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Military Training Technology

ONLINE EDITION

MetaVR Inc.

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President and Co-Founder

Q: Who is MetaVR Inc. and what is its primary focus?

A: MetaVR was founded in 1997. From its inception, the company has been focused on using off-the-shelf personal computers, Microsoft Windows and the Microsoft DirectX graphics environment to provide 3-D real-time simulated visualization of the real-world primarily for military simulators. This was a major shift in the industry to provide high quality and affordable training systems to reach more soldiers. We are a small company with the majority of staff comprised of software engineers. We are a pure commercial products company rather than a labor-based contractor. We do not maintain an active sales force but rather market our products through the Internet, print media, and foremost by recommendations by customers.

Q: What is MetaVR's background, especially when it comes to providing services for military training?

A: Our background in PC image generators was established by making use of the confluence of Window PCs, 3-D graphics cards, DirectX, and foremost—forward thinking program managers in the U.S. Army and Air Force. Three customer deliveries come to mind as being critical to helping establish our company in the 3-D simulation market: First, we were very fortunate in that PEO STRI took a chance on both PC 3-D graphics and our company in 1998, and we became the first company to replace the visual systems in total at a SIMNET site. The installation at the Aviation Testbed at Fort Rucker Ala. is documented on the Web: If you search the Google key words "PC IG military simulation," an article about the installation is the first link in the results list and is hosted on the PEO STRI web site as "PC-Based Technology Invades Army Simulation." Second, in 2000 we were given the opportunity to be part of a competitive fly-off for choosing the next generation of 3-D visuals for the U.S. Air Force A-10 simulators. The evaluation involved all of the candidate simulation companies all receiving the same source data for building a terrain database upon which they would demonstrate their visuals. We were the only company to build the required database in full, and as the last stage of the fly-off, we left the customer with an integration that allowed them to fly their simulator using our terrain. MetaVR has been delivering visuals for the A-10 program

ever since.

The third program that has helped establish our background in the military simulation market is the Multiple Unified Simulation Environment (MUSE). In 2000, we were invited to participate in the competitive evaluation for 3-D visuals for unmanned air vehicles (UAV) that simulate the camera payload. At the time, the customer was using legacy systems but was hoping to move to a more cost-effective hardware and software environment. We were given source data and asked to provide an example terrain database for subsequent visualization. As a result of our performance, we have been providing the 3-D visual component to the MUSE program ever since. Our software is now used for the Hunter, Shadow and ERMP (Warrior) ground control stations as embedded 3-D visual training systems using off-the-shelf ruggedized computers provided by the customer's hardware vendor. We are now the dominant provider of 3-D visual software systems for the UAV training market in the U.S. military. We believe that with the Shadow TUAV system, MetaVR's visual system is the only embedded 3-D training system fielded in a production system in operational use by the U.S. military. If you go to Google and search on "UAV simulation," MetaVR systems are the first links in the results list.

Q: What sets MetaVR Inc. apart from your competitors?

A: Both our business model and our technology contribute to our differentiators: Since we only deliver a commercial product that customers pay for when it meets the written requirements for a fixed price, our customers know that we are incentivized to perform and that their costs will be fixed and known. Our software is designed to follow the technological advances in the game industry and we only use hardware that can be readily purchased from commercial outlets such as from Best Buy. (Our customers want true hardware independence.) We are always honest and realistic with our customers about our products' capabilities and committed to supporting their success.

Q: What does the future have in store for MetaVR Inc.?

A: In the near term, our next generation of terrain tools embraces the Graphical Information Systems community and standards which should provide greater access to terrain content creation even for casual users. Our future render engine and 3-D content will become more and more life-like especially in terms of lighting. We continue to monitor our growth such that we can maintain the unique environment of freedom, technology, ethics and profitability that make both our customers and employees happy.