

Augmented reality, advertising and other stories

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If you've been on the internet, stepped outside or talked to another human in the past two weeks, chances are the topic of Pokémon Go has come up. The Pokémon Go craze, which launched two weeks ago, has millions of people staring at their phones and catching Pokémon, even in countries where the game is not officially available.



With the augmented reality component of the game which allows players to integrate gameplay with their actual surroundings, the topic of augmented reality (AR) has been thrown into the limelight, with many predicting that Pokémon Go is the start of its resurgence.

While the technology and integration of augmented reality is undoubtedly impressive, and with more users having access to AR-capable devices, it may be true that more applications will be found for these features. What

most analyses of Pokémon Go fail to recognise, however, is that the reason for this game's popularity is not in the pure application of augmented reality per se, but in its integration with a pop culture phenomenon that resonates with multiple age groups and demographics.

Technological advancements like augmented reality are only powerful insofar as they are relevant to users and enhance their use of technology, rather than serving as a gratuitous accessory.

Of course, any time something grabs the attention of users, it naturally grabs the attention of advertisers. Eyeballs on a screen are valuable impressions and potentially conversions for marketers. Nintendo has already expressed its intention to introduce ads into the game in the form of sponsored locations.

This centres the goal of augmented reality advertising as being a form of visual advertising which is integrated seamlessly into user environments. The main challenge with augmented reality as advertising is no longer technology - most smartphones can support augmented reality apps and features - but the fact that it requires a complete disruption of normal user behaviour and may require users to use certain products only for this case - something which is not intuitive or likely with average users.

The primary lesson here is one that is often reiterated but rarely followed, which is to always put the user first. In order to truly capitalise on cutting-edge technology, the primary consideration should be to create a product or feature that becomes not only intuitive, but organically part of a user's digital interactions.

For more information on using visual advertising in a meaningful way for campaigns, take a look at [C2C Labs](#), an innovation hub aiming to leverage the adoption of augmented reality in South Africa.

Sources:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/baldwincunningham/2016/07/20/with-pokemon-go-its-the-top-of-the-second-inning-for-augmented-reality/#c2d249479ec6>

<http://fortune.com/2016/07/13/pokemon-go-ads/>

I am an internet addict, digital voyeur and early adopter. A desire to indulge the creative and analytical equally spawned my obsession with data visualisation and meaningful analytics. I believe data should always be interesting and beautiful and tell a story. I am fascinated by the ways different networks and user experience parameters interact with each other online, and the amazing plethora of information that people send out every second, all over the world. I'm a digital chameleon, with experience spanning everything from copywriting and video editing to digital marketing to development. Life goal: take over the world.

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