



AniMill takes animation and digital cinema to next level with AMD and Dell

Dell Precision 3630 workstation powered by AMD Radeon™ PRO W5500 GPU brings performance and value to 3D animation and motion graphics.

AMD
RADEON
PRO

CUSTOMER



INDUSTRY

3D animation, motion graphics, and video production

CHALLENGES

Complete projects quickly and at the highest visual quality

SOLUTION

A new 6K post-production workflow built on Dell Precision 3630 workstation with AMD Radeon™ PRO W5500

RESULTS

OpenCL support reduces six hours rendering to 23 minutes; 9K of workspace from a single system; increased system reliability

AMD TECHNOLOGY AT A GLANCE

AMD Radeon™ PRO W5500 8 GB GPU

SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS

Adobe® Creative Cloud®
Blackmagic Design DaVinci Resolve®
Autodesk® 3ds Max®
Maxon Cinema 4D™
Microsoft® Office 365®

TECHNOLOGY PARTNER

DELLTechnologies

Miami-based AniMill creates 3D animation and motion graphics for a wide variety of clientele and applications. At its heart, the company is driven by storytelling, helping companies from the Global 500 to local businesses promote their work.

Founder and self-proclaimed mad-scientist Curtis Sponsler says that “the key to creativity is not limiting yourself.” At AniMill that means having the technical savvy and capacity to take on any project, whether a project is entirely CG-based or combines live-action. With 6K digital cinema cameras more accessible than ever, Sponsler saw an opportunity: by combining an AMD GPU-powered Dell Precision 3630 workstation with one of these new cameras, he could afford to dive back into the world of independent film.

“The Radeon PRO GPU drives the monitor brilliantly with 5K natives, brilliant colors, and HDR.”

Curtis Sponsler, owner, AniMill

A solid foundation for professional work

Dell Technologies and AMD worked together to give a complimentary workstation to fit Sponsler’s needs, delivering a Dell Precision 3630 tower equipped with an AMD Radeon™ PRO W5500 8GB GPU, 64GB DDR4 RAM, and an M.2 NVMe SSD. The choice of GPU was important to Sponsler who points out, “The GPU is where all the number crunching happens today, so it has to be able to keep up. It doesn’t matter how fast the drives are if the system can’t handle it productively.” A seasoned DIY builder, one of the first things that Sponsler appreciated is how well integrated the system is. “The definition of a good system is one where the machine is so seamless that it becomes invisible to the user,” said Sponsler.

Driving multiple high-resolution monitors

Because he works with 6K footage and his final output is typically 4752 pixels wide,

Sponsler connected the workstation to a new ultrawide 2.4:1 aspect ratio 5K monitor. This lets him work with his footage as close to native resolution as possible, without the expense of 6K or an 8K monitor. “The Radeon PRO GPU drives the monitor brilliantly at its native 5K raster with vibrant colors, and HDR.” Sponsler didn’t stop there. He relies on the GPU to simultaneously drive a second, 4K monitor, giving him 9K of UI workspace.

Productivity and high-quality output

Sponsler’s software environment is made of many parts: Maxon Cinema 4D™, Autodesk® 3ds Max®, and multiple Adobe®

software titles including After Effects®, Photoshop®, Illustrator® and the Microsoft® Office collection of Word, Excel® and PowerPoint®. And plug-ins; lots of plug-ins! After Effects is his preferred editing tool because he appreciates the quick access to many creative visual effects tools, and lately, he has added Blackmagic Design DaVinci Resolve® to help him better align with his pipeline that begins with their new 6K camera.

The first project for the new system was a music video for a team from a Miami-based arts group. After shooting 6K footage, Sponsler used Resolve to edit the footage. “The key to working quickly was the ability of the Dell system to handle the large files directly,” said Sponsler. “That’s a big time-saver on smaller projects because it means we can spend more time on creative work instead of waiting while the files are converted to a proxy format. We had the edit done in just two days.”

Sponsler continued, “The Radeon PRO W5500 GPU powered effortlessly through the color correction, entirely in real-time. I never had to wait for it to render. This means we can stay focused on the look of the project, instead of the technology. And when I turned on stabilization, which is another function delivered by the GPU,” he laughed before continuing, “I think of myself as a pretty good cinematographer, but, wow, what a difference!”

Service and reliability bring peace of mind

Performance doesn’t mean much if the system isn’t reliable. As Sponsler explains, “I don’t care how fast you can go from zero to 60 if things aren’t reliable. The Dell Precision 3630 workstation hits a sweet spot. It’s fast, it’s bulletproof, and the price is right.” He continues, “I’m a service provider. My time is my most valuable commodity.” With three years of onsite warranty¹, the Dell Precision 3630 brings confidence that Sponsler admits is something he has never fully achieved with his DIY builds. He said, “Building it yourself used to be the only way to get the most bang for your buck, but you give up peace of mind. With Dell and AMD, I just don’t have to worry; I’ve got someone to call.”

Being hands-on by nature, however, Sponsler notes, “It is an impressive amount of machine for its size. I love the accessibility of the internals thanks to the folding design of the case and the thoughtful layout. This will make the whole process of upgrades, maintenance, and adjustments so easy.” This is important because as Sponsler says, “The Dell makes it possible to reconfigure the system with different processors, GPUs, and more memory—whatever you need to do to maximize your workflow as things change down the road.”



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The advantages of open computing

One of the changes Sponsler is most eager to see is more software vendors providing support for GPU optimization. “I am very happy that AMD went the route of OpenCL™. Other systems lock you into their proprietary ecosystem, which takes away flexibility for the buyer.”

More significant is what AMD’s support of OpenCL means in terms of performance. Sponsler says, “It’s great that more of my key software vendors are coming around to OpenCL. You can really see the difference.” Sponsler shared his own data to support that conclusion. Rendering an eight-minute video at his 4752x2160 resolution, a 2.2:1 ratio from his native footage, takes almost six hours in software alone. With OpenCL taking advantage of his Radeon PRO GPU? “only 23 minutes,” says Sponsler. “The results kind of speak for themselves.”

The next big step

With his new Dell and AMD GPU-powered 6K production pipeline in place, Sponsler has big plans. “I’ve always wanted to make films,” says Sponsler. “With this new Dell workstation and the 6K camera, I’m going to do it!” His first solo independent project is underway; a mockumentary that captures “the two different beasts of Key West,” he says before continuing with a grin, “butterflies and cats. The camera captures so much color and latitude. It’s going to be fun cutting the footage together on this system.” Sponsler plans to document and share the entire process on his YouTube channel, Mad Scientist Movie Mania.



About AniMill

Whether the name is AniMill or its founder, Curtis Sponsler, the result is the same...top quality creativity! Sponsler’s “Mad Craft Laboratory” is where years of artistic experimentation have resulted in award-winning 3D animation & motion graphics design that woo audiences the world over. Learn more at animill.com.

About Dell

[Dell Technologies](http://DellTechnologies) (NYSE:DELL) helps organizations and individuals build their digital future and transform how they work, live, and play. The company provides customers with the industry’s broadest and most innovative technology and services portfolio for the data era.

About AMD

For over 50 years AMD has driven innovation in high-performance computing, graphics, and visualization technologies—the building blocks for gaming, immersive platforms, and the data center. Hundreds of millions of consumers, leading Fortune 500 businesses, and cutting-edge scientific research facilities around the world rely on AMD technology daily to improve how they live, work, and play. AMD employees around the world are focused on building great products that push the boundaries of what is possible. For more information about how AMD is enabling today and inspiring tomorrow, visit amd.com/RadeonPro.

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1. Onsite Service after Remote Diagnosis is determination by online/phone technician of cause of issue; may involve customer access to inside of system and multiple or extended sessions. If issue is covered by Limited Hardware Warranty and not resolved remotely, technician and/or part will be dispatched, usually within 1 business day following completion of Remote Diagnosis. Availability varies. See dell.com/servicecontracts/US.

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