studio** was founded in the beginning of 1997 in Shanghai, China. **Hosem** has also a studio in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. Currently, the production team consists of over 230 skilled artists and technicians, including talented and experienced layout artists and key animators. The studio has worked on *Pocket Dragon*, *Tex Avery*, *Sabrina*, *Sonic*, *Ace Ventura*, etc. by **HongYing Animation** and *Renada*, *Simsala Grimm* by **Hahn Film Germany**. The Digital Department includes SGI and

#### Awards

In the December 1999 issue of **Animation Magazine**, several members of the Toon Boom Team were awarded Golden Pixies by **Pag Plantec**. "I've been so impressed with what I've seen that I've added a category - Ink & Paint High-End", says Mr. Plantec. When he took the time to review **USAnimation V5**, he realized what this unique vector-based technology package can offer. "Resolution can be adjusted, which means you can always have a perfectly smooth image, all the way up to lmax and beyond". And just in time for Digital Television!

Congratulations go to the Graphic Design and the Classical Animation team of the **Canadian Broadcasting Corporation** in Toronto for picking up two awards at the 1999 **Atlantic Digital Media Festival**, in the *Education, Information or Training, Animation* category. *Sesame Park: Get Dressed* was the Winner and *Sesame Park: Polarise* got an Honourable Mention. Proudly enough, both pieces were done on our own **TicTacToon** system!

