Level of Detail (LOD)

Description

This chapter briefly describes Level Of Detail techniques supported by Candera.

See also:

- Level of Detail in SceneComposer User Manual

Example Solution:

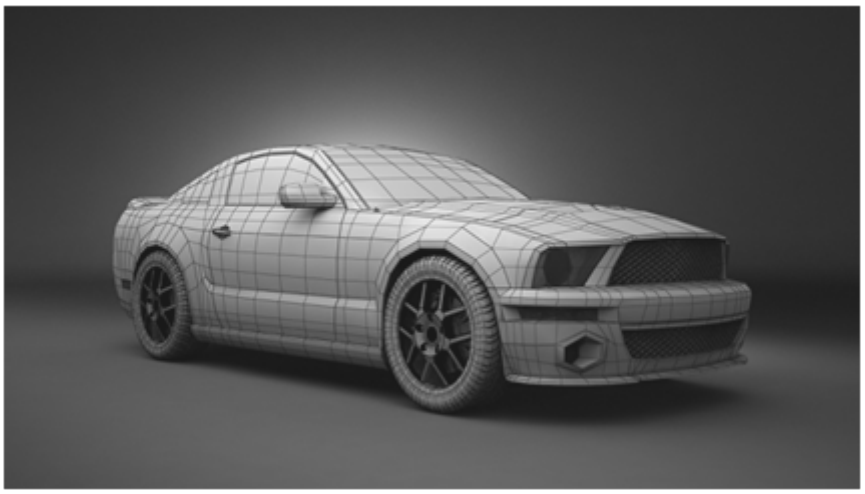
- LODSolution from folder *cgi_studio_player/content/Tutorials/08_SpecialRenderTechniques/Special3DRenderTechniques*

Introduction

Level of Detail

```
Level of detail (LOD) is a discipline of interactive computer graphics attempts
to bridge complexity and performance by regulating the amount of detail used
to represent the virtual world.
```

(Level of Detail for 3D Graphics, David Luebke, Morgan Kaufmann Publisher, 2003)



Motivation

Reduce render complexity in order to increase runtime performance with minimal or without visual penalty

Detail Simplifications

- Geometric: Meshes, Imposters, Shadow LOD, ...
- Non-geometric: Shader, Lighting, Textures (MipMapping), Material, ...

Level of Detail - Geometry Reduction Types

Discrete LOD

- Creates multiple versions of an object with different level of details. Often refered to as isotropic or view-independent LOD, as detail reduction is applied uniformly accross the object.

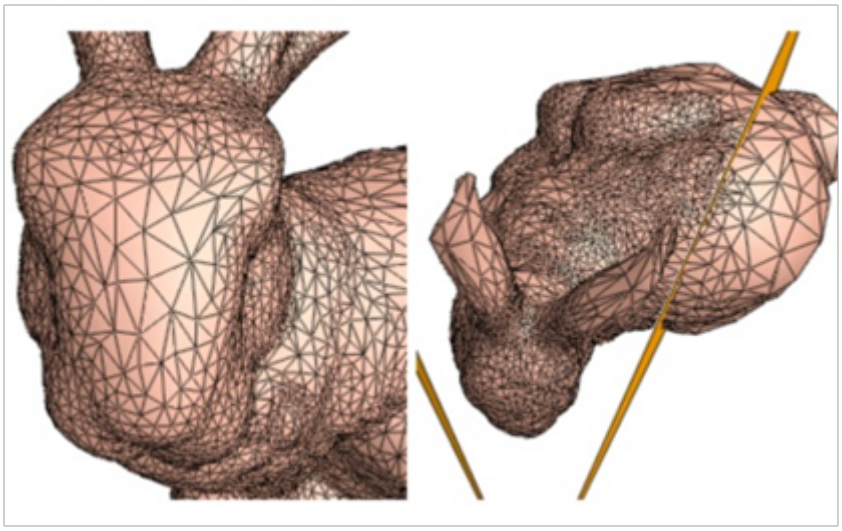
- Widely used in real time environments as LOD levels are generated during an offline preprocess. Supported by Candera.

Continuous or progressive LOD

- Simplification system creates a data structure encoding a continuous spectrum of detail. The desired LOD is extracted from this structure at run-time. Supports LOD streaming and interruptible loading.

View-dependent LOD

- Extends continuous LOD by using view-dependent simplification criteria to dynamically select the most appropriate LOD for current view. Thus, view-dependent view is anisotropic.



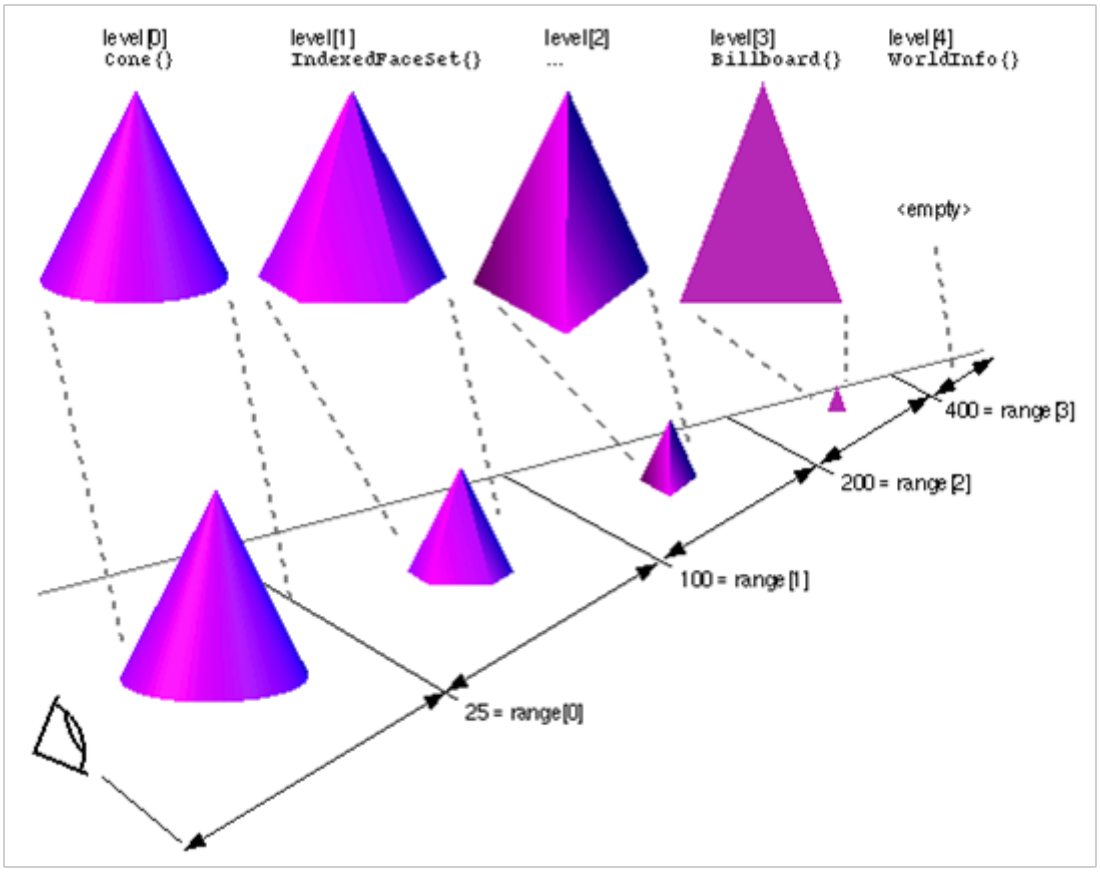
Level of Detail - Chain

- A LodNode accomodates a node for each level of detail.
- Candera Nodes are e.g: Mesh, Billboard, Light, Group, etc.

Typical LOD Chain

The following figure depicts a typical LOD chain:

- Level 0 .. 2: Meshes.
- Level 3: Billboard.
- Level 4: null-Node



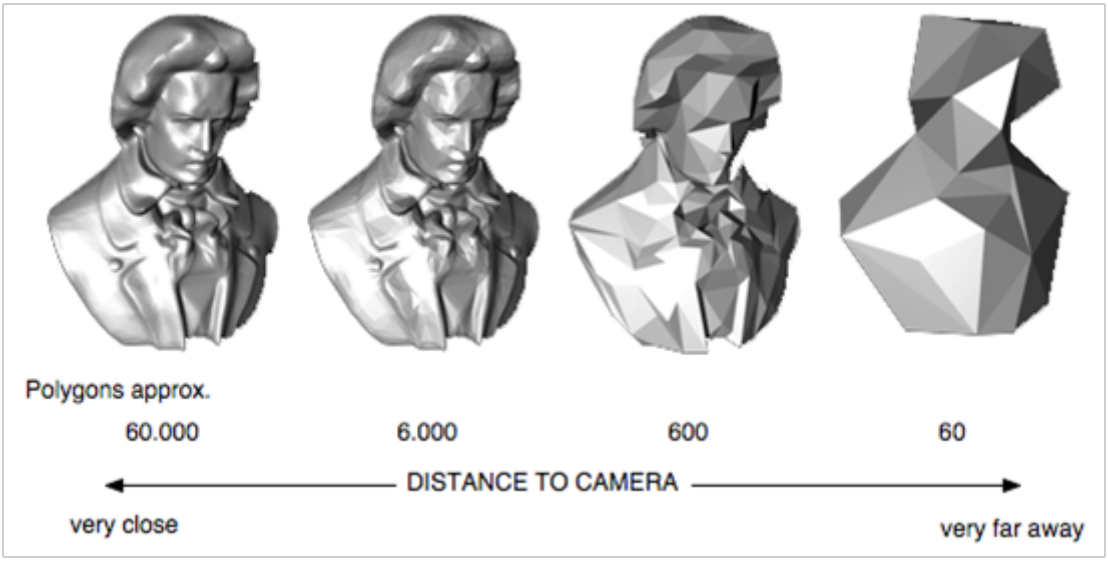
Candera - Discrete LOD Concept

Candera::LodNode, LoD Level

The class Candera::LodNode implements discrete LOD technique. Any Candera class derived from class Candera::Node is accepted as LOD representation.

Each LOD level in Candera::LodNode defines:

- LOD level index,
- Node,
- Lower bound of its visibility range,
- Upper bound of its visibility range.



LOD Render Strategy

The LOD render strategy defines the transition between adjacent LOD levels.

- Candera::DiscreteLodRenderStrategy: Stepwise transition.
- Candera::BlendLodRenderStrategy: alpha-blended transition.

LOD Criterion

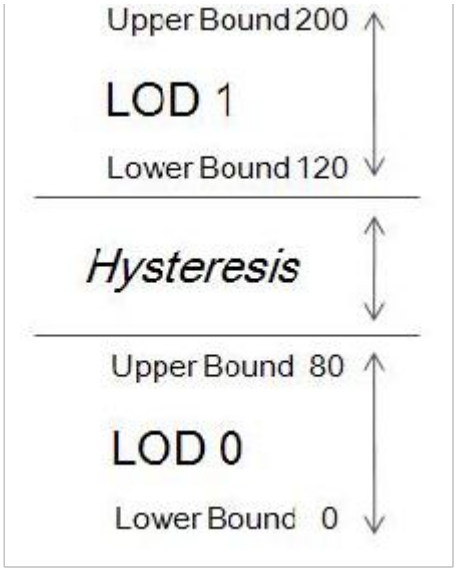
The LOD criterion delivers a source value to map onto the LOD nodes visibility boundaries.

- Candera::DistanceToCameraLodCriterion: distance from LOD node to camera.
- Candera::GenericValueLodCriterion: Application defined value.

Candera - LOD Render Strategy

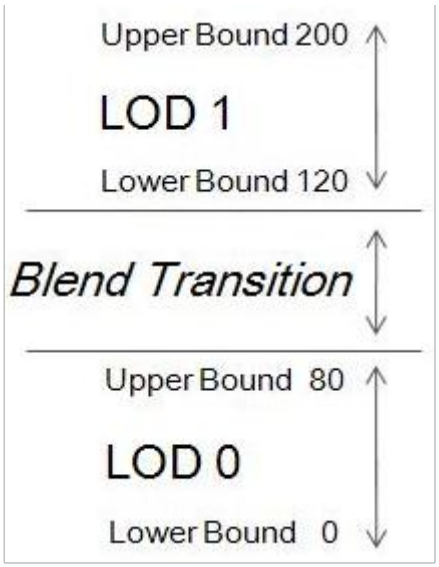
Discrete LOD Render Strategy

- Stepwise transition between LOD levels
- Non-adjacent boundaries between contiguous LOD levels define a Hysteresis.



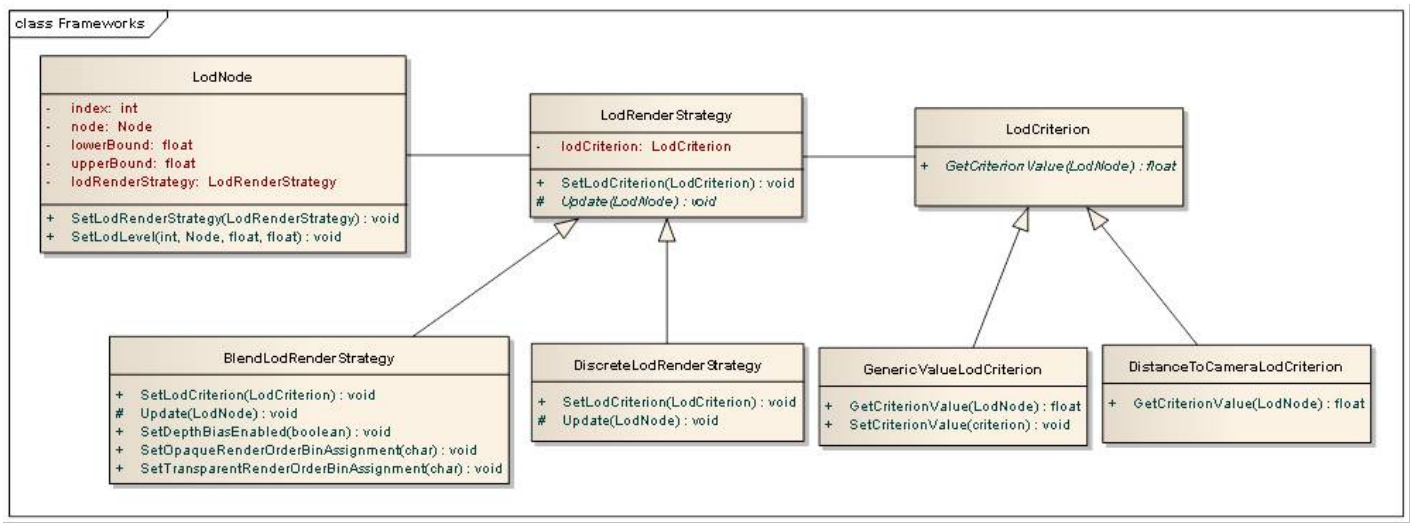
Blend Transition LOD Render Strategy

- Alpha blended transitions between LOD levels
- Non-adjacent boundaries between contiguous LOD levels define transition phase.
- During blend transition one alternating LOD node is always opaque to avoid 'see-through' effects.



Candera - LOD Architecture Overview

- A Candera::LodNode has 0..1 associated LodRenderStrategy objects.
- A Candera::LodRenderStrategy has 0..1 associated LodCriterion objects.
- According to use case LodRenderStrategy and LodCriterion objects are interchangeable arbitrarily.



Example - LOD in SceneComposer

Example - Level of Detail in SceneComposer

This chapter shows a typical LOD use case and explains how the transition from two different LODs can be realized with CGI Studio SceneComposer.

To experiment with LOD transition, the following can be used:

- **LODSolution** from folder *cgi_studio_player/content/Tutorials/08_SpecialRenderTechniques/0801_Special3DRenderTechniques*

Use Case

The example solution is based on following use case:

- The tire is shown from a certain distance in sufficient resolution.
- The camera zooms in to the tire (animation).
- As the camera captures the tire from a close distance, the tire model shall be exchanged with a higher resolution model.
- The transition between the low- and the high-resolution tire model shall appear smooth.

You can experiment with following node properties:

- **(Lower and Upper) Boundary Values**: Modify boundary values of low and high node.
- **Criterion**: Set criterion 0:DistanceToCamera 1:Generic.
- **Strategy**: Set render strategy 0:Blend 1:Discrete.

See also:

- Level of Detail in SceneComposer User Manual

Example - Blended LOD

Blended LOD

- Initialize LOD node with 2 LOD objects.
- LOD is automatically changed by distance to camera criterion.
- Desired Behavior:
  - LOD 0 is exclusively visible at camera distance 0 - 40 (in the LodNode set Lower Bound 0, and Upper Bound 40).
  - LOD 1 is exclusively visible at camera distance 60 - 100 (in the LodNode set Lower Bound 60, and Upper Bound 60).
  - Blend Transition between LOD 0 and LOD 1 is defined at camera distance 40 - 60 (in the LodNode select RenderStrategy 0:Blend).

Change CameraDistance or start CameraPosition animation to see the smooth transition.

In application code the LodNode is set up as follows:

Initializing the LodNode

```
    // init LodNode bounds
    static_cast<void>(lodNode->SetLodLevel(0, lodNode->GetLodLevel(0).node, m_lowBoundHigh, m_up
    static_cast<void>(lodNode->SetLodLevel(1, lodNode->GetLodLevel(1).node, m_lowBoundLow, m_upB
    // end init
```

Define Criterion and RenderStrategy

```
        // Define DistanceToCameraLodCriterion and BlendLodRenderStrategy

        static DistanceToCameraLodCriterion cameraLodCriterion; // LOD is automatically selected
        static BlendLodRenderStrategy blendLodStrategy; // LOD is automatically blended between

        // End Define DistanceToCameraLodCriterion and BlendLodRenderStrategy
```

Link pieces together

```
        // Init BlendLodRenderStrategy and set to LodNode

        blendLodStrategy.SetLodCriterion(&cameraLodCriterion);
        lodNode->SetLodRenderStrategy(&blendLodStrategy);

       // End Init BlendLodRenderStrategy and set to LodNode
```

Example - Step-wise LOD

Step-wise LOD

- Initialize LOD node with 2 LOD objects.
- LOD criterion value can be set by application directly. (in the LodNode set Criterion to 1:Generic).
- Desired Behavior:
  - LOD 0 is exclusively visible at camera distance 0 - 40 (in the LodNode set Lower Bound 0, and Upper Bound 40).
  - LOD 1 is exclusively visible at camera distance 60 - 100 (in the LodNode set Lower Bound 60, and Upper Bound 60).
  - Hysterese is defined at 40 - 60. Thus, criterion values within that range do not lead to LOD level swaps. (in the LodNode select RenderStrategy 1:DiscreteLodRenderStrategy).

Change CriterionValue property appropriate to see the transition.

In application code the LodNode is set up as follows:

Initializing the LodNode

```
    // init LodNode bounds
    static_cast<void>(lodNode->SetLodLevel(0, lodNode->GetLodLevel(0).node, m_lowBoundHigh, m_up
    static_cast<void>(lodNode->SetLodLevel(1, lodNode->GetLodLevel(1).node, m_lowBoundLow, m_upB
    // end init
```

Define Criterion and RenderStrategy

```
        // Define GenericLodCriterion and DiscreteLodRenderStrategy

        static GenericValueLodCriterion genericLodCriterion; // Application defined criterion va
        static DiscreteLodRenderStrategy discreteLodStrategy; // Stepwise LOD switch.

        // End Define GenericLodCriterion and DiscreteLodRenderStrategy
```

Link pieces together

```
        // Init DiscreteLodRenderStrategy and set to LodNode

        genericLodCriterion.SetCriterionValue(m_criterionValue); // Set application defined crit
        discreteLodStrategy.SetLodCriterion(&genericLodCriterion);
        lodNode->SetLodRenderStrategy(&discreteLodStrategy);

        // End Init DiscreteLodRenderStrategy and set to LodNode
```

Example - Set LOD directly

Set LOD directly

- Create LOD node with 2 LOD objects.
- LOD level index is set by application directly.
- Hint: Direct LOD level initialization is helpful, if first criterion value falls into hysteresis range, and no LOD is set active.

```
// Create LodNode object with 2 empty LOD levels.
m_lodNode = LodNode::Create(2);
// Set LOD 0 active and deactivate LOD 1. No RenderCriterion is attached.
m_lodNode->GetLodLevel(0).node->SetRenderingEnabled(true);
m_lodNode->GetLodLevel(1).node->SetRenderingEnabled(false);
```

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