



By  
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This layer-based program helps translate ideas into something more tangible.

# Toon Boom's Storyboard Pro

As a filmmaker I know the importance of the preproduction process. Many battles are won or lost depending upon the prep you do. Not only do you need a plan of attack, but you have to be able to funnel that information to your crew and talent. Translating your ideas into something tangible has always been the quest for the Holy Grail.

What if your investor, agency or named talent wants something visual other than your script? I can say from experience it's a different game when you can enter a meeting with more than just an idea and a screenplay.

As I searched long and hard to find a solid solution for bringing my stories to life I happily stumbled upon the pot of gold at the end of my rainbow. Behold Storyboard Pro by Toon Boom.

## WHAT IS IT?

Toon Boom's Storyboard Pro is an easy-to-use, extremely powerful storyboarding system for previsualizing your projects. Not only can you do any kind of drawing in it, but you can also animate your drawings. Very cool indeed. The simple user interface allows even the most technologically challenged to become the master of their domain. Toon Boom certainly made sure I was able to spend more time creating and less time learning. They even offer users some great tutorials online to get you started quickly.

Storyboard Pro comes with a complete set of WYSIWYG vector-based drawing tools. For those not in the know, vector graphics are resolution independent. Scale them to any size and they retain their quality. I was pleased to find that my Wacom tablet was fully supported. I could draw with ease, vary my pen's pressure, and even use the pen's eraser.

If you have a hard time drawing even the finest of stick figures don't fret. Storyboard

Pro comes with a built-in library of characters, locations, props and actions. You can even import a slew of graphic files, such as PNG, PSD and JPG, and drag them into your panels and layers. Now you have no excuse.

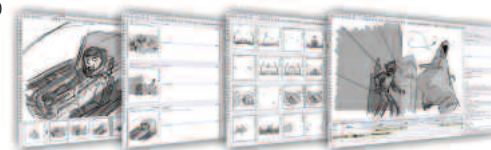
## VITAL STATS

**PRODUCT:** Toon Boom's Storyboard Pro

**WEBSITE:** [www.toonboom.com](http://www.toonboom.com)

**PRICE:** \$899.99

- easy-to-use
- supports Wacom tablets
- animates camera moves



select what you need to move, place or transform, then click on where you want it to end up. Storyboard Pro does the rest. No messy keyframes to deal with. You can also animate camera moves such as zoom and

## LAYERS & PANELS

As I began drawing my storyboard I realized it would have been nice to add a rolling hillside in my background. Did I have to start over? Not at all. Storyboard Pro is a layer-based program. Add as many layers as you like, just as you would in Photoshop or other layer-based programs, to create complex scenes. I give kudos for this feature as my workflow is always to keep assets in their own layers. Since Storyboard Pro allows you to animate a layer's position, scaling and rotation, having the assets in independent layers makes them much easier to manage. You can also drag and drop layers for easy rearrangement.

Since a scene may be ultra long or highly detailed, it's nice that Storyboard Pro offers me unlimited amounts of panels for my boards. I love the fact that I can, again, easily drag and drop the panels if I need to rearrange them. This is great for me, as I tend to pour my creativity out on the page and then rearrange them like a puzzle. My options are always open using Storyboard Pro. As I get the panels into an arrangement I like, I can place transitions between shots, such as cut, dissolve and wipe. This is a great feature when exporting an animated file for review.

dolly. Add ease in and ease out acceleration for smooth motions and realism.

The timeline is where the real power lies in Storyboard Pro. The timeline will display thumbnails of your panels. This will allow you to move them around to your liking. You can add audio files and link them to particular panels for sync. The best part? Whether you want to view a panel or the entire storyboard you get realtime playback of any animation without having to wait around for a long render process. I plan on recording some dialogue, adding music and sound effects for a film I am currently working on to show potential investors. Very powerful stuff.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

I really enjoy using Storyboard Pro. It is a fast and powerful solution for visual presentation of ideas for me. Toon Boom said the product was developed with storyboard professionals and you can see this is true. The only feature that I didn't like about Storyboard Pro was that it comes with a dongle. I have never been a fan of dongles, preferring a set number of installs instead. This is a small drawback for me in return for such a powerful application. I'm sure it's due to the fact that I have lost dongles on other programs and have gone a bit crazy trying to locate them. That being said, Storyboard Pro is extremely easy to use, and with a price of just under \$900, it is a must for any filmmaker.

Planning your shots and seeing them come to life will not only save you time on the set but, more importantly, it will save you money. Storyboard Pro will definitely be a part of my filmmaking arsenal. Now where did I leave that darn dongle?



**Storyboard Pro allows users to import their PNG, PSD and JPG files.**

## ANIMATING

Making your boards come to life is such a simple process with Storyboard Pro. Simply

■ POST