

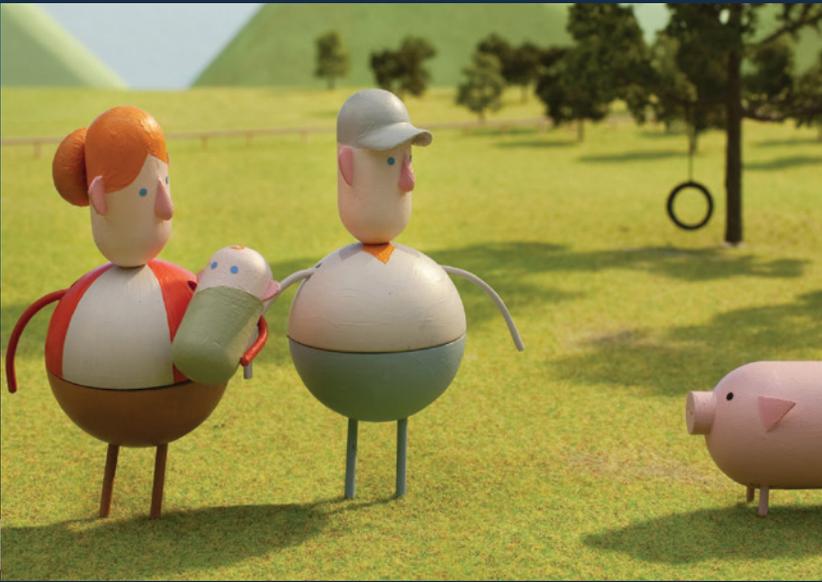
LIGHTS, CAMERA, PRINT!

Laser Lines Helps Artem Make Directors' Dreams Come True with Dimension 3D Printer-Created Special Effects

"Bringing a creative vision to life through a scale model is something Artem does best, and we knew Dimension 3D Printing would help enhance their creativity, at a fraction of the cost for outsourcing the work."

— Michael Turner, sales director, Laser Lines Ltd.

Artem used Dimension 3D Printing to create this farm family faster than was possible by hand.



Artem Ltd. is among the most highly regarded model and miniature experts in the business, producing commercial advertising models on behalf of legendary consumer brands like Ford, Kellogg's and Coca-Cola. In its two decades of experience, Artem's work has been featured in dozens of major motion pictures, including "X-Men: First Class," "Troy" and "Tomb Raider II: Cradle of Life."

When London-based Nexus Productions contracted with CAA Marketing Group and its client Chipotle Mexican Grill to produce an animation highlighting the restaurant's sustainable-farming advocacy, the production company naturally turned to Artem. The short video, "Back to the Start," featured a stop-motion animation process that relied on individually crafted models to tell the story of a farmer committed to quality ingredients.

With an approved animatic (a design file with rough-draft animated sequences), all Bob Thorne, special effects supervisor for Artem Ltd., and his team had to do was feed that data to the Dimension 3D Printer, which produced the models in just a few hours. The team then hand-finished the models, most of which were human-inspired characters that required additional detail.

Using traditional production methods, these models might have taken days to sculpt by hand and finish to the director's specifications. But with the Dimension 3D Printer, Thorne and his team completed the process overnight.

"The beauty of using the Dimension 3D Printer for this project was that we could produce exact replicas of the animatic drawings, rather than guessing about sizes and details as we might have done with hand-sculpted models," Thorne said. "To be honest, before we got the Dimension 3D Printer, we would have subcontracted out this type of work, but now that we have the right tool for the job, we are saving both time and money."



This farmer's face was part of a tray of models printed overnight.



Model makers painted the charming finishing touches on the farmer and his family.

The Right Tool for the Job

While researching 3D printing technology as a way to use computer-aided design (CAD) software more effectively, Artem's Mike Kelt, managing director, and Jason Szukalski, digital designer, realized the ubiquitous modeling machines that used starch or plaster wouldn't do.

"Had we simply wanted to mold the models, an entry-level technology might have been sufficient. But our work required durability and malleability that couldn't be matched by any other machine than a Dimension 3D Printer," Szukalski said.

Thorne took the next step by connecting with Michael Turner, sales director for Laser Lines Ltd., an exclusive Dimension distributor in Oxford, England. Turner and his team talked with Thorne about his needs and how Dimension 3D Printing could enhance the creative process at Artem.

"Prior to our meeting, Bob sent us files that are typical of the sorts of projects Artem does, and we made them some sample parts using the Dimension 3D Printer," Turner said. "We also gave them some reports on how much it would cost to acquire and use the printer, and how much time it would take to create functional parts using the FDM process."

After purchasing the printer, Artem continues to enjoy a productive business relationship with Laser Lines, with the distributor offering helpdesk services and technical assistance for the Dimension 3D Printer, as well as a source for consumable materials. Artem also relies on Laser Lines to produce quick-turn or large functional parts when the company's printer is at capacity.

"Our customers often consider us a partner rather than simply a supplier, and Artem is no exception," said Turner. "To our company, it's never just a sales opportunity – it's the beginning of an ongoing relationship, and we will give our customers whatever they need to support their purchase."

Thorne believes the Dimension 3D Printer gives Artem a competitive edge over other special-effects and prop-fabrication studios because it produces high-quality models quickly.

Future Plans

Ad Week awarded "Back to the Start" the No. 2 spot on its top-10 commercials of 2011 list. Not to rest on its laurels, Artem's Dimension 3D Printer is at work on a wide variety of projects, including point-of-sale displays for Nokia, props and models for an upcoming "Alien" sequel, and a top-secret promotional project set to debut in 2012.

"People come to us with crazy ideas all the time and not only do we have to think creatively about how to solve our clients' challenges, but we also have to prove to our prospective clients that we have the tools to help them realize their visions," Thorne said. "Today, the Dimension 3D Printer is such an integral piece of what we do that we couldn't imagine working without it."



Special effects designers at Artem built this moon buggy prop for a BBC advertisement using parts created with a Dimension 3D Printer.



A wheel from Artem BBC moon buggy – the Dimension 3D Printer can be used to produce functional moving parts, as well as prototypes and models.

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