Leap Motion's V2 takes bow as public developer beta (w/ Video)

May 29 2014, by Nancy Owano

Leap Motion on Wednesday released its Version 2 software to developers in a public beta. The update is available to developers now, and no new hardware will be required. The company wants developers to be the first to work with V2 before the new version receives its consumer release. According to the Leap Motion blog, this is the first of several major updates to come before the consumer release. The significance of the update is that the new version will make it possible for developers to leverage more intricate tracking capabilities, for

building greater content.

The new motion tracking software is more precise. According to the company, you get the same speed and positional accuracy of version 1 but this time around the precision is in how the software can now track the actual joints and bones inside each of the fingers. Fuller information allows for "robust" hand models. Fingers are tracked even when they are not seen by the controller, as might happen if hands are turned vertically or if you intertwine the fingers of the left and right hands. The new version offers improved resistance to ambient infrared light and numerous finger and hand labels. Every finger, hand, and joint now has anatomical labels such as 'pinky', 'left hand', and 'proximal phalanges'. Overall, developers can expect more granular data about the user's hands and fingers – 27 dimensions per hand, according to Leap Motion.

The Leap Motion Controller senses how you naturally move your hands and lets you use your computer in a new way. CEO Michael Buckwald blogged about the new version for developers, which marks another chapter in the company mission to let people interact with applications similar to the way they do in the physical world. "This means taking things like sculpting a lump of clay, snapping together building blocks, or learning to play an instrument – the types of actions 99% of people just won't or can't do on a computer with traditional input devices – and making them possible and instantly accessible to anyone who knows how to do them with their physical hands in the real world," he said.

His additional message to developers is that the company wants to make it easier for developers to build transformative applications across a range of platforms – not just computers but moving towards other fields such as automotive, smart homes, and healthcare.

Tim Moynihan writing in Wired commented on various aspects of the V2 release for developers. Now individual joints and bones can be

mapped to specific input rules, he said, adding that "developers can create software that translates a movement of the index finger knuckle as a completely different input than a movement of the middle finger knuckle."

More information: Leap Morion Blog: www.leapmotion.com/blog/leap-m … blic-developer-beta/