

Augmented Reality in Mobile Applications and Its Potential for User Engagement

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Introduction

Augmented Reality (AR) is an approach to the interaction between humans and the environment, in which digital information is displayed in the physical environment in contextualised manner in real time. My research looks at the landscape of the Augmented Reality applications in the UK: highlights their features and utilities, discusses the variations, as well as discusses further opportunities for research and technology applications, especially in relation to Heritage.

Why It Matters

The mixed reality technology in the recent years saw an increase in its relevance in the modern day services, Through the spike of interest towards such products as Google Glass, Microsoft HoloLens, Samsung Gear VR, Google Cardboard and Oculus Rift, the technology has spread across a wide range of private and public sectors. In the UK in the last 5 years the technology was integrated into the experiences offered by the London Olympics, Wimbledon, Science Museum, V&A, Barbican, British Museum, etc.

Overview

I will present a framework that reveals the variety of AR applications, and models the stages of AR user experiences. The applications are assessed towards the following criteria relating to: **nature of the release, trigger type, nature of content, location and positioning, time, sharing and co-experience, outcome**. The framework also provides specific categories to make fine distinctions of the applications, their features and applications. I intend to present the context (incl. key examples of AR projects) that led to my research, then present the framework, then demonstrate how the framework gives valuable insights to the Heritage network.

Beyond the Present

Currently, a small amount of AR applications sustain a long-lasting legacy: where the majority is bound to a time- and location-specific events, cannot not be authored by the public, and leaves no footprint. The framework that I will present highlights ways that these opportunities could be integrated into Heritage visitor experiences of the future, and leverage the power of AR more effectively.