



# Seeing Movies a Whole New Way

by Jo Ann Lloyd

**O**n a street in what's commonly known as San Luis Obispo's

civil, mechanical, and manufacturing engineering in the mid '80s, and his wife, **Trudie (AGB '92)**. The company employs 11 other people, half of whom are also Cal Poly graduates.

**"It was almost as if the screen had turned into a window, and you could look right into it."  
— Movie Critic Roger Ebert, on the MaxiVision process.**

industrial section sits an unassuming building in which a team of engineers has perfected a system poised to revolutionize the film industry.

Trust Automation Inc. is a business owned and operated by Cal Poly alumni **Ty Safreno**, who studied

Ty started the company in his living room in 1990 to "help companies in an honest way," says Trudie. Trust Automation now occupies an 8,000-square-foot facility, and will soon outgrow that.

The company's close-knit group of engineers and computer software specialists creates products and software that control electric motors on items ranging from semiconductor robots and aerospace satellites to tire-retreading machines and airport luggage-scanning equipment.

But by far their hottest product is the new MaxiVision projection system that dramatically enhances big-screen images. When movie critic

Roger Ebert saw it, he declared, "It was almost as if the screen had turned into a window, and you could look right into it."

By doubling the rate at which film is currently photographed and projected, the MaxiVision48™ system results in noticeably sharper, clearer, and brighter images.

And, in much the same way that "talkies" and Technicolor transformed the film industry, MaxiVision's improved visual images could become the next standard in filmmaking.

More than a few people are excited about the new projection system. The Safrenos have demonstrated it to actors, directors, and top executives from major studios, as well as cinematographers from such films as "Apollo 13," "Bugsy," "ET," "The Thin Red Line," and "Titanic." Director Martin Scorsese has discussed assembling a consortium of high-profile industry players to back the MaxiVision system.

"Everyone who has seen it has come away convinced that this is the way to go," Ty says.

The system was the brainchild of Dean Goodhill, an Academy Award-nominated film editor and founder of the Los Angeles firm MaxiVision Cinema Technology. About three years

ago he set out to find someone who could put his idea to work. Easier said than done.

Two firms with "a couple of famous engineers who had four Academy Awards between them couldn't pull it off," said Goodhill. His extensive search ended about one-and-a-half years ago when he found Trust Automation.

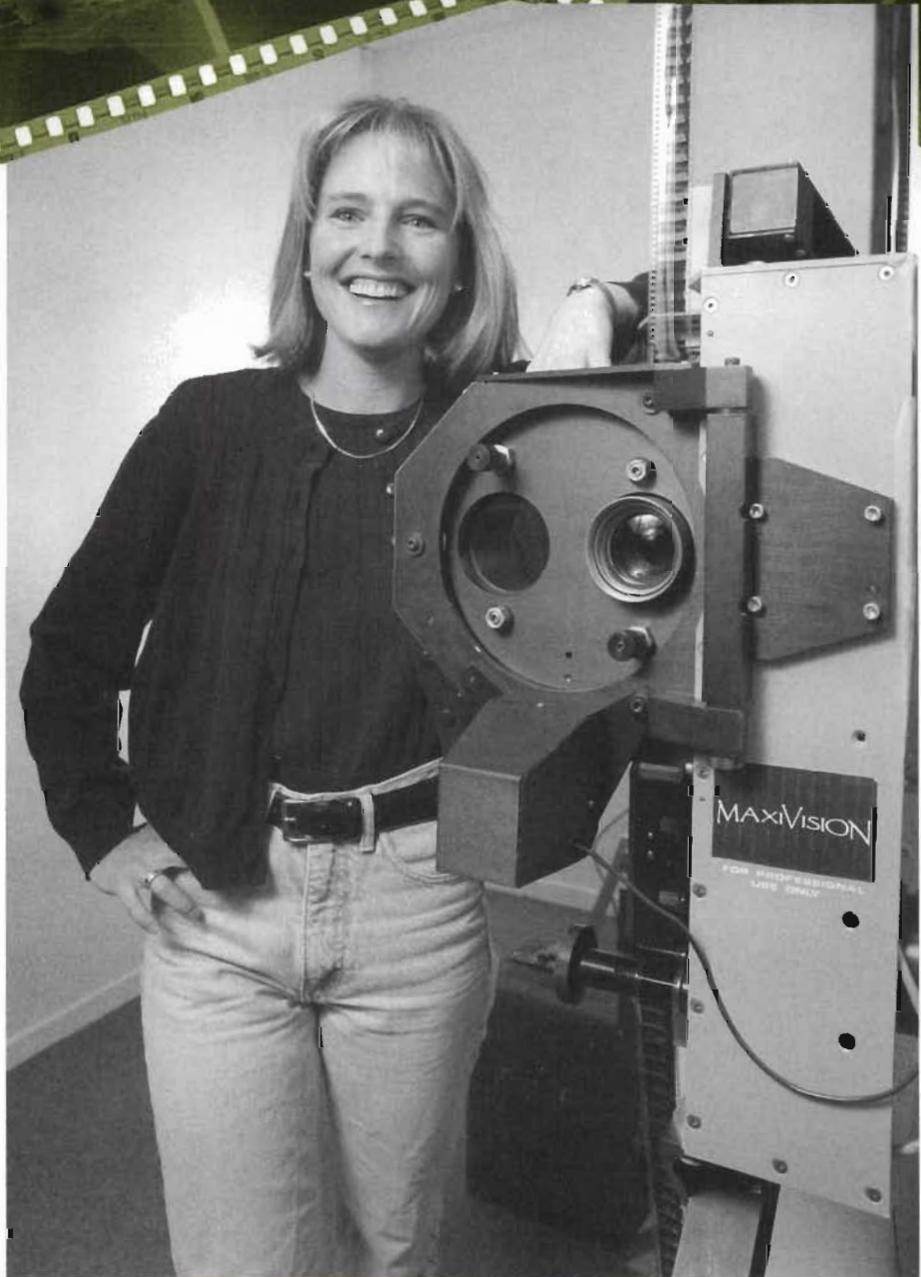
The folks there made his system work. And they made it work in a way that uses industry-standard 35mm film more efficiently, which could save filmmakers about \$200 million a year.

That, and the fact that theater owners will simply have to retrofit existing projectors, makes the system attractively affordable.

The MaxiVision system was kept a secret for three years while prototypes were being developed and patents for the new technology were being sought.

Now the issue is financing. Goodhill is in negotiations and expects to have some good news before the year is over.

"It's only a matter of time," Ty says. 



*Trudie Safreno and the MaxiVision projector.  
(Photo by Ron Bez)*