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New Methods of delivery-And when to use them.

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Learning Objectives

- Learn how to analyze client needs and identify best technology
- Learn how to discuss with client's advantages and disadvantages of new trends
- Find new use cases for emerging technologies
- Discover a variety of uses for new technologies

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Description

Whether we use a pencil or the latest technology, as digital artists we still need to develop creative to give our clients an advantage over the competition. Clients sell the same product to the same clientele—how do we help them differentiate? We have technology converging in many ways (architectural visualization, video games, real time)—how do we find the best way to make use of this convergence? Ultimately, as a creative agency or architectural visualization firm, we need to look for ways to show off products and environments that are visually more compelling so that they become the catalyst of this differentiation. Products such as 3ds Max, Maya, NVIDIA mental ray, Revit, AutoCAD, and new emerging real-time technologies like Showcase and Stingray help with this problem, but that’s just the beginning. In this roundtable we will talk about why we follow these trends and where these new technologies will bring us. Is it all a fad? Will we find a real practical use other than entertainment? Will our clients end up showing us the way?

Your AU Experts

Carlos Cristerna: With Neoscape, Inc., since 2005, Carlos Cristerna leads the studio’s 3D Visualization Teams. As visualization director, Carlos oversees Neoscape’s digital artists, constantly pushing technological, creative, and artistic limits to achieve the most beautiful and powerful work possible. His decade of experience encompasses everything from architecture, design, photography, and film, and provides him with an enviable skill set that makes him an oft-sought-after industry panelist and finalist for multiple architectural illustration awards annually. Carlos was recently elected president of the American Society of Architectural Illustrators (ASAI). Carlos received the ASAI Award of Excellence in 2009, and in 2010 his work was recognized with the ASAI Formal Award. Carlos graduated with a bachelor of architecture from the Universidad Autonoma de Sinaloa, Mexico.

Lon Grohs: Is an award-winning visual artist and founder of Chaos Group Labs. Formerly Creative Director and a principal at Neoscape, Lon oversaw the studio’s visualization teams on multiple projects worldwide. Understanding the challenges faced by designers every day, Lon joined Chaos Group in 2011 with a passion to push technology to aid artistry and design. Chaos Group Labs has become a think tank for research and development, evolving the capabilities of GPU rendering, massively parallel rendering in the cloud, and new advances in VR. The newest initiative of Chaos Group Labs, the Digital Design League, has been established to focus directly on how technology can benefit design and its impact on society

How to analyze client needs and identify the best technology

Who is your client?

Whether your client is an architect, developer, marketing expert or broker, they all will come to you for a solution. Finding out what that solution is – that is the trick. Sometimes a client will come and tell you what they need, and sometimes they are correct, but most times they are wrong (even though the client is always right. Right?). But before we get into judging and making assumptions which will inevitably lead to a bad outcome and a short relationship first and foremost, we need to understand who they are and where they come from.

Your client

Understanding your client is an integral part of deciding what solutions you will offer them. Ask yourself: Who are they? What is their history? Look into previous work they have done, failures and accomplishments; we need to dive into their way of thinking. This is the only way we will be able to put ourselves in their shoes and be capable of seeing the world as they do. Without this first step, we would not be able to understand their goals and motivation to come to you.

Your client's audience

Before we race to offer solutions, another part of the equation is to understand the audience. Are they a broker? Is it the end user? Young? Old? Ethnicity? Income? Culture? Are we doing work in another country? (The Middle East and Asia are great examples of how what we sell here is not the best solution, expectations are different as well). Is it local?

Their goals

Once we have gone through this back story and philosophical learning experience, we hope that we have a good understanding of who our client and their audience is. It's time we think of why they asked for 30 renderings, a marketing campaign, an iPad app, lots of lens flares with moody renderings, hot air balloons and yes, birds in the sky. Not to mention their curiosity for Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Real Time experience and all the "new" things that will make their product shine above the competition.

Only then we will be able to get a glimpse at who they are and where they come from. Hopefully we will be able to either agree with them, elaborate or propose something completely different that is based on facts, figures and ways of thinking that they will relate to and understand.

Does your client know what they need?

"The client is always right." This statement is in fact true (especially since they are the ones paying for the product), but they only know what they know, just as we do. So, this is where the relationship becomes a collaboration. You learn from them, and they learn from you. What I have learned over the years is that being complacent and thinking that you already know a client and their needs will make you lose them. They almost always have an IDEA of what they need, but the truth is that they are looking for something new ALL THE TIME, and it is our duty to always look back to UNDERSTANDING and EXPLORING to be able to help our client INNOVATE.

Want vs Need

The always fun "want vs. need." I want an awesome car; a lot of people seem to be driving them, so why not me? But what I really need is ANY car that can take me from point A to point B. Do I need to do this with style? Am I going to be driving alone? I am trying to impress anyone? Do I have cargo? You get the

point. It is important to identify what a client wants vs. needs. Realistically assess (Want+Need-Budget=always awesome result, no matter what) those factors so you can advise on the best solution.

How to talk to your client about our advice being the one to follow.

So, can we always deliver "awesome results, no matter what"? I would say realistically no, but we can always attempt to achieve that 100% of the time, and that will always make the difference. After doing all of this we will be able to advise on whether or not you really need the 30 images, the iPad app, the Virtual reality tour etc.

Discuss with clients advantages and disadvantages of “new trends”

Define “new trends”

After we have decided what to use, and IF we end up using what a client perceives as a “new trend,” we have to educate our clients on what these new trends are. What they do they do? Do they accomplish anything for them? Are they novelty only? We need to give them a bit of history about the technique and discuss the advantages and disadvantages. Before we talk about "new trends" we need to go back in time and try to understand the evolution of techniques we now take for granted.

We need to go back a bit

When we think about new trends, technologies or techniques we need to think about the history of what we take for granted now, how did it evolve into something useful? From Novelty to entertainment to educational tool to commercial and art form.

Example 01: Architectural illustration / Renderings

An ancient art form, considered that for hundreds of years, became an invaluable tool for visualizing complex ideas, conveying size, color, mood etc. Fast forward to the 80s, and 3D technology was starting to become something of a mainstream technology, and so the cycle began (Novelty, Educational, Commercial to Art form). It took us a while to go through the cycle. Some people saw it as a “wow” technique. No one questioned your choice of furniture or your time of day—we were all amazed by it. But as with any new technology, there were the naysayers: the people who couldn’t see the potential or felt threatened by it, shot it down to just a soulless technique and not an art form, a fad. Then as it evolved, it became abused, tried and tossed around many times. There was a race to render more and faster. We did countless lens flares, hot air balloons, birds and joined the quest to replicate photography and physically accurate lighting.

As a result, we got some of the best and some of the worst possible looking illustrations in its history, BUT we evolved and learned what was important and what was not. Today there is no question about the commercial value of this technique, and it’s no longer looked down to upon by “traditional” artists. There are schools for it; it’s accepted and became art again. We understood what it was meant to do.



Example 02: iPad

This one is fun, the iPad on its own is just a big iPod touch or iPhone without the phone. On its own, it is not much more than a television you can carry around with you. The real value of a device like the iPad comes from what it CAN or CAN'T do—and that is defined by the programmer and its users. (Understand your client and target audience.) The content and how it's delivered makes the difference.

Example 03: Film

Film is another great example of a new tech or trend that appeared a while back. We had photography but not moving photography. This new “voodoo” comes in, and what do we do? Well, we don't know how to use it so we start experimenting with this novelty, filming random stuff and being amazed by it. The problem was that people were not thinking outside the box; they were trying to use a new tool to do something familiar: theater. They were filming a one shot play from the audience's point of view until we started creating screenplays and editing. Still telling stories, but in a different way, film evolved from novelty to educational to commercial to art form.

VR, AR, RT

So, here we are, at the odd phase of discovery, of overdoing, of the lens flares and the hot air balloons. We are again trying to Film Theater (Nils Norgren). We need to think outside the box. What the hell are we going to do about this? How is this useful? Is not even new!!!! Is this just a bunch of old technologies that are converging and giving us the opportunity to create something new and meaningful?

Discover a variety of uses for new technologies**Entertainment is the starting point (Storytelling)**

In my personal opinion, all of these trends, techniques and tools have gone through this evolution and invariably they all start by achieving a very simple need, to be entertained. It's clear the new technologies have been around for decades: video games, flight simulators, medical research, automobile design, aerospace industry, etc. These industries have the capital and motivation to use them in a practical way beyond entertainment for training, experiencing situations otherwise difficult to replicate, for efficient design, for profit.

Why did these industries use these technologies?

These industries had the capital and motivation to use them in a practical way that went beyond entertainment—for training, for efficient design, for a profit—not just economical, but intellectual as well.

What can we learn from these industries?

Just like with our clients we will need to dig deeper into why they used the technology. It's cheaper, reduces the risk of dangerous and otherwise complex situations to replicate, and it WILL pay off.



Find new use cases for emerging technologies

We are in the “Over doing phase”

The good news is that we are already shooting in so many different directions, and there are many huge companies trying to get to the mass market, to the consumer. There is the Oculus, HTC, Samsung, Microsoft, Google etc. etc. etc.

We need to explore as much as possible, use the technology in as many ways as we can to find the use that goes beyond entertainment, a use that can be capitalized on in our industry (AEC and Marketing). A use that our clients and our client’s clients will say “I need this because my goals require it,” not just because it is a new trend or fad.

Let’s find a practical use, go beyond Art and Fun for the masses.

Medical and Mental (phobias, social anxiety, PTSD)

Surgery training simulator

NGO’s fundraising/Charities

Immersive therapy

Sports training

Virtual Education (remote class)

Artists and creators/design

AEC

Research

Telepresence

Remote work

Motor dexterity

Ancient Tourism

Old memories and friends/recorded meetings?

Storytelling (entertainment)

