

Key Features and Benefits

Autodesk® Softimage® 2012 software delivers innovative new creative toolsets, offers enhanced interoperability, and addresses emerging production demands to provide a powerful 3D toolset that extends the capabilities of existing content creation pipelines for today's demanding television, games, and film projects.

Building on the power and flexibility of the Interactive Creation Environment (ICE), Softimage 2012 introduces a new procedural modeling paradigm; adds integrated support for Syflex cloth using ICE and Lagoa Multiphysics simulations; and provides easier access to a wide range of effects and rendered looks. Moreover, with single-step interoperability and a more unified f-curve editor with other Autodesk® Entertainment Creation Suite Premium products; an extended software development kit (SDK); and added support for the Autodesk® Maya® 2012 software nCache format and Autodesk® FBX® 2012 asset exchange format, Softimage 2012 is more easily integrated into production pipelines. And, with support for vector displacement maps and new stereoscopic capabilities, Softimage 2012 embraces emerging technology to help meet the evolving challenges its customers face.

Top Features and Benefits

ICE Modeling

Softimage 2012 introduces a whole new way to model. Leveraging the power and flexibility of ICE, artists can create geometry based on a set of rules, conditions, and parameters. ICE procedural modeling facilitates topology operation creation, particle meshing, custom primitives, and geometry fracturing; its nondestructive nature means that UV attributes and certain other data are preserved during edits, helping eliminate the need for retexturing as changes are made. A single ICE graph can handle interactive edits to huge data sets such as forests and cities—so artists can more easily create and manage the extremely high levels of detail required by today's productions.

Enhanced Everyday Workflows

Overall productivity and ease of use are boosted in Softimage 2012, thanks to a wide range of small-scale enhancements to day-to-day workflows throughout the product. Adding up to a noticeably improved user experience, updates and improvements have been implemented across the board: the Explorer, Schematic View, Scene Layer Manager, Render Tree, Bone Primitive, Reference Models, and the Weight Editor have all received attention.

UV Unfolding

Save time and effort with new UV relaxing and pinning options, making it easier to conform to an existing image or to create a regular sized set of UVs.

Syflex on ICE

Now artists can use the power of ICE to achieve greater control and flexibility over Syflex cloth simulations. Leveraging the flexible node-based workflow of ICE, artists can create and edit highly-realistic cloth effects faster and more easily than before.

Lagoa Multiphysics

Plastic, liquid, soft-body, cloth, and foam-like effects are achievable in Softimage 2012, with new compounds that use the Lagoa Multiphysics framework developed by Lagoa Technologies. With Lagoa, artists can more easily create incompressible fluids, as well as inelastic, elastic, and plastic deformations.

ICE FX Builder

Create and modify sophisticated effects more quickly and easily, with the help of the new ICE FX Builder. A module menu toolbar provides a springboard into ICE for common workflows: for example, particle emission type can be set from a menu option, and the effect modified as required with just a few clicks. The ICE FX builder automatically connects compounds and nodes, enabling artists to modify or extend effects using the standard editing workflow.

Stereoscopic Support

Take advantage of the current trend for 3D films, with new tools for the creation of stereoscopic renderings. The tools feature both an in-viewport stereoscopic viewer offering a range of display modes, and a stereoscopic camera rig.

ICE Subframe Sampling

Calculate collisions more accurately in ICE simulations, especially for fast moving and deforming objects, with new support for subframe sampling on a per-object or per-point cloud basis.

Vector Displacement Map Support

With new support for Vector Displacement Maps (VDMs) in Softimage, artists can use mental ray[®] rendering technology to render complex high-resolution details created in Autodesk[®] Mudbox[™] 2012 software or certain other applications on low-resolution geometry. VDMs can represent directional displacements that do not simply follow the normal: for example, forms with appendages, undercuts, folds, and bulges, such as a human ear.

Other New Features

Autodesk Softimage 2012 software also has the following key features:

New ICE Compounds, Preset FX, Shaders, and Model Library

More easily create a wide range of effects and rendered looks in ICE with the help of new compounds, shaders, and pre-defined ICE FX that can be used “as-is”, or customized as required. Moreover, an ICE model library packages ICE FX, geometry, and animation to provide complete scene effects—for example, a burning candle, or a cigarette with smoke—with a single click.

mental ray 2012

Save time tweaking settings using the new simplified sampling controls for mental ray. This latest version also supports version 1.7 of the industry standard EXR format.

Polygonizer

Build liquid and blobby effects with the new Polygonizer toolset. Based on technology often referred to as “metaballs”, Polygonizer enables artists to create smooth polygon meshes over particles, other polygon meshes, curves, and nulls, and can be used in conjunction with the new ICE compounds.

SDK Enhancements and Events

Facilities large and small can now more easily customize and extend their tools and pipelines, with the exposure of more core Softimage services and events: Undo Bracketing, onCommand Events, and onRenderPass Events. In addition, technical directors (TDs) can now add menu items using new anchor points in the Animation Editor, Material Manager, Texture Editor, and Schematic View.

Softimage Composite

Incorporating features that draw upon the heritage of the Academy Award®-winning Autodesk® Flame® visual effects system, the high-performance, high dynamic range (HDR) Softimage® Composite toolset offers keying, tracking, color correction, raster and vector paint, rotoscoping, warping, advanced filters, a full 3D compositing environment, and tools that help support stereoscopic productions.

Maya nCache Support

More easily transport geometry and ICE simulations between Softimage and Maya 2012 software, with new support in Softimage for reading and writing the Maya nCache format. The Softimage attributes map to the channels within Maya, helping to facilitate data exchange.

MatchMover Professional Camera Tracking

Considered a critical production tool at leading visual effects facilities, Autodesk® MatchMover™ software enables artists to extract 3D camera and motion data from video and film sequences in order to insert CG elements into a live-action scene. MatchMover provides easy-to-use automatic tracking capabilities combined with the precision manual controls that professional artists demand.

Single-Step Suites Interoperability

More easily take advantage of the focused toolsets in the Autodesk® Entertainment Creation Suites Premium, with new single-step interoperability between Softimage and Maya, Autodesk® 3ds Max® software, and Mudbox. Export Softimage scene elements to Mudbox to intuitively add organic sculpted and painted details, and then update the scene in Softimage in one simple step. And use the power of the Softimage ICE particle system in your Maya or 3ds Max scene.

FBX 2012

Through support for the Autodesk® FBX® 2012 asset exchange technology, artists can transfer stereo camera rigs, vector displacement maps, multiple UVs, and subframe samples for icecache and PC2 in and out of Softimage, making it easier to safely pass production assets between products.

Consistent F-Curve Editor

Animators can more easily switch between multiple products in the Autodesk® Entertainment Creation Suites Premium thanks to an updated F-Curve Editor that provides a toolset that offers more consistent functionality and terminology for editing animation curves.

ViewCube Navigation

Common to a number of Autodesk 3D products, the ViewCube® navigation tool provides feedback about the current camera view in relation to the 3D scene, and enables artists to more quickly and easily switch between scene views.

For a complete review of the new features and enhancements in Autodesk Softimage 2012, view the “What’s New” documentation on the Softimage product center at www.autodesk.com/softimage-documentation.