SNAPSHOT
TOPICS
SERIES

"MR blends the physical world with the virtual world."

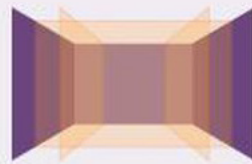# Reality Check: Mixed Reality

Facebook, Apple, Amazon and Google are all "mixing it up"— releasing mixed reality (MR) developer tools for fear of "missing out" on the incredible opportunity of the latest "reality" technology.

With MR, real and digital worlds co-exist and interact in real time. MR does more than overlay digital objects. It anchors them to the real world, so movement there impacts movement in the digital world.

virtual reality (VR)

Fully artificial environment

Full immersion in virtual environment

augmented reality (AR)

Virtual objects overlaid on real-world environment

The real world enhanced with digital

mixed reality (MR)

Virtual environment combined with real world

Interact with both the real world and the virtual environment.

SOURCE: FORBES, THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VR, AR AND MR, FEB 2018

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There are two types of MR experiences. The first begins with the real world and overlays AR and/or VR. The other begins with the virtual world. In this case, the real world is blocked out. Users can move around (in the real world) and the virtual environment is adjusted accordingly.

Different devices deliver these experiences:

Holographic devices like Microsoft HoloLens, which has transparent glasses so you can see your surroundings.

Immersive devices, which have opaque displays and use cameras for tracking.

INDUSTRY INTEREST:
HIGH, BUT NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

According to Deloitte, more than 50% of the Fortune 500 are testing or have deployed mixed reality products/solutions. MR is here. It's real. It's cool...but it's expensive. Don't even think about it unless you have a healthy budget.

> We're still at the beginning of this."
> — ALLIED MARKET RESEARCH, JUN 2018

TECH READINESS: ONE STEP CLOSER TO SCI-FI

AIBC says mixed reality may be the future of immersive experiences, but there are several technology hurdles it must overcome before it becomes mainstream." Field of view is still is problematic for headsets, object tracking technology and interactivity still have issues. While processing power is getting there, true spatial responsiveness, mobility and ultra-realistic images are not yet achievable. Also, there are not a lot of apps that are designed specifically for mixed reality. So...stay tuned.

BEST PRACTICES: DEMOING,
PROTOTYPING AND STORYTELLING

MR is an amazing medium for storytelling. You can step into immersive 3D environments. Transport attendees to new holographic realms. Do things on the trade show floor that we could only imagine a few years ago. Want to design the OR of your dreams? Want to demonstrate the 50 home of the future? Want to get up close and personal to one of your sports heroes? You can do it all in MR. ■

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