



How Your Business Can Tap Into the Power of Augmented Reality

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What is augmented reality and why does it matter to me?

Augmented reality is the integration of digital information with the user's environment in real time. Unlike virtual reality (VR), which creates a totally artificial environment, AR uses the existing environment and overlays new information on top of it.

Let's flash back to the 90's when PCs and the web were moving into the mainstream... Remember dial-up internet? How practically no one had a website? Remember irrelevant searches that didn't give you the information you wanted and needed? How few people used any online technology?

Now flash forward to July 6th, 2016... a company called Niantic releases a location-based, interactive online game for Apple and Android devices that uses a device's GPC and camera to allow players to capture, battle, and train virtual creatures called Pokémon.

And within three weeks 65 million people had downloaded the game.

To put that in perspective... It took Facebook a full year to hit one million users. But within five short hours after its release, Pokémon Go was the most popular app on both iTunes and Android's Play store. Within *just a few days* time, it had more users than Twitter.

And people aren't just downloading it - they're using it more on a daily basis than Whatsapp, Instagram, Snapchat, or Facebook's Messenger app.

So how can your business tap into the power of AR technology?

#1. Think of the smartphone as the "remote control" of our lives.

Love it or hate it, smartphone technology is *the* platform for how most of us operate our lives. Buying research, crowdsourcing, appointment keeping, driving instructions, photo collections, interactions with friends... if you're mobile, it's done through your smartphone.

#2. Embed AR technology into your print ads.

We spoke about 2 companies in our blog post about the power of AR: Layar and Aurasma. These companies can help you produce do-it-yourself AR layering on your existing printed work. Or there are developer tools like Wikitude to become your own AR developer.

- a. www.layar.com Their website is very user-friendly, if you can believe something that sounds so complicated can be made easy.
- b. www.aurasma.com also boasts an effortless user interface. "Aurasma's platform includes a powerful drag-and-drop web studio that enables anyone to easily create, manage, and track augmented reality experiences."
- c. www.wikutude.com bills itself as "the world easiest augmented reality tool" that will let you develop an AR experience without programming skills.

#3. Study & understand gamification for businesses.

It doesn't really matter if you offer a product or a service - you *must* turn your customer experience into a game if you want to engage today's consumers. But gamification isn't just about engaging consumers... Gamification can incentivize employees, improve training programs, and increase innovation. Whether you want to increase revenues or drive your internal goals, you need to understand how game mechanics and game design techniques motivate people to achieve something.

#4. Interact with gaming AR programs directly.

Pokémon Go! isn't the only gaming AR program - just the most popular. Regardless of which one you choose, you can capitalize on the popularity of AR games in ways like:

- a. Offer a customized map of Pokémon Go targets in your location. Just a few days after the U.S. launch of the Pokémon app, Jungle Jim's International Market in Cincinnati released a customized map of Pokéstops and a Pokémon gym in their store.... Wow! People have been walking in (and into each other) by the carloads ever since.
- b. Buy a Lure. Savvy retailers are cashing in on the popularity of Pokémon GO by purchasing Pokémon "lure modules" to attract many players into their businesses. L'inizio's Pizza Bar in Queens, NY, spent a total of \$110 in lure modules and six days later their transactions increased by 75 percent.
- c. Offer coupons or discounts to people playing the game to drive traffic. Pay attention the next time you're out and about in your area and you'll probably see signs and posters advertising discounts to Pokémon GO players based on which team they are on, what level they are at, or which Pokémon they've caught.

#5. Incorporate AR into trade shows.

Here's where the rubber can really hit the road for B2B companies. Either as a trade show exhibitor or particularly as a trade show organizer, utilizing AR technology can really pay off.

- a. As an exhibitor: use AR to highlight certain products on your printed materials to give more information in a captivating format. Or if Pokémon and similar games are popular, buy gaming lures to bring trade show floor traffic closer.
- b. As an organizer: stage AR technology all around the show: on print ads, banners, event tickets. Create a game and a map for trade show folks to visit the whole show floor, even the far away corners, increasing traffic for everyone.

#6. Be an early adopter of AR in B2B.

Closely follow trade magazines for news of AR platforms coming to your industry and become early adopters.

- a. There could be brand new 3D programs that will greatly enhance your training programs. For example, using an augmented reality device (glasses, helmet or even a smartphone), a trainee can see exactly what to do and how to do it because a little digital arrow appears in her view. AR has the capability to provide on the job training without the need for employees to consult a manual or even look away from the task.
- b. Creating a safe environment where people can practice their skills without the fear of doing any harm. AR creates practice environments in the real world. It's already being used in this way to help teach surgeons and other medical professionals, and as the technology becomes more accessible it's likely to be used in other sectors where there is a requirement for safe practice.
- c. Collaborative learning: AR is also about sharing an experience, allowing people to see what their partners can see at the same time, and interact in the same space.

Want help identifying how AR can grow your business?

**[CLICK HERE](#) to schedule your complementary
"Gamification" strategy session today!**