



Image courtesy of Constructive Media

The future of real estate marketing: Constructive Media delivers visual solutions using Autodesk 3ds Max

Building construction today is reliant on the ability of architects and designers to gain project development approvals and then successfully market their space to buyers. Both requirements increasingly involve the use of visualisation techniques to communicate ideas to each audience and one Western Australian company is revelling in the new found discipline.

Perth-based Constructive Media was launched two years ago to create 3D visuals for the architectural, building, and construction industries. "Most of our visualisation is of pre-construction images and animations of proposed multi-storey, mixed-use commercial and residential properties," said Constructive Media Owner Darren Kam.

"We outgrew a previous business and realised we needed more sophisticated software to keep up with client demands for more detailed images. Everyone is aware that creating virtual buildings is possible and they now want more realistic shadows and lighting and higher resolution images so they can see more detail in the buildings."

The company tried several software packages, but soon outgrew their technical restrictions and moved to Autodesk® VIZ software before adopting Autodesk® 3ds Max® company wide.

"We chose 3ds Max because it was an industry standard, so we knew it had a support base and there would be skilled VIZ people we could hire if we needed more staff. 3ds Max also had all the features we were looking for such as network rendering capabilities, together with its extensibility through the use of plugins," explained Kam.

"A bonus of the move was that we overestimated the time it would take to learn to use the features of 3ds Max. Because we had been heavily involved with Viz before we were able to get up to speed very quickly using the in box tutorials."



Image courtesy of Constructive Media

To produce the higher quality, detailed models, Constructive Media matched the 3ds Max V-ray plug-in from the Chaos Group to a small render farm to handle distributed rendering. “We now have plans to add 12 dual core processors into the render farm to achieve our goal of faster turnaround times for animations and even faster turnaround times for individual images.”

Constructive Media is now busy producing a range of images for an expanding client base. The client’s CAD data is imported as DXF files into 3ds Max for the creation of high-resolution 3D models. The models then become the source of a wide variety of marketing and promotional solutions to promote commercial and residential property developments. These include 3D animations, web sites, interactive programs, street signage, brochures, broadcast-quality video, and high-resolution print images.

“Once we get the CAD information together with a list of colours, materials, and design specifications in 3ds Max we can quickly export it as QuickTime or AVI files or whatever the client needs,” said Kam. “Our images and animations enable everyone involved with the building to see what it is going to look like—from advertising agencies to the construction workers.”

“City Councils are now specifying that applicants need to show some form of visual images before any development can go ahead so we can supply them prints. And of course our models are used as a design tool to help architects and designers as well. We have helped pick up problems such as small stairwells which would only have shown up in construction.”

Shayne Le Roy Design

Shayne Le Roy Design provides an architecture design service where clients have the flexibility to achieve their dream home by having constant input in the design process. By working closely with Constructive Media clients move from 2D floor plans and elevation drawings to a set of 3D exterior and interior visuals of what they can expect to see on completion.

“Because we are working in a CAD-based environment, changes to the 3D CG model are quick and easy—something not possible with traditional watercolour perspectives,” said Kam. “The ability for change also enables Shayne to use Constructive Media as a design/reference tool—he can request changes and we can provide him with comparison images to discuss with his client.”

Devwest Group

The Devwest Group is a property development group specialising in unique high-rise residential/commercial projects for syndicates and individual clients. Working in conjunction with architects, Constructive Media creates massing models (3D CG models of a development and its surroundings), rendered in white, to represent the structure free of colours and textures.

This enables the architect and clients to visualise the overall impact of the development on its environment. These visuals are upgraded with constant feedback from the architect to incorporate finishes such as feature stonework, facebrick, cedar-lined eaves, etc.

“It is easy for us to visit suppliers to scan in samples of their products,” said Kam. “We work closely with interior designers like Jodie Cooper to illustrate colours and texture options for everything from leather couches to shag rugs—we take digital photos and scans then recreate their look and feel using bump mapping or displacement mapping in 3ds Max.”

A successful example of this process is the creation of multiple interior colour schemes in 3D, allowing interstate and overseas investors to visualise what their unit will look like. Visitors can log on to the Devwest web site (also maintained by Constructive Media), select an available apartment, select its colour scheme, and make an investment decision.

For more information on Constructive Media, please visit www.constructivemedia.com.au.