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Big Stage, Virtual Heroes Jam With Intel At CES



At the 2008 CES, Intel CEO Paul Otellini's keynote presentation featured a live jam session with the band Smash Mouth -- but only lead singer Steve Hartwell was physically present. The other band members participated virtually, using technology by Organic Motion, eJamming and Big Stage. The virtual jam session was presented in a 3D virtual garage built by serious gaming and learning technologies company Virtual Heroes, to demonstrate how virtual world technology and online connectivity are evolving social interaction and group experiences.

Big Stage created the 3D avatars of the Smash Mouth band members with their instruments, playing in Virtual Heroes' garage. Big Stage says that, through its 3-D capture technology, users can create a 3D avatar of themselves just by uploading three simple digital camera photos of themselves. The company explains that from there, its technology is capable of mapping a user's face structure to create an animation-ready avatar with lifelike movements and gestures in less than a minute, and users can add accessories like hair and eyeglasses to personalize the look. Avatars also end up in Big Stage's library of user and professionally-generated content, which consists of still pictures, games, animation data, virtual worlds and social networking and community content.

Jerry Bautista, co-director of Intel's tera-scale computing program, said, "In our research at Intel we are looking for new applications that will take advantage of the advancements in multi-core computing, bringing new capabilities to consumers on mainstream PCs. The combination of serious games animation with virtual world technology by Virtual Heroes combined with multi-core processing power, is a great example of what could be done in this new computing era."

Virtual Heroes worked with the architecture of the America's Army training platform, as well as the 3DiTeams Duke Medical Center's Human Patient Simulation Center app. Said CEO Jerry Heneghan, "We are thrilled with the opportunity to help Intel present exciting new technologies with collaborative virtual worlds. There is no better venue than CES, to showcase the future of interwoven technologies for work and play, and we were honored to play a key role in making that happen."

This collaborative presentation at the CES sends a clearer message than ever that virtualization is an important part of developing tech trends, and Intel has always demonstrated an interest in exploring its various uses for business and entertainment. Following this event, it's likely that other tech giants and entertainment bigs will take notice, too.

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