



### *Storyboard Pro by Toon Boom*

Software: Storyboard Pro

Developer: Toon Boom ([ToonBoom.com](http://ToonBoom.com))

Reviewer: Charles Renne / Underproduction Multi-Media (<http://www.d-mag.org>)

Rating: 4.5 out of 5 stars

Conveying a vision to the client is probably one of the hardest parts of my job as a video professional, especially to the business minded, tight budgeted executives that are still on the fence as to why they "need" our services. For years we have feverishly scratched out cartoonish figures over text with a series of pencil marked camera moves accompanied with my poor voice over and sound effects. So when I got my hands on our copy of Storyboard Pro I was excited to say the least.

Installation went easy on my cheesy low powered, 1.6 GHz laptop running Vista (Toon Boom recommends 2 GHz or better). The only down fall which I will say is probably a necessary evil though, is that the program uses a USB dongle for software security and seat licensing. The dongle is required for use of the program so don't lose it! This is definitely the biggest drawback of the program, especially when you're using it as a mobile production tool.

The guide book warns the new user that this will not be a substitute for planning, but you'll find that it's a huge asset in putting all the parts together. The book even walks you through the planning stages!

Storyboard Pro works a lot like illustrator or freehand for drawing and Photoshop or after effects because of it's layering. It works best with a drawing pad which would more accurately portray the sensitivity of your strokes. Amazingly enough this little powerhouse can import and export AAF, CSV, PDF, PSD, SWF, AI, JPG, TGA, PNG and QuickTime file formatting. This allows almost anyone with a creative design program to be part of the storyboarding process. Exporting to QT also allows for distance approval from your client, which saves on money and headaches.

The layering process used will be familiar to anyone in the industry, so don't be afraid to jump in the Toon Boom pool. Revisions to your story are as easy a word processing or changing a layer in Photoshop. You can import a script, logos, and pictures into your timeline and even add music or voice over. If you just can't live without those little cartoon boxes on paper don't worry. Storyboard Pro will even let you print everything out, the old fashioned way.

In summary, although this is not a "video editing" program, (which it is not intended to be), if you've done your homework and planned ahead there is no reason your vision will not be seen clearly by your customer. If they could find a way to ditch the dongle, it would have been 5 out of 5 stars. In my book, it is a very valuable tool in any production house and it will find many hours of use here with our staff.