ScratchLabs

An R&D program at the MIT Media Lab to support the continuing development and dissemination of Scratch

Background

Scratch is a new programming environment that makes it easier to create your own interactive stories, games, and animations – and share your creations on the web (http://scratch.mit.edu). To create Scratch programs, you simply snap together graphical building blocks, without any of the obscure syntax and punctuation of traditional programming languages. The Scratch website features a wide variety of interactive projects from around the world; it has been called "the YouTube of interactive media."

Scratch is designed especially to help people (ages 8 and up) develop 21st century learning skills. As people program and share Scratch projects, they learn to think creatively, reason systematically, and work collaboratively.

The Lifelong Kindergarten research group at the MIT Media Lab has been developing Scratch since 2003, with primary funding from the National Science Foundation. The software and accompanying website were publicly launched in May 2007. Since then, more than 10 million people visited the Scratch website, more than 1 million people downloaded Scratch software, and more than 500,000 user-created projects have been uploaded to the Scratch website. All Scratch software and services are available free of charge. Our ultimate goal is to democratize digital expression, so that everyone – of all ages, from all backgrounds – can create and control dynamic, interactive media.

ScratchLabs Initiatives

The MIT Media Lab established **ScratchLabs** as an R&D program to support the continued development and dissemination of Scratch throughout the world. Among its initiatives, ScratchLabs will:

- Continue to add new features to the Scratch software and website
- Develop a web-based version of Scratch, to support new forms of sharing and encourage new types of Scratch projects that leverage social media
- Develop versions of Scratch that support interaction with mobile devices
- Explore new forms of collaboration, including real-time interaction between Scratch projects and use of Scratch in shared virtual worlds
- Develop versions of Scratch to control robotic construction kits and personal robots
- Develop educational materials to support the introduction of Scratch in K-12 schools and after-school programs
- Create and support an online community where educators can share ideas, sample projects, curriculum materials, and strategies for introducing Scratch
- Extend Scratch so that it is better suited as an introductory language for computer-science education
- Establish testbeds and pilot sites to explore the use of Scratch in real-world settings

Sponsorship

We are seeking sponsors to support the work of ScratchLabs. All sponsors of ScratchLabs are entitled to the following benefits:

- Sponsor name listed on the Scratch website
- Membership on the ScratchLabs Sponsors Committee, with opportunities to influence future directions of Scratch development efforts
- Regular updates on the latest developments at ScratchLabs.
- Right to run a local Scratch community website (serving a particular language, culture, or geographic region) as part of the Federation of Scratch Websites
- Invitations to MIT Media Lab special events
- Free registration to Scratch@MIT conferences

Principal Sponsors of ScratchLabs are entitled to all of the above benefits, plus the following special benefits:

- Collaboration with MIT Scratch Team on specific Scratch-related projects – for example, integration of Scratch technology into sponsor products
- Sponsor name on the opening splash screen of Scratch software.
- Special recognition as Principal Sponsor at Scratch@MIT conferences