MetaCreations LogoMotion 2.1 Tips and Techniques

The Easiest Way to Create Amazing 3D Animation

Make a Fast, Easy Flying Logo

With LogoMotion it is so easy to produce a flying logo. Make one for your company and get a Promotion!

In the Text Dialog, type in any text, choose a font and a bevel, and just like that a 3D object will be created.

StageHands help speed up the process of producing animations. You can quickly select from a collection of pre-made cameras, lights, 3D objects, and backdrop images.

Impress all your friends and co-workers with your new 3D animation skills!!!

Here's an easy way to make your first animated flying logo. All your friends will think it took you hours.

1. Create 3D Text
Create some text by choosing the Text Tool on the Toolbar (button whose icon looks like a "T") and clicking on the Camera View Window. In the dialog, type in your name, choose a font, select a bevel, and click "OK." Just like that, your name will appear in 3D!

Use the "Move" tool from the Tool Palette to center your newly created 3D text in the Camera Window.

2. Apply a Surface
In the Surfaces Panel, select a surface that you like and simply drag it from the bin and drop it onto your text. To see the surface, select the Rendering panel and choose Fast from the choice of shading modes on the "Quality" pop-up.

3. Add a Background
Here's where using LogoMotion gets really fun. Go into the StageHands Panel and click on the Backdrops button. You'll notice the preview window on the panel shows the background currently selected in the bin. Find an image that you like and – that's right! – just drag it into your scene.

4. Now For a Prop
While in the StageHands Panel, click on the Props button. Once again use the preview window and the bin on the panel to find a cool prop that you like. When you find one, drag it into your scene. To see a bounding box preview of your animation, choose Preview from the Animate menu.

5. Make it Fly!
Click on the Camera button in the StageHands Panel. Just drag the desired camera into your scene and *Pow!* Your text is animated. Choose Preveiw from the Animate menu again. Pretty cool, eh?

6. Make a Movie
Choose "Make Movie" from the File menu. When the "Render Setup" dialog box appears, click on "Render." Give the movie a name and save it on the desktop. LogoMotion will take a few minutes to render your movie, so take a short break. Once it's finished, you can view the movie by double-clicking on its file icon on the desktop.

7. Amaze Your Friends and Co-Workers!
Once your movie is finished rendering, it is ready for use in any application that accepts moviessuch as Adobe Premiere or Macromedia Director. To simply watch your movie, double-click on its icon on the desktop. A standard movie player will automatically run and play the movie.

How to Make Exploding Letters

Here's something cool you can't do in a 2D graphics program!

Create 3D text with the Text Tool. Break the text into characters and link the letters to an invisible parent object.
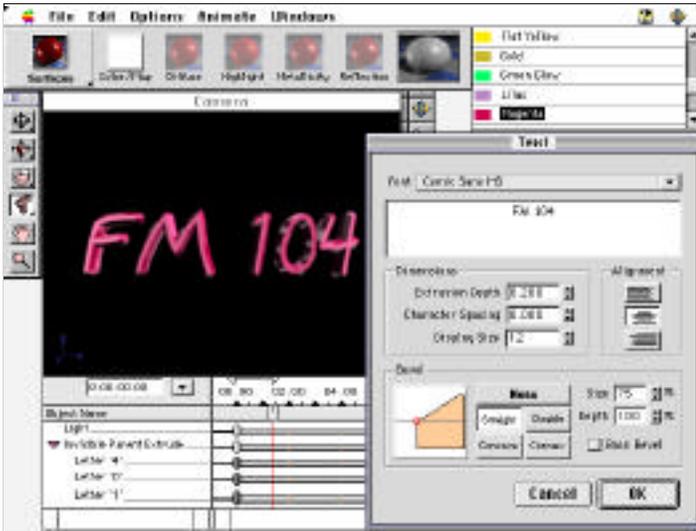
After moving the World Time Marker on the Animation Sequencer ahead one second, move the positions of each item in the scene.
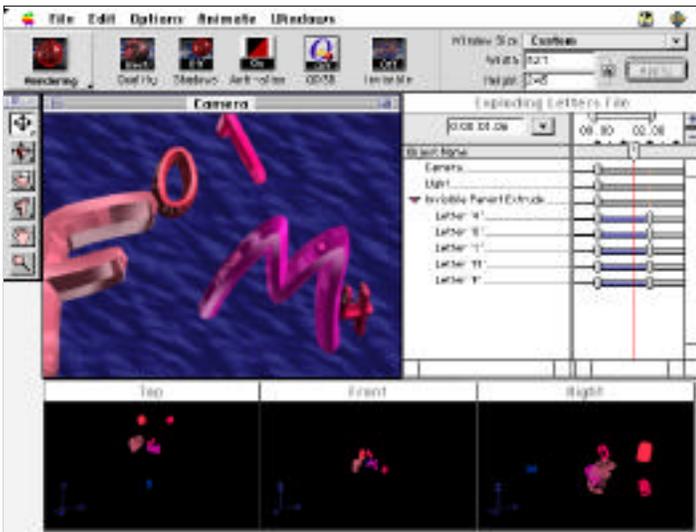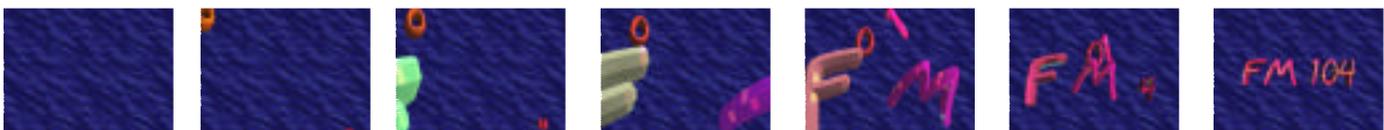
Here's a quick tip for creating the effect of your logo exploding or flying together.

1. Create 3D Text
Create some text using the Text Tool on the Toolbar (button whose icon looks like a "T"). Choose a font and give it a bevel.

2. Break Into Characters
With the word selected, choose "Break into Characters" under the Options menu. This process separates the text object into individual letters, where all letters are "children" of the first character (or in this case the "F").

If you want, apply a new surface to each of the letters using the Surface Panel (Command-2 on Mac or Control-2 on Windows) to drag & drop a desired surface.

3. Link Characters to an Invisible Parent Object
Sometimes animators use an invisible parent object when animating several objects that move in relation to each other. With the invisible parent, the objects can be moved all at once without destroying their individual motion. In fact, most of the StageHands produced by MetaCreations have invisible parent objects for this purpose.

4. Move the World Time Marker and Animate
In LogoMotion, animations are produced by moving the World Time Marker (the gray pointer with the red line coming out of it on the Animation Sequencer) to a different point on the time line.

Move the World Time Marker to one second. Now, move each letter to a different spot in the world. A blue line will be created between the object's eventmarks on the Sequencer when you move the object to a new spot in the scene.

To position the characters, it helps to use both the Top View and the Right View. These views can be opened under the Windows menu.

Choosing "Preview" from the Animate menu will display a bounding box preview of your animation in whatever view is selected.

5. Reverse the Animation
If you leave the animation as is, your text will look like it's exploding. To make it look like the letters are flying together, simply drag each letter's far-left eventmark on the Animation Sequencer to the 2-second point. Then move the other eventmark of that same object to the zero-second point. Instantly your animation is reversed!

Example of characters flying together to form a word:

Importing Complex Models

Disney spent millions of dollars producing the movie Toy Story. Heck... someone should have told them about LogoMotion!

Bring DXF or 3DMF Models into LogoMotion by selecting Import Objects under the File menu. Once the model is imported, use the Animation Sequencer to reorder the linking of each object.

With the Surface Panel, apply new surfaces to each object.

You're now set to create a whole animation with her as your star!

Not only does LogoMotion supply its own modeling tools, but it also allows you to import models from other 3D programs!

This feature can be perfect for situations when you need a complex model, but don't have the time or ability to create it yourself.

This example shows how to import a DXF model of a little girl. Models saved in the 3DMF file format may also be imported into LogoMotion.

1. Import a DXF file
Select Import Objects under the File menu. Use the dialog that comes up to find the 'Little Girl.dxf' file, found in the DXF Importing Example folder in the Tips & Tricks folder on the LogoMotion 2.1 CD-ROM. Make sure the File Type to Import is set to "DXF" instead of "3DMF." After hitting Open, choose "Best Guess" in the DXF Options dialg and import the model.

2. Reorder Object Hierarchy
Now relink the objects in the Animation Sequencer into a series of child/parent relationships. This will help later on when you animate the little girl.

on the hierarchy) move in relation with their parent. Thus, when linked properly, the girl's left thumb will move with the left hand, the left hand with the left arm, the left arm with her upper torso, and so on.

Check out the sample LogoMotion file "Little Girl (LM file)" in the DXF Importing Example file of the Tips & Techniques folder on the LogoMotion 2.1 Deluxe CD.

3. Apply Surfaces to Objects
By default, all DXF models brought into LogoMotion will be assigned a default chrome surface. Unless you're making another sequel to the *Terminator* movies, you probably will want to apply different surfaces that are more natural for her. Use the Surface Panel (Command-2 on Mac, Control-2 on Windows) to create these surfaces and then drag & drop them onto the objects in your scene.

Child objects (items lower

Sophisticated Flying Logo, Part I

Hey, why should the major studios have all the fun? It's easy to create a slick flying logo with LogoMotion 2.0!

After breaking text into characters, re-link the individual letters in the Animation Sequencer. Make the letters fall on a curved path by entering numerical values into the Object Information Panel Mode.
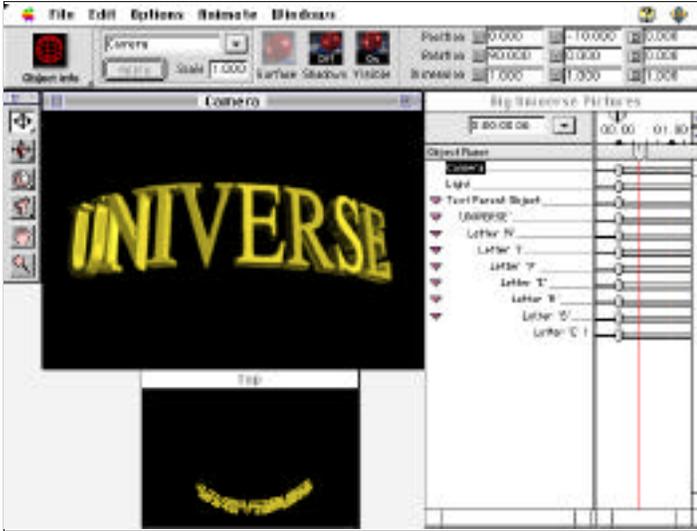
Create more text with the Text Tool, then link all the objects to an invisible parent object .
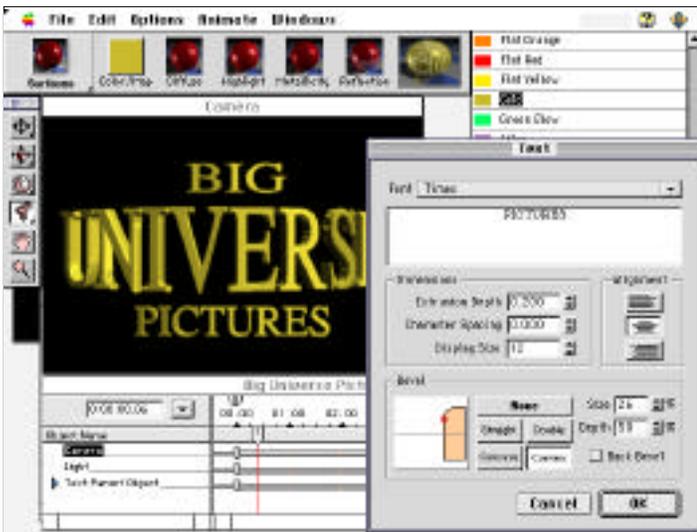
This example shows how to create a variation of a familiar animation: the Universal Pictures logo seen at the beginning of many movies.

1. Create 3D Text

First create some 3D text by double-clicking on the Text Tool in LogoMotion (button on the Toolbar whose icon looks like a "T"). In the Text Dialog box, type in "UNI-VERSE," select the font Times, and add a convex bevel.

After LogoMotion generates the 3D text, use the Surface Panel Mode (Choose "Surfaces" from the Windows menu) to switch the text's surface from the default chrome to a gold surface. Then elongate the vertical dimensions of "UNIVERSE" by changing the numeric value on the Y dimension from 1.0 to 1.5 in the Object Information Panel Mode.

2. Tweak the Appearance of the Text

The next goal is to make the letters fall on a curved path instead of the default straight line.

Select "Break Into Characters" under the Options menu, which separates the letters in the text string into individual objects. In the Animation Sequencer, re-link the individual letters by dragging the name of one letter onto the name of another letter. This action makes each letter the "child" of the letter before it in the text string (see the

LogoMotion manual for more information on creating hierarchies). Do this for the letters "N" through to the final "E."

Finally, set the child letters' positions to a curved path by changing the Y-rotation in the Object Panel from 0 to 11 for each of those letters. To see the effect of the curved text, use the Rotate tool to view the text from a different angle (Just be sure to choose 'Undo' from the Edit menu to restore the original orientation!)

3. Add More Text and an Invisible Parent Object

As in Step 1, add the words "BIG" and "PICTURES" with the Text Tool and position them relative to the word "UNIVERSE." It is often effective to join several objects to an invisible parent object, so a group of objects can be moved relative to each other without losing any animation information.

To do this, place an extrude object into the scene. Then make the cube invisible by clicking the "Visible" button in the Object Information Panel to "off." To complete the process, link the text objects in the Animation Sequencer to this invisible cube.

[Check out the next section to learn how to finish creating this flying logo. See how to add complex DXF models and then create the final animation!]

Sophisticated Flying Logo, Part II

Luckily, LogoMotion doesn't require a license to fly. You can create logos that zip through space right after opening the box!

Import a DXF model of the Earth. Place a sphere in the center of this Earth object to serve as the Earth's oceans.

Copy and paste the Earth behind the text. Then use the Animation Sequencer to make the Earth spin.

4. Bring in DXF Model of the Earth

To prevent having a crowded workspace, open a new scene to serve as a work environment for producing a model of the Earth.

In short, the Earth model can be created by combining a lathe object (a sphere icon on the Toolbar) and a DXF import (DXF is a 3D file format, similar to what TIFF is for 2D images). This DXF was created with an Adobe Photoshop plug-in called CyberMesh that transforms 2D grayscale images into 3D models. [Note: CyberMesh can be ordered through Knoll Software (415) 453-2471]

Import the DXF Earth model by choosing Import>Objects from the File menu. Set the File Type to Import to DXF, and open the 'Earth.dxf' file located in the Tips & Techniques folder of the LogoMoiton CD-ROM. Accept the default settings and click OK to import the model.

5. Place Down a Sphere

To make the bodies of water, place a sphere into the scene. Then with the Uniform Scale tool, enlarge the sphere to fit just inside the DXF model of the world. Once positioned, link the two objects in the Animation Sequencer.

For the final touch, create two new surfaces in the Surface Panel by choosing New Surface from the Options menu. Make one a highly reflective variation of the "Flat Blue" surface, and apply it to the sphere to resemble water. The second should be a highly reflective variation of the "Flat Green" surface for the land masses.

6. Copy and Paste the Earth and Animate

Next copy (Command-C, Mac, Control-C, Windows) the Earth from this work scene and paste it (Command-V, Mac, Control-V, Windows) into the original scene. With the help of the Movement Tools, position the Earth behind the text.

Then create a simple animation of the Earth spinning around. This spinning motion can be produced by moving the World Time Marker on the Animation Sequencer forward to a new time and rotating the Earth parent object an additional 90 degrees on the Z axis in the Object Information Panel. Repeat this four times for a full rotation.

7. Add Environment and Custom Backdrop

As a final touch, add a backdrop image of "Stars" from the StageHands Panel. You're now ready to render the animation!