Macromedia Director Essay, Research Paper

Overview and Introduction

What Macromedia is and what can it do for a business.

Macromedia Director is the premiere authoring software in the multimedia industry, allowing users to merge and orchestrate text, graphics, animation, video, sound effects, and music into business presentations, entertainment and education CD-ROMs, interactive information kiosks, and other full-featured interactive software. Multimedia-rich programs can be developed with little programming skill.

(http://enternet.softseek.com/Review\_28506\_index.html)

It supports different types file formats and you can combine images (BMP and PIC), sound (WAV), animation (GIF), text (RTF), and video content (FLC and FLI) into a single file and then export it in a variety of file types, including AVI and Shockwave. (http://enternet.softseek.com/Review\_28506\_index.html)

Macromedia Director features a high-quality playback engine; visual effects, such as alpha channels, rotation, and skewing; support for vector illustrations; a scriptable programming language entitled Lingo; and much more.

(http://enternet.softseek.com/Review\_28506\_index.html)

Macromedia Director 6.5 lets you produce business presentations that sparkle with flavour, without giving you a scripting headache when you make them.

Its goal is still to help novices quickly create multimedia animations, while letting advanced users produce eye-popping designs. At the heart of Director 6.5 is its Stage interface; you create interactive designs by dragging Cast Members–such as images and sounds–onto Scores, or series of frames in an animation.

But Director 6.5 brings much more power to this virtual set. It’s loaded with handy tools, and it works with all your favourite programs. To jazz up a PowerPoint file, simply import your slides into Director, and they’re placed on a Score. Here, they’re ready for sound, animation, and anything you want to add.

(Jeff Walsh, 1998 v20 n20 p37(1) InfoWorld)

Director 6.5 offers full Flash support, which makes it easy import and manipulate vector animations. There’s also enhanced Windows support for QuickTime 3.0, allowing snappy digital video.

What type of visual media will it let user incorporate?

Macromedia Director allows many different types of visual media to be incorporated. I will explore four types of media and its capabilities and limitations Director provides.(Andre Persidsky 97 – Director 6.5)

The four types are:

Text

Animation

Bitmaps and Vector grathics

Text

Director supports three different types of text that you can incorporate in your movies. These are bitmapped text, Rich text and field. Each type has it advantages. A summary has been given below.

Rich text (or otherwise known as simple text) is created using Directors text window, or with the text tool found on in the Tool palette. Of the three types, Rich text has the most extensive formatting controls. Unlike Bitmapped text, rich text can be edited after it has been created. The text window provides features of any ordinary word processor e.g Microsoft Word, offering definable tabs, margins, paragraph formatting, line spacing, and other controls we find in any word processing packages. Rich text can also be edited directly on the stage.(Andre Persidsky 97 –Director 6.5)

A Field Text is created with the Field tool in the Tool palette, or otherwise in the field window. The distinguishing feature of this can of text is it can be edited whilst a movie is being played. This is extremely useful if you making an interactive movie, where the users type in data to interact. This type of text should only be used if its absolutely necessary since they animate the slowest, and also require the same fonts be installed on the system that will be running your movie, which could be rather tricky.(Andre Persidsky 97 –Director 6.5)

Bitmapped text is created in directors paint window. You can apply all the effects and tools in the paint window to the bitmapped text, as you would to any bitmapped image in and paint package, e.g Paint. Bitmapped text animates the fastest, but one down side to this form of text is it cannot be edited after it is created. .(Andre Persidsky 97 –Director 6.5)

Animation

An animation is created in Director by one or more graphical casts members on the stage, and slightly changing the positions of these sprites in the successive frames of your movie. When the frames are played back at high speed, animation is created. Director provides several techniques for this process. One is called tweening. Tweening offers the most convenient and practical ways of animating, because Director creates for you frames automatically when you set key frames within your sprite. So to give business users a head start. (http://www.fbe.unsw.edu.au/Learning/Director/animation/tut7.htm)

Bitmap and vector graphics

Director allows you to import bitmap and vector graphics. Import facilities include Macromedia Flash support, which lets you work with vector graphics within Director. The Director movie you’re working on, and every cast member in the movie can have its own colour depth setting. When you import an image with a custom colour palette, Director offers you the choice of importing the palette, which can also be customised for your needs. Director also has tools of a normal paint package with facilities to flip the image, ink masks allowing certain parts of a cast transparent, auto distort to create in between images of art work that has been transformed with the skew, Warp, perspective, or the rotate command. Tools such as onion skinning allows you to create a new cast member whilst viewing one or more existing cast members as reference images which appear dimmed in the backround. Also like any conventional paint package you can alter paint brush size, adjust colour palette, tile and use different types of brushes in different sizes. (http://www.acm.org/crossroads/xrds65/macromedia.html)

Conclusion/ recommendations

Director 6.5 is an investment worth considering. Macromedia Director 6.5 is way to wow your audience with multimedia presentations.

Although Director is expensive, it does provide a complete environment for developing interactive training apps, animations, and dynamic Webware for almost any platform or medium. Macromedia enables professional Web developers to create engaging and effective next-generation Web sites. Professional Web developers, enterprises and dot com’s turn to Macromedia for its vision of comprehensive, integrated solutions that manage the full Web content lifecycle from content authoring, management, delivery and display to personalisation and analysis.

Macromedia solutions are used for everything from building personalised, real-time e-businesses for companies like Carlton Online, Virgin, LineOne and Sportal in the UK, to achieving new heights in online branding for international companies like Coca-Cola and Volkswagen. LineOne, the UK’s second-largest free ISP, turned to Macromedias Web analysis tool, Aria, to help it track and profile its thousands of users visiting its 30 different content areas, which was previously impossible.

(Julie Polito, , Oct 1998 v11 n10 p122(1) PC/Computing)

Macromedia Director allows you to incorporate different types of media (as outlined above), whilst dealing with wide range of file formats for these types of media. It also facilitates for on-screen adjustments allowing the media to also be placed wherever you desire on the screen(as outline above) Media editing can be done to a certain extent.

In the view of the author there is a need for editing packages such as adobe photoshop, Corel draw. If used with macromedia Director 6.5, then it will make a complete package to cater for all the needs of the business.

The author also recommends the use of Macromedia Director the latter versions 7 and 8 which include additional tools to take advantage of.

I conclude my report with a quote from a macromedia staff :

“Macromedia’s mission Is to provide software, solutions and technologies that realise what the Web can be, making it possible for companies all over the world to maximise their presence in this exciting medium and reap the benefits that the new economy has to offer.” Sue Thexton: ,macromedia.com

(Centaur Publishing Ltd))

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Director 6 visual quickstart guide for windows) Andre Persidsky 1997

http://www.macromedia.com/help/