Animation in Giotto

In this section you will see how to make a simple animation in Vectorian Giotto. It also describes some basic but essential terms you have to know if you want to use Giotto effectively.

Animation Basics

Animation is the optical illusion of motion. Animation consists of still images called frames which are displayed sequentially, one after another, in order to create illusion of continuous movement. This is possible due to the way our sense of sight “operates” or, more precisely, persistence of vision phenomenon. There are two types of frames: key frames and tween frames.

Key Frame

A key frame is a single still image (frame) in an animated sequence that occurs at an important point in that sequence. Key frame is always drawn or constructed by the user. Key frames are defined throughout an animation and they define crucial points of motion, for example start of a motion and end of a motion. In hand-drawn animation, an experienced animator would draw key frames and beginner animators would draw tween frames (also known as in-between frames). In computer animation, user of an animation program would draw key frames and computer would insert tween frames.

Tween Frame

Tween frames actually create illusion of motion. Tween frames are intermediate frames with the purpose of creating smooth transition between two key frames. For smooth appearance, animation requires at least 24 frames per second (fps). For example, you can create only two key frames, one to begin and one to end a movement. Computer program will then create remaining 22 tween frames. The final result would be one second of smooth animation with a little effort from user.

How to make an animation in Giotto?

This section provides step-by-step instructions on how to make a simple animation in Vectorian Giotto. It illustrates creating of key frames, creating of tween frames and determining how many frames per second (fps) animation will have.
You will draw one rectangle and one oval (ellipse) on the first key frame. From the Drawing Toolbar, which is initially placed in the left hand side of the Giotto’s window, choose Rectangle tool. Now choose color of rectangle’s outline and fill (interior). This is done from Colors Toolbar, which is initially located just below the Drawing Toolbar. By left-clicking the small black triangle just right of Pen label we can choose the color of rectangle’s outline. Similar to that, by clicking the small black triangle just right of Brush label you can choose the color of rectangle’s interior. In this example you will draw rectangle with black outline and blue interior. All graphic media content (vector images, bitmap images and text objects) are drawn on Stage, the central part of Giotto’s window. You will see crosshair cursor. Press left button of your mouse where you want top left hand corner of your rectangle to be and drag (with left mouse button still pressed). When you release left mouse button a rectangle will be shown on the screen, as seen in the picture.

In a similar fashion, add an oval in the top right hand corner. Oval tool is located just to the left of Rectangle tool. For example, change Pen color to green and Brush color to red. You have now finished the drawing of the first key frame, which is at the same time the first frame of animation.

Next step is adding the second key frame. For example, choose 24th frame on the timeline by left-clicking it.

**Notice the blue marker on the timeline which shows that all future commands will refer to this frame!** Make this (24th) frame key frame by right-clicking it and choosing Insert Keyframe option from context-sensitive menu. Notice the difference in timeline – frames from 1st to 24th are now marked grey. If the 24th frame is not already selected, select it by left-clicking it.
on the timeline.

Now choose Selection tool from the Drawing Toolbar. Both rectangle and oval have green dot shaped markers around them, which means they are already selected. But you need to select only rectangle in order to move it. Left-click white space on the Stage and notice that green markers have vanished. Select blue rectangle by left-clicking it. Now drag the rectangle (without releasing left mouse button) to the bottom right corner of the Stage. This is the final rectangle’s position in animation. In a similar fashion drag red oval to the bottom left corner. You have now finished the drawing of the second key frame, which is at the same time 24th frame of the animation. Your screen should look like this:

Next step is adding tween frames between first and second key frame.

Left-click any of frames between 2nd and 23rd frame on the timeline. Notice the black marker on the timeline which shows that all future commands will refer to this frame!

Now right-click and choose Create Motion Tween from the context-sensitive menu.
After this, all frames from 2nd to 23rd became tween frames. Notice that frames from 2nd to 23rd on the timeline are now marked blue and there is a line with an arrow pointing to 24th frame. This is a visual indicator that those frames are tweened. Finally, we will set fps. This is done by invoking Modify/Document command from menu or by pressing Ctrl + J keyboard shortcut. Giotto will open a Document properties dialog where fps can be set. In this dialog we will enter desired fps in the Frame rate field. It is possible to set fps in any moment during the animation process and to change that value any time later.

Now you can see how your animation looks like in a built-in player. Left-click the 1st frame on the timeline, thus making it starting frame for animation playing, and click Play button on the Main Toolbar.

Your animation is displayed in the Stage. Notice that Giotto has created all the necessary
movements for you. All you had to do is to decide beginning and ending position of rectangle and oval and how many fps you want in your animation.

We created Giotto for designers, not coders

Giotto is the free Flash animation package made for you to design, not to code. With Giotto you can relax and focus your imagination on creative concepts, integrating stunning graphics and music into masterpieces of design.

The latest versions of Adobe® Flash® are moving away from designers. They are becoming more and more oriented towards coders. With the introduction of ActionScript 3, creating a simple action such as button click now requires ten times more coding than before.

Giotto has full support for ActionScript 2, but we made built-in effect generators that will help you create outstanding effects without any scripting at all. This software is made for you, designers.
Vector drawing, animations, sounds, filters...

Create complex vector illustrations in Giotto, anything from simple shapes to custom ones like polygon, star, or rounded rectangle. Transform vector objects in any imaginable way. Use bitmap filters like blur, drop shadow, glow, and all blend modes.

Organize all objects in the Library, create symbols like Movie Clips and Buttons for multiple use. Add text fields, with font kerning and paragraph alignment.

Animate objects with motion tweens and shape tweens. Add sound to movies and create advanced interactivity.
Powerful animated effects without any scripting at all

Giotto comes packed with more than 50 great effects that can be applied to both shapes and text. All effects are fully and easily customizable through the effect editor, and the results are immediately visible on the screen for you to play and explore.

There are more than 100 effect presets, to show the new user the different ways the effects can be adjusted.

These effects are based on ActionScript, but you don’t need to know the code behind them. Creating a perfect banner has never been easier!
Color palette editor that you can actually use

One of the main advantages of Giotto is its built-in editor for color palettes. Most color palette editors out there are quite useless, but we made Giotto’s very applicable in real life.

The Color palette editor uses special algorithms based on human perception of colors, rather than traditional mathematical models which produce poor results.

Once you select the base color of your project, you would have countless options to create palettes using many various matching algorithms. This makes the start of your new project quite easy!
User interface very similar to Adobe® Flash®

Switching from one animation software to another can be hard. We hate learning to use completely new software as much as you do. That’s why we created Giotto’s user interface very similar to Adobe® Flash® and simplified it further in order to enable designers to achieve results easier and faster.

Although it’s freeware, there’s no lacking of major features, and everything is where you think it should be – tools, context menus, object properties... so you will have the sense of familiarity and ease of use from the very first moment you open it.

We have added some new elements like natural color palette editor, effects generator, and other tools that create stunning effects without ever touching the ActionScript.

Vectorian Giotto isn’t just yet another animation software. Giotto is the full flash animation making application. It looks and feels like the sort of design application you’d see around; and yet, it runs – fast and effective, with practically no competition over freeware flash makers. And did we mention it’s FREE? Here are a few screenshots to show you how Giotto works, and what you can do with it;
You want people to love your web site. You want them to be impressed, amazed, thrilled. You need Flash animations that will light the spark in your visitors eyes, and encourage them to explore amazing things that you have to offer.

And yes, you can make that cool Flash animations by yourself, for free! Using Vectorian Giotto, a completely free Flash animation software, you’ll have a chance to make what you want, and how you want it! You just have to get through few tutorials, and there you go, you can start animating. It’s free for both personal and commercial use, so there are no boundaries to your creativity!

It’s absolutely free, as in $0.00! There is NO catch – download and start using it NOW.

More creativity, less scripting!

Giotto comes packed with more than 50 great animated effects that can be applied to both shapes and text, without any coding at all! Play with Flash effects through the effect editor, and see the amazing animations immediately on the screen.

You only need to focus on expressing your creativity and making Flash animations, there’s no need for scripting and coding, and even no need to pay anything!

Familiar user interface.
Giotto follows good practice of other successful design software. You don’t have to learn to drive again. Everything feels like home – the user interface, motion tweens, symbols, library, filters like blur or drop shadow...

It’s really like switching from one browser to another. Giotto’s user interface looks, feels and smells like the top commercial Flash design software packages, so you can make a transition without a hussle, absolutely free!

Exciting new features!

Advanced color palette editor that REALLY creates cool palettes. Shape tweening and morphing that actually WORKS. Dozens of new features that will make you fall in love with Giotto right away! Features are all integrated, and work together giving you a chance to just make that perfect Flash banner or any other Flash animation. While you use it, you will be amazed to see that more and more functionalities will make your life easier. And if you have an idea, a feature request, or want to report an issue, we are here to help. We listen to our users!

Contacting Vectorian Inc.

Vectorian Inc., developer of Vectorian Giotto, is a Canadian software company, incorporated in the year 2005.

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About Us – Vectorian Inc.

Vectorian Inc. is a Canadian software company. Our mission is to bring free-of-charge Flash animation creation to the World. Because of that, we released our Vectorian Giotto Flash authoring tool as freeware software. We are committed to offer software that will help you to express your design ideas in area of vector graphics and animation. Inspired by the previous work in this field, our efforts are aimed towards creating an advanced but completely free product for every Flash designer. Our determination to improving our software and underlying technology is strong – so feel free to contacts us with any issues you might have or suggestions for future improvements.