

COMPANY
BUNNYDOG STUDIO

LOCATION
Indonesia

SOFTWARE
Autodesk® MAYA®

Jakarta Animation Studio's Customizable Workflows give Artists Complete Creative Freedom

How Bunnydog Studio uses an Integrated Maya Python API to Give Artists Creative Freedom while Expanding its Global Reach

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– **Michelle Wibowo**
Bunnydog Studio
Co-Founder



Image courtesy of Bunnydog Studio

Working at the Speed of Thought

It's been just one year since Indonesia's lockdown orders have been lifted. Meanwhile, Jakarta-based animation firm, Bunnydog Studio, is going stronger than ever. By customizing a fully integrated Maya Python API, the studio is able to give its animators the freedom to work within the same UI/UX pipeline at all times, despite fluctuating client requirements. This workflow speeds up the creative process while enabling artists to generate content from anywhere at any time, right at the moment inspiration hits. The results are a reduction in rework, fast turnarounds, a smooth transition into a work-from-home setup during the pandemic with no missed deadlines, and of course, happy artists. Unlike other studios that faced many challenges after COVID-19 hit, Bunnydog actually grew, and the firm continues to flourish.

Industrywide Challenges: A Shortage of Skilled Animators and Minimal Standardization

Animation has come a long way since the sketchpad, but there are still some distinct hurdles that must be overcome. One of the primary challenges the industry faces, particularly in Indonesia, is an overall lack in understanding of production pipelines and how they function. As a result, workflows can be chaotic and disorganized, and artists will frequently work long hours or undertake administrative tasks instead of tending to their craft. This industrywide non-uniformity also leads to poor communication between stakeholders as well as production delays, and these challenges can prove to be quite costly. Nevertheless, the industry is growing rapidly and standardization needs to be more thoroughly implemented in order for it to sustain its growth.

Born out of a desire to tell Universally Compelling Stories in an Immersive Way

Established in January of 2018 by two independent artists and a business veteran, Bunnydog Studio specializes in 3D animation for multimedia platforms. The studio combines art and technology to tell compelling stories in exciting ways, always seeking new methods to create visually immersive content. With an expanding global client base, the young firm has already developed successful shows and series for local broadcast stations as well as OTT services. These include animations for clients that have aired on popular subscription-based streaming services such as Netflix.

The founders' combined production experience has led to a shared creative vision that helps them cultivate an artist-friendly workflow. A custom-built pipeline lies at the heart of the studio and integrates the Maya Python API to automate as many steps as possible without disrupting the artists' creative process. This helps to eliminate human errors while saving the team significant time and overhead, enabling fast turnarounds and a sharp reduction in time to market. Finally, it gives animators the creative freedom to work at the speed of thought.

"Proper production is conducted by taking advantage of Maya's customizable environments," says Bunnydog Studio's Co-Founder and Art Director, Michelle Wibowo. "We decided early on to develop our pipeline in order to lay the foundation for our future production. Working with different vendors, clients, and freelancers can be extremely frustrating because there's no standardized pipeline that works for everyone, so ours is built with flexibility in mind. We can integrate our client's requirements and deploy our own tools when we are working with vendors or freelancers. This way, everyone can use our standardized pipeline."

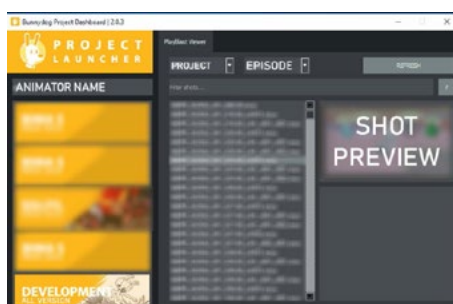
Streamlined Capabilities help Artists Push Creative Boundaries

Bunnydog Studio was already ahead of the game from the outset, and implementing their custom Maya Python API to address industrywide standardization challenges was a top priority. "Maya is essentially the foundation of our production workflow as most of our clients are also Maya users,"

says Michelle. "The main instance of added value is the Python API. This is what we used to create our pipeline within Maya from the ground up."

Autodesk Maya has remained Bunnydog's primary software for daily operation since the studio's inception in 2018. There are several standout advantages that it brings to the studio in addition to its primary usage for animation, lighting, and rendering. Client requirements can be integrated directly into Bunnydog's pipeline, and various customized tools can be created within the software as well. This includes the company's general internal pipeline that they use across all projects as well as specialized tools that are used for more nuanced animations.

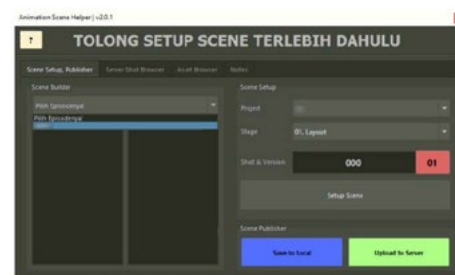
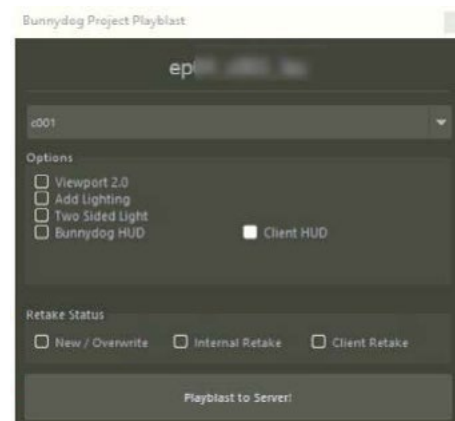
"Being able to incorporate an existing tool from Autodesk into our pipeline has been incredibly helpful," says Michelle. "The Python API within Maya works as a building block where we are able to customize everything while integrating existing Maya features into one simple interface. This makes our artists' workflows far more efficient."



Staying on Top during COVID-19

The pandemic, unsurprisingly, spawned an explosion in demand for online content, as people around the world were stuck at home with more time on their hands than ever before. To this end, firms without strong collaboration tools mostly fell by the wayside while those who'd already been relying heavily on cloud-based workflows prevailed.

Having the flexibility to add on to the Maya environment was enormously beneficial for Bunnydog when the studio transitioned to remote production virtually overnight. The ability to deploy custom tools remotely meant that team members could use updates immediately, regardless of their location. This enabled effective project management while simultaneously



minimizing delays. Meanwhile, the firm experienced a considerable growth spurt during this period thanks to a robust pipeline and an all-star team.

"We went into a work-from-home setup with minimal preparation, but over the course of a few weeks, we managed to transition fully," says Michelle. "My partner, Ginanjar, deployed tool updates multiple times a day to respond to our artists' needs while consolidating everything into a full remote production environment." The studio is also integrating Maya's Archive Scene feature into the pipeline so that its artists can package their shots and assets from anywhere.

Real-Time Rendering and Development Offer More Opportunities to Grow

Michelle believes that real-time rendering and development are the future of animation. She foresees an industrywide benefit in further streamlining production workflows by working within the environment of one software from start to finish.

As Bunnydog Studio continues to grow and plan for upcoming projects, it's always seeking ways to work more efficiently. By creating customized tools and automations, Bunnydog gives its artists the freedom to push their creative limits so that they can continue dreaming up stories for their customers.