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next-generation vfx tools

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Spark Media Embraces Imagineer Systems' Planar Tracking Tools

mocha Brings High Tech Surveillance Command Center to Life in Upcoming Hollywood Release, Hidden Camera

GUILDFORD, UK (January 22, 2008) -- Spark Media (www.sparkmedia.com), a boutique visual effects company based in Burbank, California, took on the complicated task of completing 236 effects shots for the soon-to-be-released feature film, *Hidden Camera*. With the goal of keeping costs as low as possible while simultaneously delivering the highest quality composites, Spark Media turned to Imagineer Systems (www.imagineersystems.com) and **mocha** to track the numerous flat panel monitors used in crucial CIA surveillance room scenes.

In the scenes, the camera pans across a crowded CIA surveillance room, with agents buzzing about, while dozens of monitors depict a multitude of images, from moving satellite surveillance images to scrolling data across computer monitors. With obstructions, camera movement and monitors moving on and off screen, traditional point tracking solutions would not have been able to accurately four-point track the numerous screens required for this intense scene.

“Creating a believable, ultra-high tech surveillance room would have been close to impossible using After Effects’ built-in tracking capabilities,” said Paul Carlin, owner of Spark Media. “When you’ve got people and objects constantly moving across the frame blocking your track points, **mocha** becomes indispensable in creating believable tracking results.” Tracking data was copied and pasted into After Effects as either corner pin data or transform data.

“The ease of getting the tracking data from **mocha** to After Effects was definitely a time saver,” continued Carlin. “Time is not always available for these complicated jobs; that’s where a tool like **mocha** can save your hide.”

For Carlin, letting go of the traditional point tracking philosophy was not easy. “I’ve worked with point trackers all my life. It took some time to get used to the idea of planar tracking, but now I am a true believer. I preach the gospel of planar tracking to everyone I meet.”

Time was saved during shooting as well. Carlin continues, “I knew the power of planar tracking from previous experience and was able to save time during the film shoot by not wasting time on needless track markers. This saved me the trouble of having to remove them in post as well.”

mocha is a standalone 2D tracking tool with features that make the life of the effects compositing artist easier and less stressful. With **mocha's** advanced planar tracking technology, compositors can avoid the guesswork and inaccuracies that result from the painstaking and time-consuming process of hand tracking difficult shots. The process of generating solid 4-point tracks, giving position, scale, rotation, shear and perspective-matched tracks, is significantly accelerated by Imagineer's next generation tracking. Once the track is complete, **mocha** is designed to seamlessly export the data to the industry's most well known compositing and finishing packages such as Inferno, Flame, Flint, Smoke, Combustion, Avid DS, Quantel generationQ, After Effects, Shake and Digital Fusion, providing artists the freedom to finish shots in the compositing application with which they feel most comfortable.

Imagineer Systems' mocha is available immediately and is priced at \$2,995 for single node-locked licenses. For more information, please visit www.imagineersystems.com.

Hidden Camera was produced by DrimTim Entertainment and will be released in 2008 by Sony Pictures. You can watch clips from the job at www.sparkmedia.com.

About Imagineer Systems

Imagineer Systems Ltd innovates and markets next-generation visual effects solutions for film, video and broadcast post production and have made their mark on such marquis Hollywood blockbuster productions as Casino Royale, Pirates of the Caribbean and Harry Potter. Imagineer's product line consist of **monet**TM - placement station, **mokey**TM - removal station, **motor**TM - roto station, **mofex**TM - plug-in for Shake. Imagineer Systems was founded in 2000 and its headquarters is located in Guildford, United Kingdom. For more information visit www.imagineersystems.com.

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