

Hi,

I'm still experimenting about the best way to add images (or animations) to the docs. I think that one of the major issues with images is the problem of updating (especially these days with the faster pace of development). And this problem gets much worse if you add some ornaments to the screenshot (such as text, arrows, ...), which in my view every image should have.

I would like to propose a new kind of workflow that could be a solution and also will empower Blender even a little more. Can you give me some feedback on it?

[Right now, I'm using svg-images (with a bitmap of the screenshot embedded). So, if the embedded image has to change (due to blender change in interface), you can simply create a new screenshot and paste it in. Or if the text/arrows/... have to change, you can only update those. The SVG approach has also some disadvantages: file size, difficult to animate or add interaction; cfr user-controlled slide show of images.

The images for the Blender docs will be made within Blender. For each image, there exists a blend-file and a png-file.

The Blend file contains a scene that is especially prepared to create the screenshot (correct workspace, panel layout, added objects in the scene, ...). Special attention should be given to the resolution of the Blender-window on the monitor. This should be standardized (eg. 1920 x 1080) so that other users (with other monitors) could recreate this scene easily. [In the accompanying blend-file, this scene is called scene, has the VSE setup in Sequencer & Preview with removal of all other windows. The resolution is set to 1920 x 1080.]

With the screen grabbing app of choice, a screenshot is made and copied on the clipboard. With a free addon (ImagePaste: <https://github.com/Yeetus3141/ImagePaste>), this image could be easily pasted as an image on a plane. Be sure to enable the File > External data > Automatically pack external resources).

In a second scene (called Annotate in the example), this image as plane is inserted. The camera and lightning/or shading should be in place and remains the same for other screenshots. Different screenshots could be placed in consecutive frames.

Text could be added with the 3D Text object. Arrows and other ornaments could easily be added with a Grease Pencil object.

If everything is OK, a render output path is specified and a png (or png sequence) is rendered in the same folder of the blend-file and with the same name.

If anything has to be changed later-on, this could be done in the blend-file with overwriting of the previous render. It should be even possible to store previous Blender-versions doc-images (call the scenes annotate-2.92, annotate-2.93, ...).

I've tried this workflow with the accompanying example. Right now, there are still a few issues and questions. If you find this a viable approach, I could work on it further. What do you think?