

Autodesk Games Insight

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"Titles like *WET* are getting a lot closer to interactive films at this point, and the quality of the content is more important than ever. So if we can optimize our pipelines to enable more iterations at a faster pace, then we're ahead of the game. Tools like Maya, MotionBuilder and Kynapse help us get there"

— Martin Walker
Chief Technology Officer
Artificial Mind and Movement

WET: A2M Uses Autodesk Creative Tools and Middleware

Montreal-based game developer Artificial Mind and Movement (A2M) is best known for developing family-friendly games and licensed titles like *Iron Man* and *Indiana Jones*. So when it came time for their first foray into mature gaming – for them to make their mark – they knew it would have to set a new standard in both game play mechanics and in look and feel.

WET centers on Rubi, a feisty problem fixer trying to figure out who double-crossed her and why. It is a third-person shooter with a unique mix of acrobatics and swordplay. The game's dual-targeting system lets players control one of Rubi's weapons and auto-targets the other. Rubi can aim and shoot in different directions while doing complex acrobatic moves. Players are rewarded for making Rubi jump off the walls, shoot down ladders, stay in the air and be as acrobatic as possible.

WET was written by Duppy Demetrius and Rubi was voiced by actress Eliza Dushku (Dollhouse, Buffy the Vampire Slayer). *WET*'s gritty look and feel can be compared to such films as *Kill Bill*, *Desperado* and *Sin City*, with a clever use of photoreal 3D and stylized graphic novel-type visuals. In key moments Rubi goes into "Rage Mode", giving players an entirely different experience. Rubi becomes faster and stronger, and the graphics transform to a minimalist color palette with enemies in contrasting colors.

With a staff of 500 working on as many as a dozen projects a year, A2M needed to standardize and streamline several key development processes with reliable, off-the-shelf tools. To do so A2M used Autodesk® Maya® and Autodesk® MotionBuilder® software to build the game characters and levels for *WET*. Autodesk® Kynapse® middleware was used to implement the artificial intelligence (AI) that drives the game's non-playable characters.

Using Kynapse AI middleware helped A2M focus its development efforts on the creative look and feel of the game and high-level game-play interactions, rather than on the time-consuming process of path-finding and location awareness.

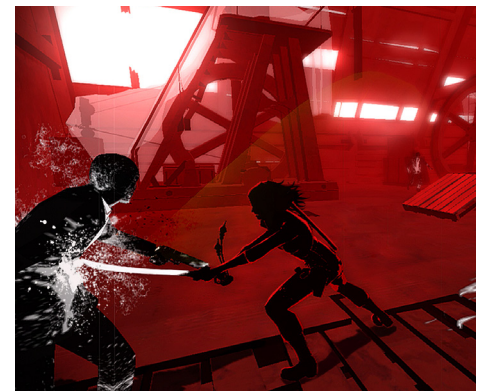
"Our main philosophy with regards to development tools has always been – if it's good and it already exists with the right price tag, why reinvent it? That's why we chose to work with Kynapse as our AI engine for *WET*. In the game, the player confronts a large number of enemies. We needed a path finding and location awareness system to control decision-making for these characters in a coherent manner," explained Martin Walker, CTO, A2M. "Kynapse has a fantastic hide-and-shoot algorithm that was used to conceal and disperse the enemies in a natural way throughout environments."

MotionBuilder was used to enhance motion-captured sequences, helping A2M experiment with character movement. "We used MotionBuilder extensively to clean

up motion capture data for *WET*," said Walker. "Also, when we did our mo-cap, we weren't sure which villain would take on which moves. With MotionBuilder, we were able to retarget motion data onto different characters even if the skeletal data wasn't necessarily a perfect match."

WET is A2M's first mature AAA game title. "Titles like *WET* are almost interactive films at this point, and the quality of the content is more important than ever. So if we can optimize our pipelines to enable more iterations at a faster pace, then we're ahead of the game. Tools like Maya, MotionBuilder and Kynapse help us get there," concluded Walker.

For more information on Autodesk games software and middleware please visit www.autodesk.com/games.



"Rage Mode" stylized combat in A2M's *WET*.

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