



Is Virtual Reality the New Reality for Advertisers?

Discussion > Advanced 9



Exercise 1 – Vocabulary

pervade	To spread through and be noticeable in every part of something.
[verb]	<i>Ex: Violent crime is a problem that pervades most large cities.</i>

jump on the bandwagon	To support something that is popular.
[phrase]	<i>Ex: The superstar has now jumped on the fashion bandwagon, releasing her own range of lingerie.</i>

augmented reality	A technology that superimposes a computer-generated image on a user's view of the real world, thus providing a composite view.
[noun]	<i>Ex: Augmented reality is an extension of virtual reality.</i>

covet	To wish or long for something.
[verb]	<i>Ex: Many people I know covet money, power and fame.</i>

millennial	Connected with the generation of people who became adults around the year 2000 (in this case).
[adjective]	<i>Ex: The millennial generation is addicted to technology.</i>



Exercise 2 – Reading

Read the text aloud with your tutor and discuss the key points.

Is Virtual Reality the New Reality for Advertisers?

Advertising is practically inescapable these days, pervading our daily lives, mobile devices and now even virtual reality.

With the growing number of virtual reality headsets and apps coming to market, opportunities to experience VR are more readily available, but so too is the potential to experience more advertising. Brands like Oreo, Mountain Dew, Jim Beam, Lufthansa and Marriott have already jumped on the virtual reality bandwagon, creating one-off experiences to engage consumers. For these companies, whether the reality is physical or computer-generated is less important than capturing your attention.

“Augmented reality and virtual reality are expected to hit \$150 billion in revenue by 2020... that number is going to catch the eye of marketers,” said Katie Richards, staff writer at Adweek.



For brands, that means creating experiences that work alongside their own products, like last year's collaboration between outerwear company Merrell and creative studio Framestore, to create a virtual reality mountain hike for the launch of Merrell's Capra hiking boots. Viewers were given the chance to virtually traverse the Dolomite Mountains of Italy. While it's not clear how effective these VR campaigns are, one thing is for sure: they still cost money.

"It is quite expensive for the marketer and for the agency to create this experience," noted Richards. "The other challenge is making sure that what you're doing stays true to your brand, and you're not just experimenting with virtual reality to do it," she added.

But for the digital natives that make up today's youth, virtual reality might be as normal as chicken McNuggets. In Sweden, participating McDonald's restaurants have begun serving Happy Meals in boxes that convert to basic virtual reality viewers.

For digitally-savvy brands, virtual reality is one more way to reach the highly-coveted millennial demographic. "Millennials are willing to spend a lot of money on experiences," said Richards, "Virtual reality is a way for a marketer to give a millennial an experience that they might not have otherwise." An out-of-this-world experience that marketers hope will result in real world spending.



Exercise 3 – Discussion

Discuss the following questions with your tutor.

1. What do you think about advertisers using virtual reality to create experiences for future customers?
2. Do you feel that you are surrounded by advertisements? Why or why not?
3. In your opinion, what is the most effective way to advertise? Why?
4. In what ways do you think virtual reality will shape our world?
5. Why do you think technology is currently evolving at such a high pace?
6. What do you think will be the “next big thing” in terms of technological advancement?
7. Do you think that we have become addicted to technology? Why or why not?
8. Do you think that we are living in an increasingly artificial world? Why or why not?