

ToonBoom StoryBoard review



Review by [Morten Marius M. M. Apenes](#)

If you feel that you are reinventing the wheel every time you want to create and share a storyboard, this could be the perfect tool for you.

What does it do? A simple way to make, animate and export a storyboard to a file for sharing

Platforms: Windows / Mac OSX

Manufacturer: Toon Boom Animation

Website: <http://www.toonboom.com/>

Price: Full version \$ 899.99. With a Wacom tablet \$ 999.99.

What is ToonBoom StoryBoard (TBSB)?

In short, this is a tool to make, animate and export a storyboards with your own text and voice comments, to a movie or a PDF. It is a tool for those of us who are involved in movie productions, animation projects, presentations or game development. It is a software for those of us with little or no time to learn new advanced software. It is simple and intuitive to use and quick to learn.

My background

I am a flash-designer/ animator, and accustomed to applications as Photoshop, Illustrator and of course Flash. (And just for the record: I was not a huge fan of Toon Boom Studio.)

As a designer and animator, I am often too eager to get started and not a big fan of tutorials and manuals. But the tutorial-movie that came with TBSB was easy and straightforward. After that I dove right into the program and started to create.

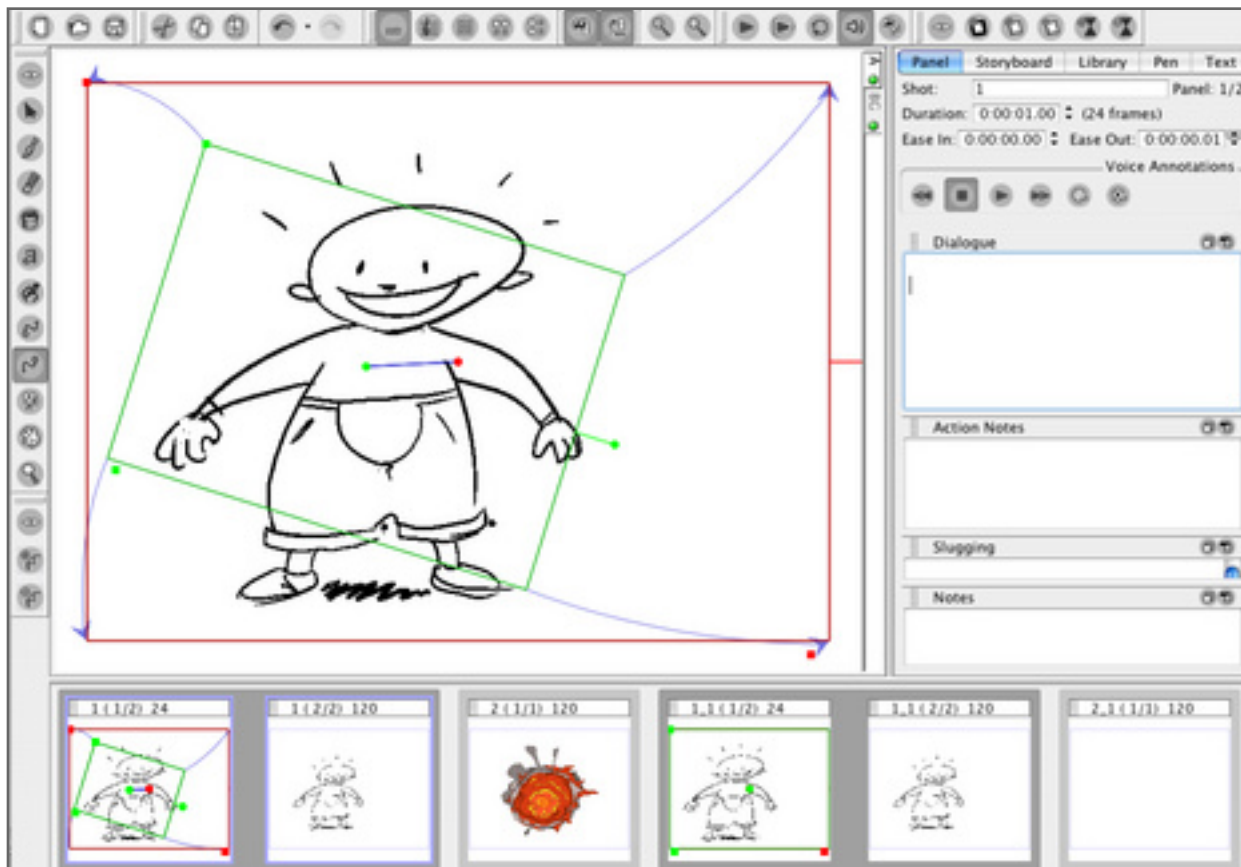
Ease of use

Fiddling around on my own for a couple of hours, I quickly got the hang of the basics. I used the template-objects, I used my built in laptop microphone to add comments, used animation and camera movements without too much fuzz. I struggled a bit with copying and pasting stuff, as I was unsure what I actually was copying. I never found the "paste in place"-function that I use a lot in Illustrator and Flash, and ended up copying and pasting the frames. It felt very inconvenient doing it this way, but in time i might find my own tricks and shortcuts.

Key Features

Naturally, TBSB is built around storyboard Frames or shots. There are two kinds: A shot, and a panel. A shot is the main frame, and the panel or panels are one or more subframes. Each Frame has it's own layers and can be annotated in the various text-fields separated as "Dialogue", "Action notes", "Slugging" etc. You can also name each shot and your own voice annotations. You can do rough animations in the different layers, indicating the movement and speed of characters and elements. There is a quick

playback function for each shot and the entire storyboard. When you are set and done, you can export this PDF or various movie formats.



Pros and cons

I have used a Wacom tablet for everything the last six years, and this feel like the natural tool to use with TBSB. It has good support for pressure sensitivity. The brush tool is very nice for squiggles and roughs, but when drawing an actual storyboard, I personally like the good old analog method with pen and paper. Fortunately TBSB supports this. So if you would like to base your storyboard on scanned pictures and drawings, you are free to do so.

Although this is built around a timeline that is very different from the one I am used to from Flash. My biggest challenge was to forget how things are solved in Flash. TBSB is different in every way. I would imagine it might be easier to learn this if you don't know Flash or Aftereffects.

Conclusion

- It is a very nice and easy to use program
- It is too expensive for the infrequent user - but if storyboarding is part of your business, you could quickly save the \$ 899.99 in slicker output and faster workflow
- The output-option allows you to export the various Layouts as PDF
- If it had support for SWF-output and a nonlinear feature as well (for storyboarding websites and games)
- it would be a "must have" for creatives in other businesses than film and animation as well.

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Published: 11 Oct 2006