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The Simpsons TV Show and Adobe Make Live Animation Television History

The Simpsons television show has produced their first-ever live animated segment in an episode "Simprovised" which aired in the United States on Sunday.

In 1997 in *The Simpsons* episode "The Itchy & Scratchy & Poochie Show", Homer Simpson got an up-close look at the world of animation when he became the voice talent behind the animated dog Poochie. When Homer asked whether the episode was airing live, a veteran voice actor dryly replied, "Very few cartoons are broadcast live. It's a terrible strain on the animators' wrists."

Now, almost 20 years later, his prophetic question is reality as *The Simpsons* team—using Adobe Character Animator—aired the program's first ever live segment. The setup: Homer, with help from his voice actor Dan Castellaneta, improvised a three-minute live segment, sharing his takes on current events and responding directly to questions submitted by fans.

The episode, titled "Simprovised", broke new ground for *The Simpsons*, the show's legions of fans, and live televised animation.

How did they do it?

Castellaneta delivered the live performance and Adobe Character Animator (a relatively new feature in [After Effects CC](#), part of [Creative Cloud](#)) made the magic through realistic lip sync and keyboard-triggered animations. The talented teams at Fox and *The Simpsons* had early access to the upcoming version of Character Animator, which debuted at the recent NAB trade show.

"*The Simpsons* has always pushed the boundaries of what's next and what's possible in entertainment," says Van Bedient, senior strategic development manager at Adobe. "They're not afraid to take risks. When it came to putting a live segment into their wildly popular program, we couldn't imagine a better opportunity to show what's next in technology."

Adobe Character Animator literally lets designers bring 2D characters to life. A professional animator or any designer can create a layered character in Photoshop CC or Illustrator CC, bring them into a Character Animator scene, and then act out the character's movement in front of a webcam. Even subtle facial expressions show up instantly, along with recorded dialogue and other actions triggered by a few simple keystrokes. All of this combines to create animations that have real-world, real-time elements, as characters interact or as people interact directly with their favorite characters. Smile, and your character smiles right back at you.

"People don't usually associate animation with speed and simplicity," says Bill Roberts, senior director of product management DVA for Adobe. "Traditional animation takes a huge amount of time to do well. It's not easy to convey emotion and action, and if you design too fast, you risk losing all those great 'in-between' moments. Character Animator is a game changer."

Learn More

Discover for yourself why people are so excited about the potential of Adobe Character Animator by [creating your own animation](#).

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