A Haven for Artists: Macs and EMA Multimedia

"I wanted to create one of the first digital design studios to service Hollywood," says Michael Pace. And so he did: EMA Multimedia.

With six years of advertising and marketing experience under his belt, Pace knew how to turn his creative concepts into finished products. And he was also very familiar with something else—the Macintosh. While working as a creative director for an ad agency, he bought his first Macintosh system—a Quadra 700—to test out his theory that he could produce on his computer what would normally require several agency bodies to create. That project was an international marketing campaign for the movie "Mo' Money," starring Damon Wayans. The success of that project gave Pace the confidence that, Mac in hand, he could venture out on his own "The Mac allowed me the freedom to start a business without having a big agency," says Pace.

In 1992, he founded EMA Multimedia, a self-funded, full-service design and production studio located just a stone's throw away from Hollywood. You may or may not have heard of them, but if you've ever navigated your way through a DVD, it's likely you've experienced their handiwork. Having been involved in DVD production from the very beginning, EMA has had a hand in 250 DVD titles—from such companies as HBO Home Video, Warner Bros., New Line Home Video, Columbia Tristar Home Video, Sony, MGM, Twentieth Century Fox, Universal, and Disney. A pioneer in DVD menu design, EMA was the first to introduce animation to DVD menu screens, the first to enhance them with sound, the first to plant Easter Eggs in them—a feature savvy Mac users are no doubt familiar with regard to their Mac systems. "Rewind is the thing of the past," says Pace, who serves as both the company's CEO and its creative director.

But the company's work goes way beyond DVD production. The studio's marketing campaigns involve not only print media —from posters and billboards to popcorn bags and tee shirts—

From the beginning, the EMA team—which currently includes 12 members —has relied on Macs to make their design and marketing ideas bear fruit. "The high-end full res marketing campaigns we were squeezing out of our Macs had in a sense never been done before this way," says Pace. "Where larger agencies may have had the ability to buy a Flame or a Henry, I was out to prove that we could do the same thing with our Macs."

Especially now, with DVD fast becoming "the delivery platform of choice," he particularly appreciates the Mac's strength in this arena. "With Final Cut Pro and DVD Studio Pro, we're able to create a final high-end product all in-house." says Pace. "What's exciting now is that I don't have to go out and spend a quarter of million dollars on a DVD authoring environment. I have it with Final Cut Pro and DVD Studio Pro and I can produce titles for the independent studio or filmmaker at a substantial savings." Moreover, the Mac system allows him, he says, "to focus on the vision, rather than the ability to realize that vision."

One of his recent visions manifests itself in the form of a standalone enhanced CD devoted to the skateboarding legend Tony Hawk, called "Tony Hawk Inside Out." Called upon by Maverick Recording to make a behind-the-scenes interactive CD of the skateboarder, Pace took his Canon XL1 digital video camera and captured Hawk performing his gravity-defying stunts, Hawk falling (gravity wins sometimes), Hawk living. Back in the studio, Pace and his team then edited the footage on their Power Mac G4s using Final Cut Pro and incorporated, among other elements, animated graphics created with Adobe After Effects and 3-D renditions of Hawk's favorite skating spots, as well as footage from the Sony PlayStation game Tony Hawk Pro Skater 3.

The project began on Adobe Illustrator, which EMA used to lay out the floor plan and flowchart, and then they employed Photoshop to compose. After the footage had been edited and put together with the graphic elements, they converted the resulting movies to QuickTime for playback. Along the way to final output, they even used iMovie 2 to compress the cuts down small enough to put online for their client to see and approve. "We're working totally digitally and online," says Pace. "So there's no need to exchange tapes or dump disks."

but interactive CD-ROM and website design and development, and digital video shooting and production. From the early days, Pace saw to it that his company would be equipped to offer whatever the latest advances of technology would allow. In fact, it was from an early forward-thinking project that the studio's first DVD menu was born. Pace had produced a demo of an interactive in-flight shopping module that would allow airplane passengers to shop during long distance flights. Showing this to Warner Bros., a client he'd worked with in the past, he was asked to build from it what would turn out to be a DVD menu.

QuickTime is the optimal playback environment for that, he says, "because it's cross-platform, because it allows full-screen viewing, and because it can play back different codecs."

"Apple technology has been an integral part of my career," says Michael Pace. "I started this company so that it could be a haven for artists, and The Mac was the tool that I needed to do that—it was an artist's tool. Apple technology is why my company is here."

Search

[Site Map](#) | [Search Tips](#)

Visit the Apple Store [online](#) or at [retail](#) locations.
1-800-MY-APPLE

[Contact Us](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)