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Subject: New tool I am working on, feedback wanted  
Posted by [jonwil](#) on Mon, 20 Aug 2012 06:17:55 GMT

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Renegade supports a feature called "alternate materials". That is, when a building is killed (or when it goes low power), the materials on its meshes get changed. This can mean changes to such things as vertex materials, shaders, textures and texture coordinates.

This feature was originally created for use by the Westwood light-mapping system (so as to change the lightmaps over to "dead" ones when the building is killed/low power and as far as I can tell is not supported by the w3d export plugin at all.

I am the process of writing a tool that will let you make use of this feature for your own maps. (and before anyone says otherwise, no, using tiles for your building exteriors and interiors rather than terrain is not the answer, it uses more RAM, GPU, CPU etc)

The current thinking of how this would work is that you would produce your mesh with the texturing/materials/etc for the normal state and export it. Then you would change the materials without changing the geometry (there would be details available of whats safe to change and whats not) to create the "dead" state and export that. Then you would take both w3d files and run them through a tool that would combine both w3d files into one w3d file.

Does anyone have any comments on this idea? Does anyone have any suggestions for a better way to do this? Or a way to make it easier for the modelers?

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Subject: Re: New tool I am working on, feedback wanted  
Posted by [reborn](#) on Mon, 20 Aug 2012 08:38:21 GMT

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It sounds great, custom maps don't often have this feature, and I guess if they do, they're using the only method available to them, which you said isn't the best way to do it.

Does it work only for buildings, or would this open up possibilities for other objects, too?

That other tool you were working on would also be pretty neat:

<http://www.renegadeforums.com/index.php?t=msg&th=22644&start=0&rid=3415>

Good job!

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Subject: Re: New tool I am working on, feedback wanted  
Posted by [jonwil](#) on Mon, 20 Aug 2012 09:07:25 GMT

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That other tool (to generate proper prelit light-map chunks) isn't going to happen at this point. But combine the tool in this thread with other 4.0RC1 changes and you will be able to do something

that's pretty close to WS style light-mapping (assuming you know how to build the actual light-map textures that is)

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Subject: Re: New tool I am working on, feedback wanted

Posted by [Mauler](#) on Tue, 21 Aug 2012 03:12:41 GMT

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All this is great but light mapping is not easy and it very time consuming, so experience with unwrapping and graphic software is needed

Also the method you mentioned would be the easiest imho, all that really needs changing in the main interior or exterior of the structure would be the lightmap

I would love to know how alternate materials can be applied.. Seems there are some w3d flags we do not have access to in the current max tools

And the animated tiles is only thing to come close to what Westwood had done with their structures, not to mention the ability to disable vertex lighting from max also brought it a lot closer than anyone else has, without custom tools.

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Subject: Re: New tool I am working on, feedback wanted

Posted by [sla.ro\(master\)](#) on Tue, 21 Aug 2012 10:31:10 GMT

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/me wants bumping maps/better lighting/shadows (in one word, better shaders)

this is nice too. Keep up the good work

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Subject: Re: New tool I am working on, feedback wanted

Posted by [jonwil](#) on Tue, 21 Aug 2012 11:33:14 GMT

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I have now written this tool and it (along with other things appearing in the latest scripts build) will allow modders to do lighting that is as close to proper Westwood style lightmaps as its possible to get without the tools Westwood used.

Details of this tool will be posted as appropriate when the next scripts build is released.

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Subject: Re: New tool I am working on, feedback wanted

Posted by [OWA](#) on Sat, 25 Aug 2012 01:10:21 GMT

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The method sounds great for modellers jonwil. Nice one!

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Subject: Re: New tool I am working on, feedback wanted

Posted by [Mauler](#) on Sat, 25 Aug 2012 03:21:27 GMT

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So disabling the vertex lighting won't be included with these tools?

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Subject: Re: New tool I am working on, feedback wanted

Posted by [Generalcamo](#) on Sat, 25 Aug 2012 19:43:17 GMT

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Actually, taking it from the Test Build Changelog, there are two new features coming soon. One is a User-Defined property set in 3ds max/Gmax that disables vertex lighting. And the other is a fix to a certain LE tool.

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