

ILTM in partnership with Everywherebrand.com

10 things you need to know about virtual reality but are too afraid to ask

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CANNES

Virtual Reality is getting a load of air time and as with any new technology, there's a lot of confusion as to what it is and how best to use it. At **ILTM**, we have teamed up with **Everywherebrand**, our creative partners, who have been pioneering this for some while and picked their brains on everything you might want to ask.



**All VR is 360, but
not all 360 is VR**

1. What is it?

It's difficult to explain because it's such an experimental medium which needs to be seen to be believed, but here goes.

Virtual reality (VR) is a fully immersive, computer-generated experience that is achieved from wearing a head-mounted display called VR goggles.

By putting on the VR goggles and shutting the world out, the viewer is placed inside an immersive 360 experience where you can look around anywhere of your choosing, instead of traditionally just viewing a screen in front of you which directs your view.

The beauty of this is you can be transformed from just being an observer of a story to being a

participant, with the option of actually influencing the story itself by choosing what to focus on or where to go. Which means you need to think about the clever use of sound, or directional sound as it is called, to influence the viewer to turn and look where you want them to.

The level of interaction and immersion varies enormously. The terms '360' and 'virtual reality' and AR (augmented reality) are often confused. There are important differences, for example, 360 video on your mobile is limited to being able to turn your head in all directions. But without any interactions with your environment, you miss out on this captivating experience which is what makes VR so compelling. VR is closed,

fully immersive experience whereas AR (augmented reality) is a open and partly immersive experience, for example you can see the real world at the same time.

We will be showcasing examples at ILTM this year.

For a true VR experience, you need a headset and some degree of interaction to appreciate the full immersive feelings of being in a virtual reality environment.

	Virtual world	Basic 360 video tour	Mixed reality / AR
Interactivity between the 'film' and viewer	✓	✗	✓
Computer generated imagery	✓	✗ less likely	✓
Been able to move about within the environment	✓	✗ move the mobile or via navigational arrows on screen	✓
Level of immersion	✓ full	✗ If no headset	Partial
Being able to 'see' the real world at the same time	✓	✗	✓ Think gaming experience
Platforms/headsets	All (google cardboard, Samsung, HTC Vive, Oculus Rift etc)	All headsets support, but can also view on website without (although not immersive)	All capable, but HoloLens are pushing as their USP

2. How can I watch it?

You can watch 360 and virtual reality videos on headsets such as Oculus Rift, HTC Vive, Samsung Gear VR, Google cardboard and Daydream and many others coming onto the market over the next months. Prices range dramatically - check out reviews online.

Some headsets plug into your laptop, others are powered by your smart phone. Some come with headphones, others not. Some only work on android phones, others on all. But make sure for best effects, you view with a good quality set of headphones to experience any audio content.

The number of devices sold is forecast to rise from 2.5 million this year to a whopping 24 million in 2018 so things are moving fast.**

There are other optional accessories such as hand controllers that are used to enhance your simulated experience of being in another world which are used with producing an AR (augmented reality film), such as the feeling of picking up an object for example.

VR content is accessed through your website, your Youtube 360 channel or via an app which you can download from the app store. All VR devices have their own app stores, similar to your smartphone app store where you can browse and download individual apps.

Other considerations

When directing virtual reality films, you need to consider choreography. Think in terms of theatre as opposed to TV. The action is literally going on around you whilst the camera tends to be stationary at one location at a time (too much movement and interaction can lead to nausea!). How you direct this action, without of course getting yourself and any equipment in the shot is the skill.

3. Why should I be interested?

Because in a world of shrinking attention spans, competition frenzy and content overload, nothing engages you and holds your focus for that length of time like an immersive VR experience.

Seriously imagine your prospect giving you 100% of their focus, full immersion in your brand for many minutes. That's an eternity in marketing.

It's a premium experience

It offers you the chance to inform, educate, persuade or entertain your customers in a whole new way.

Just think about the upselling potential! Showing your clients premium features and add ons will make it harder to resist when they face the option to buy, having 'experienced' them first hand.

It builds warmth and empathy towards the brand

It taps into the emotions in a way no other medium currently does. Just look at how people smile when they first put the headset on. And introducing characters inside your VR experience can build warmth towards the brand, as we usually only reserve these 'personal spaces' with those we are most close to.

First movers are grabbing the prize

VR is already here in your world and will grow very fast. It is impossible to overstate the Impact VR will have on the luxury travel industry.

Those who are already experimenting with VR are benefiting from first mover advantage. It's a race for content and if you're first, you win!

Some early published examples are Thomas Cook who saw a 190% uplift in New York excursions when it promoted them using VR. And claimed a 40% ROI. Other hotel groups have seen a 135% increase in online revenues per month and return on investment in less than 4 weeks. The evidence is continuing to mount before our eyes.

If your supplier is using cutting edge technology, the perception is, your travel experience will also be cutting edge.

It's a dream for marketers, immersing consumers in brands or products whilst shutting out the real world.

4. How and where do I start?

Jump on in and don't be afraid to experiment. Everyone is a newcomer here.

VR is still very experimental and the learning is happening out there in the real world. Rules are being written and torn up everyday.

2016 is the year of VR experimentation, no one can claim to be an expert yet, so pick someone with imagination to explore with.

CAPTURE

Think about what you want your VR strategy to be

- Is it to educate and inform?
- Is it to entertain?
- Is it to persuade?
- Is it to improve customer experience?

Come up with ideas for your content – a memorable story that will work in VR, rethinking the old rules of storytelling, consider how you will transport them from one location to another.

CREATE

Film – create an experience tailored to your brand using the latest VR camera rigs. We use the GoPro Omni which has 6 go pro cameras on a spherical rig

Post Production – the lengthy process of stitching together the content from films captured by the multiple cameras, syncing everything, rendering, enhancing colour, adding the all important directional sound, coding any additional content and interactivity.

EXPERIENCE

Consider creating your own App which your audience can download, to allow you to track, control the content experience more easily as well as develop a library of additional content

Share the experience far and wide. Think about how you are going to promote your new content digitally and face to face so your brand can benefit from your new innovative content.

5. Who else is doing it?

The ones getting most PR at the moment in the travel industry are Marriott, Lufthansa, Jumeriah and Thomas Cook.

Marriott (guests can order VR room service (Vroom service) and up comes a black box with headsets preset with Marriott postcards around the world. They have also created a unique teleportation experience for the public, complete with all sorts of sensory stimulation where you can be transported to a beach in Hawaii for example.

Lufthansa created augmented reality check in experiences and trips where the passenger can pick up a glass or an object and see their hand touching the object as well as make eye contact with the stewardess.

Thomas Cook are creating various 'try before you buy' experiences which have delivered some excellent ROI.

Jumeriah produces content in 5 languages and quote that people visiting their site inside.jumeriah.com were 2.5 times more likely to book than those who haven't been on the platform.

Shangri-la, Hilton Hotels, Destination BC, BA, St Giles Hotels, GCH Hotel Group which has it's own virtual reality site and markets content under brands such as Accor, IHG, Carlson Rezidor, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts & Best Western are all experimenting as well. And no doubt others we haven't mentioned.

6. Does it alter by region around the world?

Currently USA, with a non surprising bias towards the west coast, leads development with significant concentrations of development also in Asia.

But by 2020 Asia will have overtaken and be leading the world in VR and AR.*** So expectations are going to be higher here.

7. Is there an age limit?

No, we have wrestled to get the headsets off heads of 70 year olds as well as 10 year olds. Imagination has no age limit!

“We believe this kind of immersive, augmented reality will become a part of daily life for billions of people”

Mark Zuckerberg

Top 5 tips to watch out for

1. GoPro cameras are excellent for outdoor day light shots, but less so for low lighting indoors. You may need to accept lower quality video in darker areas, or find some way of disguising additional lighting somehow within the 360 viewpoint!
2. Audio is very powerful, use cleverly and make sure it feels like it is coming from the right direction
3. Watch out for stitch lines, make sure anyone you are shooting is not standing in between the cameras, causing potential jagged lines or 'stitch lines' as they are known
4. Moving the camera too much can cause nausea
5. Don't make your film too long, leave them wanting more!





8. How much does it all cost?

It depends on the package and the quality of work and kit. There are some cheaper cameras coming on to the market, but as with most things, you get what you pay for.

A handy guide for pricing is available at Everywherebrand, come and have a chat at the show and we can talk you through in more detail.

There are 3 levels of pricing;

1. VR LITE Basic non immersive 360 footage, the cost going into kit and post production rather than creativity or any fancy post production. Not ideal for a premium product.

2. VR GOLD 360 footage with a story narrative, using sound and interaction.

3. VR PREMIUM 360 footage fully interactive with 'hot spots' navigating you deeper into content (bit like an interactive website). Any web content can be integrated into the video such as brochures, youtube videos, web forms, interviews or just textual information such as pricing

9. Will it go away?

No, it's just going to get bigger and bigger.

The VR market is set to grow at a very fast rate into a \$10bn market within next 10 years. Deloitte Global are already predicting 2016 to be worth \$1bn.

10. Whats next for VR?

Facebook bought oculus for a £2m investment so look out for VR evolving from a solitary to a sharing experience through social platforms like Facebook. User Generated Content is going to be big as the price of technology falls.

Whatever you think about VR, 2017 is going to be the year for figuring out the real potential for this technology.

44% of people surveyed last year in the USA were already 'very interested in VR'

43m people quoted as active VR users worldwide in 2016, predicted to rise to 171m by 2018.

26% saying they had used a VR headset at a convention or somewhere else**

ILTM Show Offer

ILTM has been helping you forge relationships for 15 years and as technology develops and new opportunities arise, we want to help you take advantage of these too in a changing world.

We are always obsessing over how to deliver you better ROI. To make your pre-scheduled and networking time together even more effective and deliver results. And we think we've found it.

In the same way that VR will not replace travel, but enhance it and drive demand for it. so it is with the connections made at ILTM. We want them to go even deeper and last even longer.

1. Do you already have your own VR content and want to share it wider amongst our community?

2. Do you need help in creating your own VR content?

EXPERIENCE OFFER:

We will be launching a Pilot offer in the next few months to allow you to share the technology more widely at each ILTM event around the globe. We will be creating a beautiful virtual lounge to view your content in a perfectly controlled, curated environment.

And we are looking at ways to host your content digitally, putting your content in front of your target audience all year round, the highest quality of luxury buyers globally.

To express your interest in VR broadcasting sponsorship opportunities at ILTM shows contact Andy.Ventris@reedexpo.co.uk for more information. Places are limited to please make sure you highlight your interest early.

Please contact rachel@everywherebrand.com, or call + 44 (0) 7894 521782 quoting ILTM offer for more information and to book in your free creative consultation.

CAPTURE & CREATE OFFER:

Special show offer from Everywherebrand - a FREE creative consultation

Everywherebrand will give you a **free creative consultation** to capture the essence of your offering with recommendations for your VR film along with a quote to produce.

We're living in a new age of magic and wonder – let's make it a reality!



*“People will forget what you
said, they may forget what you
did, but they will never forget
how you made them feel”*

Maya Angelou

Free creative consultation
from Everywherebrand

rachel@everywherebrand.com
+ 44 (0) 7894 521782
quoting ILTM offer

www.everywherebrand.com