In the U.S. alone, meetings and event planning is a $330 billion per year industry. But booking an event space is a slow and complicated process requiring planning, research, travel, and remote collaboration between multiple parties over a long period of time. This process can take up to six months, carrying a risk of lost sales opportunities and increased booking costs for hotels, event planners, and buyers. We wanted to make this process easier for everyone involved, so we created the XR Event Planner, a cross-platform solution that gives all parties the ability to visualize, customize, and move through event spaces remotely, all while collaborating in real time. The result is a faster, more efficient, and more immersive process that can shorten the sales cycle, lower booking costs, increase event room bookings, and increase brand affinity, especially with millennials or gen Y.

Qualcomm partnered with Accenture, IHG, and InterContinental hotel in downtown Los Angeles to create a new cross-platform solution with new XR tools powered by Qualcomm technology.

The XR event planner starts with a typical search for an event space, but what comes next is special: a 3D recreation of the Hollywood ballroom in the InterContinental hotel.

But the biggest improvements come from the real-time space configuration and the collaboration tools in XR. These tools allow for immediate modifications of room layouts, table and chair density, decorative options, and even lighting environments, and include the ability to leave design notes. The experience can run on a smartphone or a tablet. We can place a 3D recreation of the event space anywhere and get a dollhouse type view and using the collaboration tools, we can change the flow in real time across any device, whether we're in the same room or on different continents. For a deeper level of immersion, we also developed the experience for the Nreal mixed reality glasses. These are powerful, lightweight, smartphone-powered glasses that project 3D content directly into the user's field of view. This allows for a rich hands-free experience in a form factor...
that is comfortable, familiar, and portable. Raffaella: For the most immersive experience, we use the vibe focus VR headset. In VR, the user can truly experience an event space at a one to one scale. They can walk around the space and get a real sense for the flow and the details of the setup. Patrick: We tested the solution with event planners, corporate buyers, and our partners at IHG and the Intercontinental hotel. The hoteliers saw clear benefits. I think this is going to be a very collaborative tool, it seems incredibly innovative. It sort of, it brings it to life in three dimensions. I, I think that, you know, the, in sort of real time being able to sit there with a customer and make these changes, whether you’re sitting right next to them in a trade show situation or in their office or even, you know, remotely they’re in their office, you’re, you’re in your office, I think would definitely help build their confidence and help us close the sale as well. Yes, I think this tool would definitely help shorten the selling cycle. I think that the value that I really see in it is being able to sell your property and your spaces to people who are not directly in the city. Well, and the cost for us too, because quite often when you do site inspections you’re having to allow yourself for rooms that you take out of inventory, so if you can make the sale without having them to come, I think that it’s a win win for both client and hotel.

Our combined analysis from the focus group feedback and market data shows that individual hotels could see increased revenue 8% by using our solution. Participating in the XR Event Planner tool pilot with Accenture and Qualcomm is another great example of this focus. Through the use of augmented reality and virtual reality technology, we can help our hotels close event sales faster, increase overall productivity, ultimately have the potential for increased revenue. At the same time, we’re helping groups and meetings clients experience an event space up close without having to visit in person, which reduces our carbon footprint and gives them added assurance that their event will be a success by bringing it to life in even more dynamic ways during the planning process.