



PHOTO BY LINDA SANDSMARK

Direct Images Interactive producer/director Bill Knowland's computer showcases several of the interactive videos he has designed.

By Linda Sandmark

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With over 25 years of experience in video production and new media, Bill Knowland of Direct Images Interactive knows how to make just about any business look good.

“What we do is interactive marketing and design services,” says Knowland. “For people looking to promote their company online, for example, we can make video ‘product tours’ or testimonials. Most of our clients are high-tech companies. We show them off in the best light.”

Bill and his wife Beverly (a graphic designer) comprise a two-person company whose specialty is software and product demos, interactive Flash presentations, and online marketing videos. They are expanding into new areas as well, such as stereoscopic 3-D video and mobile media.

The company ended up in San Leandro at the West Gate Shopping Center (above Home Depot on Davis Street) by chance. Twelve years ago they came here to produce a video for another company in the building.

“We were shopping around. They have good rates here, and it’s conveniently located for people,” says Bill Knowland.

In addition to interactive website videos, Direct Images Interactive creates point-of-sale demonstration videos for use in stores. A customer who wants to try out a product can experience its features using these one- to three-minute videos. Direct Images Interactive has done over 100 such demonstration videos for Apple. Apple Stores use Knowland’s in-store video demos to help customers try out and learn about laptops and other products in person.

It has also made these interactive videos for every Creative Suite launch by Adobe, including Photo Shop. Other clients include Hewlett-Packard, Industrial Light and Magic, Samsung Semiconductor, the City of San Leandro, Altera, East Bay Regional Parks, and EBMUD.

Knowland says that mobile media is the wave of the future, and that within the next few years companies will be looking into marketing through mobile devices, such as Android and iPhone, and other devices to be available in the future. Direct Images Interactive is already working on demos and streaming video customized for different platforms.

One particularly exciting new area for the company is 3-D stereoscopic video for corporate use. It will be used in-store to help companies showcase their 3-D products (the kind that require 3-D goggles).

Direct Images Interactive has done more traditional video productions as well, including an anniversary-employee recognition video for the Lucille Packard Children's Hospital. Knowland was also director of photography on over 20 music videos.

Direct Images Interactive's portfolio may be viewed online at www.directimages.com/. For more information, call 613-8299 or e-mail bill@directimages.com. The company is located at 1933 Davis St., Suite 314, San Leandro.