Interactive Visualization of Complex Scenes

COS 426, Spring 2014
Princeton University
Interactive Visualization

Render images with interactive control of viewpoint

Boeing
Mechanical CAD

Medicine

Driving Simulation

Entertainment

Avery Fisher
Architectural CAD

Education

UBC
Interactive Visualization Goals

Realism
- Realistic enough to convey information

Frame rate:
- >10-60 frames per second

Latency
- <10-500 milliseconds response delay

Computation
- Fast preprocessing
- Fast startup
- Low storage
- etc.
Scene Complexity

Examples:

- Automobile: ~20,000 parts
- Boeing Airplane: ~2,000,000 parts
- Aircraft Carrier: ~20,000,000 parts
- Sculptures: ~200,000,000,000 samples
- Outdoor Environments
Architectural Models

Soda Hall Model (7.6M polygons)
Structural Engineering Models

Coal-Fired Powerplant: 15 million triangles
Mechanical CAD Models

Submarine Torpedo Room (850K polygons)
Mechanical CAD Models

82 million triangles; 126,000 objects

Newport News Shipbuilding
Video Games
Rendering Acceleration Techniques

Visibility Culling
- Backface culling, view-frustum culling, occlusion culling, ...

Detail Elision
- Levels of detail, multiresolution, ...

Images
- Textures, billboards, imposters, ...
Visibility Culling

Quickly eliminate large portions of the scene that will not be visible in the final image

- Not the exact visibility solution, but a quick and conservative test to reject primitives that are not visible
  - Trivially reject stuff that is obviously not seen
  - Use Z-buffer and clipping for the exact solution
Visibility Culling

Basic idea: don’t render what can’t be seen

- Facing away from camera: backface culling
- Off-screen: view-frustum culling
- Occluded by other objects: occlusion culling
Back-Face Culling

Do not draw polygons facing backwards with respect to camera

A polygon is backfacing if $V \cdot N > 0$
Back-Face Culling

Avoid testing every face separately

- Cluster faces
- Precompute range of normals for each cluster
- Check cluster before testing every face
Hierarchical Back-Face Culling

Avoid testing every face separately

- Cluster faces hierarchically
- Precompute range of normals for each cluster
- Check cluster before testing every face ... hierarchically
View-Frustum Culling

Don’t draw primitives outside the view frustum

- Organize primitives into clumps
- Before rendering the primitives in a clump, test their bounding volume against the view frustum
View-Frustum Culling

Hierarchical bounding volumes

- If a clump is entirely outside or entirely inside view frustum, no need to test its children
Hierarchical View-Frustum Culling

Hierarchical bounding volumes

- If a clump is entirely outside or entirely inside view frustum, no need to test its children
Hierarchical View Frustum Culling

Hierarchical bounding volumes

- If a clump is entirely outside or entirely inside view frustum, no need to test its children.
Hierarchical View Frustum Culling

What shape should the bounding volumes be?

- Spheres and axis-aligned bounding boxes:
  - Simple to calculate/test
  - May be poor approximation
- Convex hulls:
  - More complex to calculate/test
  - Tighter approximation
Uniform Grid Subdivision
Octree Subdivision

View Frustum
BSP Subdivision

View Frustum
Occlusion Culling

Blue parts: occluders
Red parts: occludees
Occlusion Culling

Object-precision

- Cells and portals
- Shadow volumes

Image-precision

- OpenGL occlusion test
- Hierarchical Z-buffer
- Hierarchical occlusion maps
Cells and Portals

Subdivide space into cells.

Cluster polygons into objects.

Build an index of objects incident upon each cell.
Cells and Portals

Source Cell

Visible cells
(All cells reached by sightline from region)

Visible Objects
(All objects incident upon brown visibility beams)
Cells and Portals

Visible Cells

Visible Objects

Observer
Occlusion Culling

Object-precision
- Cells and portals
- Shadow volumes

Image-precision
- OpenGL occlusion test
- Hierarchical Z-buffer
- Hierarchical occlusion maps
OpenGL Occlusion Test

Hardware returns how many z-buffer tests pass

View Frustum

Near Plane

Far Plane
Hierarchical Z-Buffer

Store z-buffer as pyramid and test depth hierarchically
Rendering Acceleration Techniques

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Levels of Detail

Triangles:
- 41,855
- 27,970
- 20,922
- 12,939
- 8,385
- 4,766

courtesy of Division and Viewpoint
Levels of Detail

Pre-process
• Generate discrete set of independent levels of detail

Run-time
• Select level of detail according to viewpoint

Advantages
• Fairly efficient storage (2x original)
• No significant run-time overhead

Disadvantages
• Requires per-object simplification
• Not good for spatially large objects
Levels of Detail

597 Polygons  211 Polygons  51 Polygons  28 Polygons

889 Polygons  241 Polygons  97 Polygons  40 Polygons
Levels of Detail

69 k tris

11 k tris

2 k tris

575 tris
Selecting Levels of Detail

Two possibilities:

- Guarantee quality, maximize frame rate
- Guarantee frame rate, maximize quality
Selecting Levels of Detail

\[ p = \frac{\varepsilon r}{w} = \frac{\varepsilon r}{2d \tan\left(\frac{\theta}{2}\right)} \]
Guaranteeing Frame Rate

No Detail Elision
0.22 Seconds
(19,881 Polygons)

Optimization Detail Elision
0.05 Seconds
(3,568 Polygons)
Guaranteeing Frame Rate

- Objects Shaded by LOD (Higher LODs appear darker)
- Pixel-by-Pixel Differences (Larger differences appear brighter)
Multiresolution Meshes

Pre-process
- Generate tree of simplification operations

Run-time
- Refine/coarsen current model according to viewpoint

Advantages
- Allows finer control of tessellation

Disadvantages
- More run-time computation and complexity
- Difficult for retained-mode graphics
Multiresolution Meshes

selectively refined mesh
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Imposters

Algorithm

- Select subset of model
- Create image of the subset
- Cull subset and replace with image

Why?

- Image displayed in (approx.) constant time
- Image reused for several frames
Simple Example
Simple Example
Simple Example
Issues

Imposter placement
- What geometry should be replaced by images
- How should images be integrated into scene

Imposter representation
- What viewpoint(s) should be captured in image?
- How render from arbitrary viewpoints?
Imposter Placement
Cells and Portals

Aliaga
Portal Images

Aliaga
Creating Portal Images

Ideal portal image would be one sampled from the current eye position.
Creating Portal Images

Display one of a large number of pre-computed images (~120)
Creating Portal Images

or…

Warp one of a much smaller number of reference images
Summary

Visibility Culling

• Backface culling, view-frustum culling, occlusion culling, ...

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Recurring Themes:

• Trivial reject checks
• Hierarchical processing