

SpaceNavigator 3D mice aid creativity at Flynn Product Design

3D Mouse: SpaceNavigator®

Application: Autodesk Inventor, Rhino 3D



As a company that has made a name for itself creating innovative and stylish products it follows that Flynn Product Design Ltd has embraced 3Dconnexion 3D mice as an integral part of the design process.

Flynn Product Design (FPD) is an independent product design consultancy based in Bristol, United Kingdom. Established in 2007 by managing director Chris Flynn, the company has a broad range of experience working on projects across a variety of markets including consumer technology, medical device technology, transport, lighting and furniture. "I really enjoy the cross fertilisation and dynamism of working across different market sectors," says Chris. "Rather than becoming shaped and guided by one discipline we strive for creative freedom and a good sense of well rounded market focused styling."

Chris trained on Autodesk Inventor and also uses McNeel's freeform solid modelling software, Rhino 3D. He has been using a 3Dconnexion 3D mouse for five years having been introduced to the products while working for architectural firm Architen Landrell.

"Architen Landrell specialises in tensile fabric structures like the Millennium Dome and the design team there was interested in what Autodesk Inventor might bring to the business," explains Chris. "The person who came to demo the software was using a 3Dconnexion 3D mouse

and I was really impressed with how the 3D mouse brought Inventor to life. The whole thing looked slick and I was sold straight away."

Chris has been using a 3Dconnexion 3D mouse since that first encounter and is currently using a SpaceNavigator. "I'm a big fan," he says. "Working in 3D it makes sense to use a 3D mouse, it gives me enhanced immersion in the environment. I also really like the build quality of the SpaceNavigator. It's a heavy, well-designed object with impressive 3D sensor technology that gives precise control."

3Dconnexion 3D mice allow users to control their viewpoint and move in three dimensions simultaneously by gently pushing, pulling, twisting or tilting the controller cap. One hand engages the 3D mouse to position the model while the other hand simultaneously uses the traditional mouse to select, create or edit the model.

"It feels natural to be using both hands," says Chris, "You would use both hands working on a physical object in the real world so it makes sense to approach 3D



modelling in the same way and because you're not having to think about how to navigate around your model, you spend more time concentrating on designing and being creative. I find myself rolling the model around while I'm thinking. It's the equivalent of a painter looking out of the window, or a copywriter chewing a pencil. Working with a 3D mouse really helps in that respect. It actually adds to the creative process."

Before setting up Flynn Product Design, Chris was working as a freelancer and would always take his 3D mouse with him. "When you go in-house as a freelancer and work alongside other designers you want to hit the ground running and prove you are worth your salt," says Chris. "Having the 3D mouse definitely helps with that. A 3D mouse gives you a direct link to your model and this accelerates the design process from concept to delivering a product to market. I'm always surprised when I meet a designer who doesn't use one. I wouldn't go back."

