BMW IVISUALISER AND THE JEEP COMPASS VISUALISER

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

My name is Sophie Burgess and today I am joined by Andrew Wheelan from our Accenture Interactive practice. Andrew, could you tell us a little bit about yourself and your role at Accenture?

Yeah, hi Sophie and thanks for having me on, I'm looking forward to this. So I am a Manager within Accenture Interactive, I do a lot of work on customer experience and now immersive experiences in the last few months and year. I have been with the company for a while and it has been incredible to see how much this area of immersive experience and augmented reality is really taking off and seeing how us and Accenture interactive are able to take really take a leadership role in it and bring some great stuff to the market and to our clients, which I'm happy to tell you all about today.

Amazing, and were here today to discuss some of the amazing technology in the hub. So as listeners probably know by now, Accenture Interactive and the Innovation Programme have partnered in takeover of our Innovation Hub and the theme is all about imagination and nostalgia. So, to that end, I've brought you along a little bag of sweets.

I'm from the US so these look little different to what I'm used to. But then also, I grew in the house of a Dentist as a parent and so I'll try to contain my excitement.

So there are a couple of demos from the hub that you've worked on and these are the BMW iVisualiser and the Jeep Compass Visualiser. To start with, could you explain what to us what they are and what they do?

Yeah happy to, so both the Compass Jeep Visualiser and BMW Visualiser are what we would call augmented reality apps. It may be worth giving a bit of context there on this, they are visualisers that allow you to explore and customise a car in a virtual space, but that is also part of where you are in the world. Let me put that into a frame of reference there, when we talk about augmented reality and virtual reality, we see it as a spectrum of immersive experiences, going from the far-left end of it would be the real world that we are all used to, so when you go into a car dealership you get to see a real car there and sit in it which I still think is a great place for that. You move over a little bit into areas where you might be putting an object onto your phone screen so if anyone has seen Pokemon Go, that is kind of a baby step towards augmented reality but it's quite interacting with the world, it is just showing something cool on your screen that is fun to interact with.

Where we have done this, and what makes these demos like the iVisualiser so interesting is we've created a life size, extremely detailed model of these cars and you can place them by bringing them up on your phone and just taking

the app and placing it in the showroom and it will appear as if it is actually there in life size, 100% of the detail. You can really walk into the car while you are looking on your screen, get into it, customise the interior, customise the colours, honk the horn, turn on the stereo and it all interacts as if you are actually sitting in that car. But now instead of having one model of a car in a showroom, you have every colour, every wheel and every interior figuration right there in front of you. So for a customer, that is really exciting because you never have to strain your imagination to think 'what would that look like?' or 'they don't have the blue I really want in the showroom, I wonder', you can actually, it's as if it were there in front of you just on your phone screen.

So just to finish out the spectrum and putting it all into context – there is also Virtual Reality, which is the fully immersive experience where you would in contrast put on a headset that would cover your eyes, that would put you into an entirely different virtual showroom basically wherever you are. So, we have chosen to focus in that middle space, where you could project the life size car on your driveway at home if you have one of these phones, or in a dealership like BMW and Jeep are doing now in their dealerships.

It's so interesting, it's kind of amazing where technology can take you now. So, can you explain a bit more about the technology behind it, I believe it's Google Tango, so what is that technology and what does it do?

Good question, so Google's Tango technology, simply put, it's an array of cameras that are put onto a certain set of phones. There is one out right now called the Lenovo Phab 2 Pro and another one from Asis is due to come onto the market this summer. These phones look pretty much like your typical phone, they just have a few more cameras on the back end. But what that array of cameras actually lets you do is really impressive. So, they work together to have depth perception, area learning and motion

tracking. Whereas with your phone you kind of hold it up and take a picture now on most smartphones, it only perceives what is right in front of you in 2D, maybe you could pertain an image of it but as you hover one of these tango phones over the area around you, it's literally creating a 3D model of the space around you in real time. It remembers where you are in that space, so with these visualiser examples, to place the car in the middle of the room, it will remember and anchor it to the floor so you can get down on your knees to see the wheels are actually on the ground. You can walk around it, you can open up doors, step into say the passenger or driver seat and as you walk around it in this real space it will know exactly where you are in relation to the car. So it truly creates what we often call, a 'phigital experience', where the physical and digital world are combined and it truly makes it feel like you are in an augmented 3D space that you can interact with, virtually anything you can imagine. A we have just helped our clients do it in a particular car context with Jeep and BMW.

Wow, clearly this really lends itself well to the automotive industry but could you talk about where else you see this being adopted. Or where it could prove successful. Because I guess some people might think is this a bit of a gimmick, how useful can it be. So where else would you see that taking hold?

There is a lot of applications, in terms or is it a gimmick, something new a flashy right now. It is new, but Tango technology has been around for over a year now. Google have just announced at IO that they are going to be supporting this tremendously and this is going to be coming out on a huge array of new phones. And if we look at trends of people adopting technologies around this, you know you can look historically and see how looking far back things like TV took 30 something year to reach 50 million users, the internet took 4 or 5, Facebook reached 50 million users in three years, Twitter in two but for example if you were then to take a guess on

how long did it take to reach 50 million users of Pokemon Go – how fast do you think it got there?

Oh, well I know it was quick – I guess maybe under three months?

Much under yeah, actually even though it was only rolled out in a few countries, it took 19 days. 19 days for consumers around the world to embrace that exact application of augmented reality technology. So, it is new, it is fast evolving but people are showing tremendous demand and excitement for it. We've had thousands of downloads of our BMW app, which is now on the public Google Play store. We had over 350,000 views of the video that shows that we have co-created with BMW, showing how the visualiser is used. We're seeing tremendous interest in it and rapid acceleration and growth and all the industry results are showing this too.

In terms of where else it can be applied, that is all great in terms of an auto context and gaming context. We're seeing tremendous interest around, anyone who like me has moved into a new home or switched departments lately. You'll know that there is a huge amount of information and decisions you need to make around buying furniture, sizing up a place, figuring out how to decorate your new home. That is one place I have personally found it to be really useful because Tango technology allows you to simple, as I mentioned, point your phone around a room, it learns the space and can measure it in incredible detail. Simply point from one wall to another wall. You can literally trace out a rectangle and it will show you how big that space is and you can therefore figure out, okay I can fit a 43-inch TV or let's see if we can fit a 45 or something like that. Then you can place it in there with absolutely uncertainty that that space that the phone has measured out is accurate. So, for electronic retailers, there is great potential there. In the latest Google IO updates, they've shown how Wayfair – the home decoration retailer – what they're doing, what is just about to come out now is that you'll be able

to just measure, say you need a new table in your living room, you'll be able to measure that out as I mentioned on your phone and tap onto your phone onto your floor space and make a 3D cube of that space that you want to put the table in and Wayfair will show you only tables that will fit in that exact space. So, you have just cut down the selection process and you don't now have to worry about

You don't have to click through all the filters, it just makes it so easy for the end consumer.

If you've ever gone in there and written down measurements, just bring your tango phone along and you're basically all sorted. So that is an incredible application, I'm personally finding incredibly useful and less trips back and forth to the store.

And then there is a look of interest in the fashion retail world as well, where Gap have introduced their own app that allows you to virtually try on clothes. Either on an avatar or map it to yourself, to your own measurements. Less returns there of clothes that you don't like which again, goes without saying for the car dealerships, but it allows them in that application to save floor space so they don't have to have a huge car dealership with every model in stock, taking up tonnes of space. If you are a retailer, you are less likely to have returns when people know when something is going to fit them or more likely to. The applications go on and on in terms of construction world…

Yeah, space planning I guess, anything

So, it's really almost limitless. If there is a chance of a customer to want to interact with a real object that they can't or want more detail about it, this form of reality really lets them do it.

If the end consumer can see their outcome clearly, like with Pokemon Go, as long as its compelling enough, then they all adopt it.

Exactly. And it goes without saying that the gaming potentially, you can now set up games in 3D space. I think Hotwheels has a version where you can lay a track and trace a track from the table to the ground to a chair and the car will speed down the table to the ground and up to the chair, just as if it were actually in the space. I don't think we'll replace toys entirely but it gives us all a new way to be entertained by the world that is already around us in new and exciting ways.

Fantastic, well thank you so much for your time. That brings us to the end of this podcast. We look forward to hearing about more exciting innovations that you are working on in the future.

Thanks so much for having me Sophie.

Thanks.