

New application Google Streetview camera

yellowBird presents revolution in the film world

AMSTERDAM 17 April 2009 – Feature films, documentaries, and commercials are likely to have a completely different look from today. Ingenious technology facilitates a more intense experience – as if you are actually between the actors, swing along during a pop concert, or float above the rain forest. That is the new revolutionary application that is launched today by Dutch company yellowBird. The launch takes place during the international Next Web Conference in Amsterdam – the place where Hyves made its debut and where the organization ranks yellowBird as one of the “companies that will rock the web in 2009”.

Total Immersion

By using a Google Streetview-like camera, a system with six lenses, not as a photo but as a video camera, an all-encompassing picture is captured. This 3-D video can then be played online on any computer. An example can be found on the yellowBird website at www.yb.nl. The viewer will experience total immersion in a film, an event, or a special environment. From the point where the images were recorded, the viewer can look in any direction, let his eyes wander through the crowd, or stare at the ground or the air, which makes viewing a video an experience without boundaries.

New Dimension

‘The viewer becomes the Director, who can choose what he wants to see from his position’, says co-founder Rafaël Redczus of Groningen-based yellowBird. He started working on this technology almost 10 years ago, but now all the pieces of the jigsaw are in place. ‘Nearly everyone has a powerful computer in combination with a broadband connection. Furthermore, Adobe Flash is now standard on every computer. The latest versions of that technology provide optimum support for online film and interactive 3-D functionality.

There are unbelievable opportunities for this new dimension in online experiences. Film producers can use it for their trailers on the Internet, city marketers can use it to attract tourists, dance events become virtually physically accessible for millions of visitors, documentaries and sports events become probing experiences, whilst this technology will bring about a revolution in the world of advertising. Redczus comments ‘Advertisers are looking more and more to the Internet. This offers them unrivalled opportunities to present themselves.’ Websites, blogs, and PowerPoint presentations will attract even more hits with interactive 3-D films.

A First

According to Marc Groothelm, Managing Director of yellowBird, they are still the only company in the world that makes this concept accessible and available to businesses. It starts by making recordings with the camera, which is either in a fixed location or ‘floating’ above the head of a cameraman moving through a crowd or driving on the road. Then these images need to be stitched into one stream, which is a process that requires lengthy calculations by extremely powerful computers. Finally they make the yellowBird player available, which, like the YouTube player, uses Flash technology to play the images completely interactively. Individual users can even simultaneously select different viewing directions.

Due to the cooperation with the company Jet-Stream, yellowBird has very powerful hosting servers with ultrafast connections. The server capacity is expanded real time in line with the demand, which means that thousands of viewers worldwide could view the same streaming 3-D image interactively at the same time.

Challenge

This development is posing stiff challenges to the film industry – on the one hand it provides the opportunity to offer cinema-goers an even more intense experience, but on the other it is a threat as the competitive power of this technology is extremely strong compared to what a cinema screen offers. Perhaps it will spell the end of the classic movie, where a Director and an Editor determine how the viewer will experience the film. With yellowBird the viewer decides.