

News Release

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MPEG & Web3D Complete MPEG-4 X3D Interactive Profile **International standard enables X3D-based 3D graphics in** **rich-media broadcast and network applications**

March 31, 2004 – Digital Hollywood, Santa Monica, California - The Web3D Consortium today announced that its X3D[®] Interactive Profile has been adopted by the Moving Picture Experts Group (MPEG) to bring state-of-the-art, X3D-based, interactive 3D graphics to the MPEG-4 multimedia standard. As a result of a cooperative joint development between MPEG and the Web3D Consortium, the X3D Interactive profile is now a part of the ISO/IEC 14496 specification that will formally become an International Standard in January 2005.

The Web3D Consortium's X3D specification, ISO/IEC standard 19775, defines multiple profiles to enable diverse markets with the need to communicate real-time 3D data. The X3D Interactive Profile provides a powerful 3D capability in a small footprint that enables 3D content to be delivered to wide range of platforms, including handheld devices and mobile phones, for applications such as entertainment, product and data visualization, electronic commerce, distance learning and interactive instructional and product manuals.

"Through working with MPEG to integrate advanced 3D capabilities into MPEG-4, the Web3D Consortium has created a significant market opportunity for the 3D industry and we strongly welcome our ongoing mutual cooperation," stated Neil Trevett, senior vice president at 3Dlabs and president of the Web3D Consortium. "X3D content is now interoperable across multiple standards and so is able to be communicated in a broad variety of web, broadcast and networked applications – further delivering on X3D's promise of enabling communication with real-time 3D across applications, networks and XML web services."

Standards produced by MPEG have created a global media industry worth billions of dollars and MPEG-4 is a toolkit for developing networked multimedia applications based on any combination of audio, video, 2D, and 3D content. It is widely supported by companies such as Apple, DivX, Microsoft, Real and many international telecommunication organizations. MPEG-4 is being deployed in products ranging from cell phones to set-top boxes and next generation DVD players. The integration of 3D capabilities into the MPEG-4 standard will enable many new and innovative applications such as interactive 3D training manuals playable on a consumer-level, MPEG-4 based, DVD player or 3D content integrated into broadcast programming.

"For convergence to happen in the market place it is necessary that standards organizations adapt their practices. This is what has happened between these two ISO groups – each the expert in their respective fields of 3D graphics and the integration of digital media," said Leonardo Chiariglione, MPEG convener. "The new X3D Interactive Profile from the Web3D Consortium, and now approved by MPEG, offers content developers the ability to flexibly offer rich media content with integrated 3D graphics on many diverse platforms."

Web3D and MPEG plan continued cooperate on initiatives such as the Animation Framework eXtension (AFX) which will evolve sophisticated 2D and 3D capabilities for the next version of MPEG-4, together with full multi-user capabilities. Graphics companies that wish to contribute to the development of Web3D standards for potential adoption by MPEG are invited to join the Web3D Consortium and participate in its open standardization process.

About X3D

X3D forms the technology foundation for the Consortium's market-focused standardization activities in the CAD, simulation and medical fields. X3D is a powerful and extensible open file format standard for 3D visual effects, behavioral modeling and interaction. It provides an XML-encoded scene graph and a language-neutral Scene Authoring Interface (SAI). The XML encoding enables 3D to be incorporated into web services architectures and distributed environments, and facilitates moving 3D data between applications. The SAI enable real time 3D content and controls to be easily integrated into a broad range of web and non-web applications. X3D browsers are shipping today from leading 3D browser companies including CRC, Media Machines, and Yumetech.

About the Web3D Consortium

The Web3D Consortium is a member-funded industry consortium committed to the creation and deployment of open, royalty-free standards that enable the communication of real-time 3D across applications, networks, and XML web services. The Consortium works closely with the ISO, MPEG and W3C standardization bodies to maximize market opportunities for its membership. All Consortium members are empowered to vote at various stages before public deployment, and are able to accelerate the delivery of their cutting-edge 3D platforms and applications through early access to specification drafts and conformance tests. More information on the Consortium and Consortium membership is available at www.web3d.org.

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