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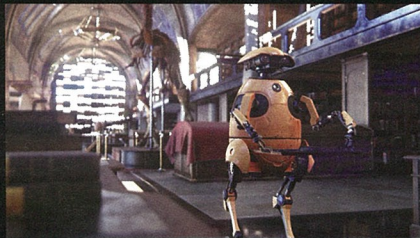
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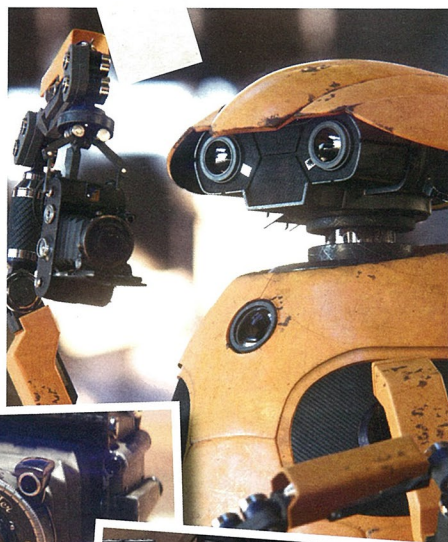


Silicon Studio strives to be the pioneer of technological and creative advancement for the digital entertainment industry.



GDC2015 Booth: #316

For more info about Silicon Studio, our range of middleware
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Rendering the future

Yebis, Paradox and Mizuchi: three products that Japanese tools firm Silicon Studio hopes will help it expand internationally. **James Batchelor** finds out more



Top to bottom: Silicon Studio's Colin Magne and Masaki Kawase want to introduce the firm's products to more Western studios

SILICON STUDIO IS best known as the provider of high-end graphics tech Yebis and developer of games like *Bravely Default*. Used to create stunning visuals, the team's middleware has attracted the attention of both games developers and Hollywood greats alike – but it is just one feather in the Japanese firm's cap.

The company is currently at work on the Paradox game engine, a project that became open source back in October. Over the last few months, Silicon Studio has been working on adding a scene editor, a physically-based rendering material editor and post-processing effects.

The new features are expected to be released as part of a new beta around GDC 2015, with the company going into more detail at the San Francisco conference. Crucially, these additions expand the scope of Paradox and who is able to use it.

"Most of the users at this point are still programmers, because Paradox is still under development," said Colin Magne, general manager of the firm's product department. "But now we're adding a lot of tools that will be useful to artists, game designers, level designers and so on.

"We've had some nice feedback from programmers because it's basically C# but we have an architecture that is completely flexible and gives access to lower levels of the engine, so they really feel they have the power to program anything they want."

Silicon Studio is also due to reveal more about Mizuchi, its new real-time graphics middleware and rendering engine. Combining the movie-quality post-effects of Yebis 3 with physically-based rendering,

high-resolution materials and more, the firm is confident Mizuchi plugs a significant gap in its home market.

"If you look at Japan, a lot of people have their own game engines but there aren't many high-end rendering engines," lead software engineer Masaki Kawase explains.

"We're really looking to push our tech out this year: Europe, North America and beyond."

Colin Magne, Silicon Studio

"We have a high-end rendering engine you can slip into place of whatever you have at the moment. And it's more advanced than what some already have."

So far, only a video demo has been seen, but Mizuchi is already turning heads.

"A lot of games companies from around the world are all of a sudden aware of the existence of our technology, and they're interested in it," says Kawase. "It adds some elements that some people have never seen before. It was a bit of a buzz for us and we're feeling pretty positive about it."

THE THIRD COMING

Released back in August, Silicon Studio's flagship product Yebis 3 continues to be a major investment. Recently added features include optical vignetting physical simulation, diaphragm physical simulation, and bokeh chromatic aberration.

In fact, the way Yebis handles bokeh – the quality of out-of-focus light in a scene – is a particular highlight. Silicon Studio claims that by simulating lens elements and structure, its tech is able to produce a bokeh quality similar to that of a real photograph.

"We've had lots of very good feedback – and not just from games developers," says Kawase. "We've also had positive comments from other industries that have been using it for things like video production. And we can only make Yebis stronger, because we're going to add more features and improve on the current ones."

This trio of high-end technology form the central pillars to the plans for 2015 at Silicon Studio's product department. With plenty of satisfied customers in its home territory, the company hopes to form partnerships with more Western developers and other industries.

"Until now, we've had a very limited approach to the international market," Magne says. "Obviously, we've tried to make sure we have a strong foundation in Japan before we go elsewhere too much. But now we really feel that we've reached the point where we are strong in Japan with a lot of users, and launching things like Mizuchi helps us to move forward."

"So with the feedback and interest we've had globally, we're really looking to push out this year: Europe, North America and beyond."

And the first stop is GDC in San Francisco. You can find Silicon Studio at booth 316 in the GDC Expo, or find more information by contacting pr@siliconstudio.co.jp or visiting www.siliconstudio.co.jp. ■