

RenderPal V2

The professional Render Management System

Point Release 1

Release notes

RenderPal V2 Version: 2.1

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What's new in RenderPal V2 Version 2.1

Parallel renderings on a single client

While most renderers nowadays support multi-threaded rendering, some still will only utilize a single CPU core. With today's multi-core CPUs, this can be a true waste of resources. To harness the full power of your client machines, RenderPal V2 now supports parallel rendering on a single client, which makes it possible to render multiple chunks of a job on a single machine, even if the renderer itself doesn't support multi-threaded rendering.

Each net job now has a setting which specifies how many parallel renderings should be executed on a client. In order to reduce system and network traffic, clients can also have start delays between consecutive renderings.

To implement this new feature, the entire rendering system has been rewritten from scratch, resulting in a faster and more stable engine that drives the rendering process.

New custom renderer management

The custom renderer management has been completely redone. Besides being more comfortable and easier to use, custom renderers will now also be automatically downloaded from the server (and can also, depending on the given user rights, be uploaded to the server). This way, all users will have the same set of custom renderers without the need to manually share them.

Extended automatic pool assignment

Automatically found clients can now be assigned to more than one client pool, depending on the IP range they fall in. This makes it even easier to automate a render farm. Clients that do not fall within any specified IP range can still be assigned to a "fallback" pool.

Net job improvements

RenderPal V2 2.1 comes with several improvements to net jobs:

Multiple net job dependencies

A net job can now be dependant on more than one net job. In many cases, it was not enough to have a job wait for a single other job to be finished, so it is now possible to have the job wait on as many jobs as you want.

Frame checking improvements

When frame checking results in new net jobs to be created, the original net job will be automatically set to depend on the newly created jobs. This way, the initial job will only be finished when all missing frames are done as well.

Renderer selection

Both standard and custom renderers have been merged into a single renderer selection control in the net job editor, resulting in a more comfortable and streamlined way of choosing the right renderer for your net jobs.

Urgent net job changes

When setting a net job to urgent, any clients that are not already rendering an urgent job will immediately drop their current job in favour of the new urgent job.

Wake-on-LAN

RenderPal V2 has always been able to shut down clients that were not needed for rendering. Now it can also do the exact opposite: wake up (turn on) clients that are shut down but are required for rendering. This is achieved by using Wake-on-LAN (as long as the computer supports this feature). Waking up can either be done manually or be automated.

Pipeline integration

The console remote controller has been extended to further support pipeline integration of RenderPal V2. It is now possible to retrieve a list of all available client pools via `-listpools`; a compact mode has been added (`-compact`) when using either `-listrenderers` or `-listpools`, which can be used to reduce the output to only the bare lists, making parsing of the output far easier. Frame checking can now also be set using `-nj_framechecking`.

Furthermore, we have created the first bunch of submission scripts for various renderers, which offer simple and easy-to-use graphical interfaces to submit new jobs to RenderPal V2 directly from within the renderer software itself. Especially artists will find these small tools more than helpful. They can be obtained as separate downloads from our website.

New renderers

This point release comes with a bunch of newly supported renderers:

- V-Ray for Maya
- 3Delight
- SiTex Air
- Combustion
- Digital Fusion
- Houdini

Other changes and improvements

RenderPal V2 has received a high number of improvements, performance optimizations, bug fixes and other changes. Many core parts of RenderPal V2 have been rewritten or improved in this release. While many of these changes are not directly visible to the user, they still result in a better and more robust RenderPal V2 experience. Numerous smaller aspects have also been changed, making RenderPal V2 even more comfortable and streamlined.

Full changelog for RenderPal V2 Version 2.1

```
+- Legend -----+
| + New Feature      |
| # Modification/Improvement |
| ! Bugfix          |
| - Removed feature |
+-----+

[# Global] Plenty of internal changes & improvements
[+ Global] It is now possible to specify the output file and directory for Blender jobs
[! RmCtrl] Fixed a possible crash when editing the render set of a net job
[# RmCtrl] When starting/stopping a pool, the pool status will now be immediately refreshed
[- Svr/Rc] Removed "Dump command-lines" from the render set sourcefile list
[# Svr/Rc] It is no longer possible to enter invalid characters into the output file field
[! Svr/Rc] When selecting multiple net job chunks with the right mouse button, the correct context menu will now be shown
[+ RmCtrl] F5 now refreshes the client management dialog (fetches all data from the server)
[# Global] If RenderPal crashes, the function in which the error occurred should now be reported in most cases
[! Global] Fixed some odd window switching/focus strangeness bugs
[# Global] Improved the unhandled exception dialog
[! Server] When dropping jobs from a client, the corresponding chunk was shown as erroneous, not as cancelled
[# Server] Urgent net jobs will now use all possible clients, cancelling any renderings if necessary
[! Svr/Rc] Most recently used entries for files and directories weren't saved
[# Server] Autosaving of net jobs is now crash-safer
[+ Client] In screensaver only mode, the user is now asked whether to cancel the current job when the screensaver stops running
[! Client] In screensaver only mode, clients were added to the server even if they were already in the known clients list
[# Svr/Rc] Improved the renderer selection in the net job editor (merged built-in and custom renderers)
[- Svr/Rc] The render set file is no longer shown in the net job editor
[+ Svr/Rc] Completely new custom renderer management
[+ Server] Added a new user right to allow uploading of custom renderers to the server
[+ RmCtrl] It is now possible to download/upload the custom renderers from/to the server
[+ RmCtrl] The remote controller will now automatically download the custom renderers from the server
[! Server] The server didn't accept heartbeats from clients with a wrong protocol number (RenderPal 2004 relict)
[# Server] Increased the trial net job limit to 10 concurrent net jobs
[! Global] Fixed the Aspect ratio switch for Maya (was -ar, should be -ard)
[+ Server] The automatic client pool assignment now supports multiple IP ranges
[! Global] The verbosity render setting is no longer available for Maya (since Maya never supported it)
[# Server] A warning is now shown when installing updates that are older than or equal to the currently installed version
[+ RmCtrl] It is now possible to specify the name of the defaults section (RpRcDefaults.conf) to use in the console Remote Controller
[+ Svr/Rc] Render settings from a saved render set can now be merged with the current render set
[+ Global] Added an event filter to all event tabs
[# Server] Chunks will no longer be set to cancelled in cases where it should only be reset to pending
[+ Svr/Rm] Multiple net job dependencies are now supported
[+ Server] When frame checking results in new net jobs, the original net job will be set to be dependent on the newly created jobs
[+ Global] Added a simple "Check for updates" function (Help menu)
[# Global] Renamed the "Maya Default" renderer to "Maya Default (Scene/Layer settings)" to avoid confusion
[+ Global] Added new built-in renderer: V-Ray for Maya
[! Client] Viewing large output logs took extremely long loading times
[+ Global] The log list dialog now contains a column for the log file size
[+ Global] Added 5 new custom renderers: 3Delight, SiTex Air, Combustion, Digital Fusion & Houdini
[+ Svr/Rc] Turned off client machines can now be woken up via Wake-on-LAN (if the computer supports it)
[# Svr/Rc] Jobs with only finished and cancelled chunks are now shown as "Unfinished" instead of "Idle"
[# RmCtrl] Implemented a timeout mechanism so that crashed remote controllers won't lock certain areas for an indefinite time anymore
[! Server] When using the free 3 nodes license, the server closed after running for about one hour
[! Server] The server could send jobs to clients even if there was an update pending
[! Server] When using non-integral "By frame" values, rounding errors could occur when calculating the start extension for each chunk
[! Server] Email notifications about remotely submitted net jobs were not sent
[- Svr/Cl] Event sounds have been dropped
[# Global] The output window will never be shown automatically (the corresponding option has also been removed)
[+ Client] The client got a new multi-core enabled rendering engine
[! Client] Fixed a bug with passing multiple layers to the Maya Software renderer
[+ Client] XSI render passes are now supported
[+ RmCtrl] Frame checking can now be specified when submitting net jobs via the console remote controller (-nj_framechecking)
[+ RmCtrl] The console remote controller can now list all available client pools via -listpools
[+ Svr/Rc] Added an option to the client settings to enable automatic Wake-on-LAN (to wake up clients that should be used for rendering)
[+ Svr/Rc] Added a setting to specify the number of parallel renderings per client to the net jobs
[+ RmCtrl] Added a switch (-nj_rendercores) to the console remote controller to set the number of parallel renderings per client
[# Server] Improved the net jobs loading time
[! RmCtrl] Fixed a bug when retrieving the output log from a client that would cause the operation to fail with a privilege violation
[# Global] Net job IDs are now formatted to 4 digits
[+ Global] Parallel renderings on a single client are now supported
[+ RmCtrl] Added -compact to the console RC (can be used together with -listrenderers and -listpools to only get the "bare" lists)
[+ Client] Added an option to configure the start delay between parallel renderings
[# Server] When installing updates which contain update notes, it is now possible to install or cancel the update
[! RmCtrl] Fixed some command-line parsing bugs in the console Remote Controller
[- Server] Removed several message boxes that could pop up in the server when certain errors occurred
[! Global] Sorting time columns in list controls didn't work properly
[- RmCtrl] Removed automatic refreshing, as this only causes unnecessary data traffic (the server updates all RCs when needed)
[+ Client] The console client now checks the return codes of renderers on all systems
```

Contact

...Heute ist nicht alle Tage, ich komm' wieder, keine Frage...

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