

This is a (MIRROR SITE) with Active links.
(The Stonehenge Link will probably report an Error & lead into the INTEL site.)

See the Megalith Virtual Reality Page for the most recent Models sent to us.)

Intel and English Heritage Unveil Virtual Reality Models of Stonehenge

Internet model lets PC users around the world explore Stonehenge in 3D; Photorealistic model to help return Stonehenge to its ancient landscape setting

LONDON, June 20 1996 -- On the eve of the summer solstice, Intel Corporation, English Heritage and leaders in the field of Intel architecture-based virtual reality (VR) unveiled VR models of Stonehenge developed on Intel's Pentium® Pro processor.

Beginning today, people from around the world can explore a scientifically accurate, 3D model of Stonehenge from a Pentium® processor-based PC connected to Intel's corporate presence server on the Internet: www.intel.com. PC users can navigate [Stonehenge](#) in 10 different eras from 8500BC to 2000AD. The model includes educational sections addressing the mysteries of Stonehenge, including the prehistoric people who built it, the beliefs that may have inspired the monument and the techniques used to shape, transport and erect the huge stones.

Sir Jocelyn Stevens, Chairman of English Heritage, said, "It is extremely exciting that from today, high-tech tourists from around the world can visit Stonehenge on the Internet to see and study the development of one of the world's oldest and least understood prehistoric sites. It's a fantastic technical achievement and a fundamental part of our vision for increasing access to this mysterious monument and increasing our understanding of the enigma that is Stonehenge."

Intel and English Heritage also unveiled one of the most ambitious VR projects to date: a photorealistic VR model of Stonehenge that is being used in a bid to restore Stonehenge and nearby monuments to their ancient landscape setting.

Sir Jocelyn Stevens added, "With the help of VR technology we can see exactly what the 'Stonehenge Millenium Park' will look like. With the 20th century clutter of roads, traffic and noise removed, it will be the greatest prehistoric monument park in the world and, at last, a fit setting, worthy of its status as a World Heritage Site. In the next millenium, people will be able to roam freely over 4,000 acres of unspoiled Wiltshire downland and explore 450 nearby ancient monuments, built between 5,000 and 3,000 years ago."

Steve Poole, vice president of sales and general manager of Intel Europe, said, "As a UK neighbor to Stonehenge for 15 years, Intel is proud to be using its latest microprocessor and Internet technology to help English Heritage educate the world about Stonehenge, while helping to conserve this engineering wonder of the ancient world."

Developing the VR Models of Stonehenge

The Internet VR model of Stonehenge was developed by Intel, English Heritage and Superscape VR plc of Hook, UK. The VR model was digitally rendered for the Internet on a 166MHz Pentium Pro processor-based PC using Superscape VRT* virtual reality authoring software.

The photorealistic VR model of Stonehenge was digitally rendered on the 200MHz Pentium Pro processor using thousands of precise photogrammetry photos of the stones along with geographic information system (GIS) data of the Stonehenge landscape and accurate astronomical maps. The model was developed under the direction of English Heritage archaeologists by VR Solutions Limited of Salford, UK on an Intergraph TDZ*-400 graphics workstation from the Intergraph Technology Center in Swindon, UK. The model was developed using the WorldToolKit* for Windows* NT from Sense8* Corporation of Mill Valley, California.

According to Professor Robert J. Stone, Director and General Manager of VR Solutions, "Twelve months ago, I wouldn't have believed it possible to render such a visually detailed virtual reality model of Stonehenge -- plus the local terrain, an accurate night time sky and real-time sunrise special effects -- on anything other than a very expensive graphics supercomputer. Yet, this is what we have achieved, on a Pentium Pro processor-based Intergraph system. Intel's processor technologies have advanced at such an impressive rate, convincing me we are about to witness a new era in virtual reality, making these kinds of scientific and educational experiences affordable to everyone."

Using the Internet VR Model of Stonehenge

The Internet model at www.intel.com is scaleable in design, allowing users with faster Pentium processor-based PCs to receive higher levels of detail and achieve more realistic frame rates. A sundial icon is used to move forward and backward in time, and mouse-driven directional controls allow the user to approach objects from any angle as well as fly over the VR scenes. The VR model can be seen in sunlit and moonlit conditions, and the Solstice sunrise can be observed from within the virtual Henge.

The screen is split between educational textual information on the left and a VR environment on the right. A new, 3D hypertext technique allows the user to "hot link" from hypertext words to corresponding features in the VR model. Users can choose a "Virtual Tour" of Stonehenge or use the "Explore" option to play an educational game. The model includes tourist information including details on how to reach Stonehenge, local accommodations and nearby places of interest.

For more information, read [STONEHENGE: A Behind-the-Scenes Look](#).

Intel, the world's largest computer chip maker, is also a leading manufacturer of personal computer, networking and communications products.



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