

Source: Flatland Productions Inc.

### Artificial Intelligence to Promote Feature Film 'Flatland'

HUNTSVILLE, Ala., Aug. 16, 2007 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- You're an independent filmmaker. You don't have a big Hollywood marketing budget. How do you market your film?

Make robots, of course!

Or, to be more precise, you make "chatbots."

"Flatland was a different kind of film; strange, intellectual, bizarre," said Ladd Ehlinger Jr., director of the animated feature. "So I wanted something different to promote it."

Chat room regulars may be familiar with the concept of a "chatbot." Alternately referred to as "pornbots," because they're often employed by the adult entertainment industry, they are also almost universally despised.

"No one likes chatbots that pretend to be humans," said Ehlinger. "But I wondered if they could be put to better use? To be entertaining in and of themselves, to answer questions about my film, to introduce people to the world of Flatland?" said Ehlinger.

Flatland, an animated science fiction feature film based on the 1884 novel by Edwin A. Abbott, is popular with mathematicians and computer scientists for its explorations into such heady subjects as dimensionality and the nature of reality.

It tells the story of a world inhabited by living geometric figures: triangles, squares, pentagons, hexagons, etc. Its main character is A Square, who has a line for a wife and five pentagonal sons.

"Flatland has these creatures that look like amoebas. I thought, wouldn't it be fun to let people interact with them?" said Ehlinger. "I looked at programming the whole thing in-house, which would have been really time consuming and expensive. But then I lucked out and found MyCyberTwin."

MyCyberTwin ([www.mycybertwin.com](http://www.mycybertwin.com)) is a new technology providing intelligent software clones who can have life-like conversations on behalf of their human twins. MyCyberTwin users can easily create online clones that can chat on websites and through social networks such as MySpace, blogs, dating sites, Second Life and MSN instant messaging.

Liesl Capper, CEO of MyCyberTwin, said: "Ladd is an innovative filmmaker, and his film Flatland has cult status all over the world. He has shown visionary abilities in our work with him. Ladd's use of our technology to depict two dimensional characters struggling to make sense of a three dimensional world is a juicy, ironic twist."

So how is the Flatland chatbot campaign going?

"People are really intrigued by it," said Ladd. "We have several different characters to choose from. A Square is pleasant and polite. Colonel Triangle is mean and loves to pick fights. He's the most popular so far. You'd be surprised at how long someone will fight a fictional character online."

Soon the Internet may be filled with all sorts of fictional characters you can chat with. Maybe you could discuss the movie "Shrek" with Shrek himself, or have a shouting match with Darth Vader, or flirt with Brad Pitt or Angelina Jolie.

And it all started with A simple Square.

You can chat with A Square and other Flatlanders at [www.FlatlandTheFilm.com](http://www.FlatlandTheFilm.com)

MyCyberTwin can be found at [www.MyCyberTwin.com](http://www.MyCyberTwin.com).

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