

## Section 3: Virtual Reality Methods and Techniques#

### 3.10 Other Environments

There are several other virtual reality development environments. This is a rapidly changing market place and this section will look at some VR products which have recently been withdrawn because they have been superseded, failed to live up to their initial promise or were not commercially viable.

When selecting a product, VR developers are recommended to consider which formats are supported and which plug-ins are required to view their worlds. This should help to assess whether users will be able to continue to view their virtual worlds should the development environment be withdrawn.

#### 3.10.1 Superscape

Superscape DO3D, 3DWebmaster and VRT were VR authoring software developed by [Superscape](#) for creating 3-D worlds. All three had a world editor with a point and click interface for construction of virtual reality worlds and a large library of shapes, objects, sounds and textures. DO3D was aimed at home use and was limited to creating worlds from the library using simple shapes. 3D Webmaster had a shape editor to allow construction of user-defined shapes which could then be used in the world editor. It was possible to create hotlinks easily and integrate the worlds into 3-D web-pages, a [Java](#) interface allowing two-way communication between the 3-D web-page and Java applets. Superscape Control Language (SCL) allowed behaviours and interaction to be programmed into worlds. VRT was the high-end product; it added the capability of building stand-alone applications for Windows (viewed using Superscape's Visualiser program), adding libraries of code written in C and had three extra editors for customising keyboard control, menus and dialog boxes and designing user interfaces.

All three authoring tools supported SVR, Superscape's 3D graphics format, and VRML97. Unfortunately all have now been withdrawn from the market by Superscape. The Viscap viewer (used to view models built using these tools) is similarly no longer available for download from Superscape.

#### 3.10.2 Microsoft Chromeffects

Chromeffects was seen as Microsoft's answer to VRML. With Chromeffects, Microsoft aimed to integrate virtual reality into web-pages and to offer a virtual reality authoring tool as part of the Windows platform. A software developer's kit was released but, following feedback, Microsoft withdrew Chromeffects pending more development work. Software developers had asked for better compliance with World Wide Web Consortium standards.