



Random Access

AV VIDEO MULTIMEDIA Producer

Interactive Marketing

Cadillac DVD-ROM Puts Shoppers in Driver's Seat

Using motion-control cameras and high-end computer graphics, Edgeworx, a New York production company, has created a DVD-ROM that promotes Cadillac's new SUV, the Escalade. The disc, which contains a 3D interactive game and advertising, was produced for Clarion Marketing and its client, Cadillac Motors. The content on the disc integrates 35mm film and 24P

the marketing disc takes users through a series of surreal environments that were composed using a combination of live action photographs and computer generated elements.

"One of the biggest challenges was figuring out a way to deliver 10 minutes of computer graphics that looked as realistic as possible in just three months," says John Bair, senior designer



Dean Cundy, cinematographer (left), and Kief Davidson, director, shooting the Escalade for the DVD-ROM.

high-definition live-action footage that was shot using the Bulldog II motion control camera, made by Image G. The shots were processed and composited with Adobe After Effects 5.0 and Discreet's 3ds max.

Written by Kevin Mack, a freelance writer, and Kief Davidson, director and executive producer,

and effects supervisor. The product had to be finished in time to coincide with the May launch of Cadillac's 2001 Escalade marketing campaign.

Edgeworx had only three months to create a project that could have easily taken twice as long if the company had used

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Users of the 10-minute interactive program navigate the vehicle through a city landscape.

traditional techniques, such as ray-tracing. Davidson had to

needed eight to 10 minutes for each computer graphic, plus time to map blueprints of all objects and environments seen in the video; rendering time with the CD; time for resolution tests; and overlapping design testing.

The project could have taken twice as long if the producers had used traditional techniques.

Trying Before Buying

The disc contains a 10 minute interactive program that lets the user enjoy role-playing while learning about the new Escalade. For example, in a 40 second sequence, the truck drives through a city landscape and arrives at a roadblock of crystals. The player must then use the tool-bar to find the fog lights, which are a

bring in an extra crew of seven 3D specialists and five Adobe After Effects experts. In all, they



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feature that Cadillac wanted to emphasize on the new Escalade. The user then has to flash the lights in order to clear the road.

Equipment that was used to complete the shoots more quickly included the Bulldog II motion-control rig controlled by Kuper Software. "Motion control

ery camera move controlled by the Bulldog II rig and captured matte passes for every scene."

The project stands out from the usual marketing piece, its producers say. "Nothing like this has ever been done," says Bair. "Projects like this are usually on the real low end or extreme high

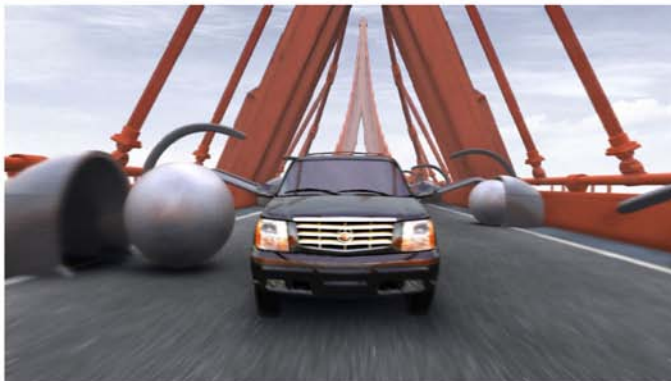


The producers could not use a blue or green screen because the car would have picked up the reflections.

allowed us to do three days of photography on a vehicle with each and every move programmed into the computer," says Davidson. "On the fourth and final day of the shoot, we covered the car with black peel paint and filled the background with white, effectively creating an image to

end – never for advertising."

The package was sent to 500,000 people, as a direct-mail piece. Cadillac felt that using a game to market its new vehicle was ideal, because it can hold a player's attention for an extended period. The game is score based, so it challenges users to



matte with during compositing. Shooting green screen or blue screen would not have worked, because of the reflections that the shiny black car would have picked up. We then re-shot ev-

play longer. Users achieving high scores can win one of an assortment of prizes such as a new Escalade or a Harley Davidson motorcycle.

-Sean Weiner