Virtual Reality for E-Commerce

Why Sell On the Internet?

For consumers, the internet represents exceptional access to any information, product or service that can be imagined. Consumers on the internet can be educated, served, and gratified in an amazing number of ways.

Most large companies by now have web sites with the familiar www.companyname.com address on the 'net. They can be accessed by the consumer for detailed product information, answers to frequently asked questions, warranty registration and support and direct sales of merchandise or services. If your company has not yet taken advantage of being on the web, Renaissounds can help with that. If your company *is* already on the web, we can still enhance your customers' experience. There are great reasons to explore the possibilities that are offered by conducting business on the internet.

For companies, the internet can be a very effective use of marketing and advertising dollars. The internet represents the single largest avenue for advertising *that the customer will deliberately seek out!* Companies taking advantage of that fact by providing added value on their web sites will enjoy enhanced profitability as their web operation assists with sales and customer service.

What Is VR?

Virtual Reality is a general term for computer generated, or computer displayed, depictions of real spaces or objects. The most sophisticated virtual reality systems are flight simulators developed for military and industrial applications. At the other end of the scale are consumer level video games - certainly an alternate reality from the perspective of many parents!

The virtual reality for e-commerce that we're talking about is much more economical than such complicated programming. It uses special photographic techniques to truly show 'real' depictions, those that a consumer are used to seeing as opposed to 'fake' computer-generated models. Virtual reality for e-commerce takes two basic forms - *places* and *objects* such as people or products.

Places can be depicted in virtual reality on the internet for many reasons, mostly dealing with the real estate market. Virtual house walk-throughs and examination of rental properties or model homes for as-yet-unbuilt neighborhoods are examples of this. The consumer can see what a site looks like, tour a home or other facility or go places that are otherwise inaccessible.

Virtual reality can be used to show construction sites, stores for virtual shopping, houses and other sale or rental properties, places normally closed to the public, or places too dangerous to visit regularly. It has already been used on the internet to allow anyone to see what the Giza pyramids are like, for example. The experiences of traveling to the top of the Great Pyramid and of

Places or objects small or large, depicted normally or in 3D - How can VR enhance your web site?

climbing inside it up to the King's chamber are available on the web. Do *you* have somewhere to show?

Perhaps the greatest potential for display on the internet using virtual reality involves showing objects. One of the things that the web can do that a catalog can't is allow the consumer to handle an object - to turn it around to see all sides of it or *even to see the product in 3-D!* Instead of a static picture of an object or article of clothing, the consumer is able to see it from all sides. This can have particularly promising potential for fashion applications.

Objects as small as individual stones used in jewelry, or as large as automobiles or buildings can be "grabbed" on the computer screen and manipulated. How does that dress look from behind? Grab the model and turn her around! Does that piece of electronic gear have easy hookup access? Turn it around and see the terminals on the back and check! How is that piece of jewelry crafted? Let's turn it over and see! How can *your* product presentation be enhanced with virtual reality?

Virtual Reality by Renaissounds

Renaissounds produces virtual reality using photography, not programming. Because of this, depictions are very natural and the consumer does not have to imagine what the 'real' version of a computer-generated place or object 'really' looks like. Instead, they see the objects or places as they are used to seeing them in photos.

Renaissounds produces the shoot using a mix of off-the-shelf and proprietary hardware and software, to fully control quality and to offer a variety of levels of quality. Of course, these options may vary according to the needs of the customer we are serving. Work can be done on location, even at the same time as other commercial photography work is done for use in print catalogs. Post production is rapid, making production of VR images extremely economical.

One of the special techniques that can be used along with VR is 3D or stereo viewing. When this method is used, the objects can be seen in three dimensions, as in the Viewmaster® some of us grew up collecting reels for. This is surely the next best thing to actually handling the object in person. Inexpensive 3D glasses can be used, which themselves serve as promotional tools for your site and incentives to order. Those who can see the MagicEye® type 3D image can also often see these object VR 3D Stereo images without the aid of any viewer at all.

For more information, or to see samples, click on the VR portfolio on the bookshelf at
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Why Use VR?

When we were kids, back-to-school time was especially enjoyable because of the arrival of the department store Christmas catalogs. Just looking at them over and over again, compiling wish lists and imagining playing with all the loot Santa would bring led to months of anticipation. That same feeling is available now to adults through shopping on the internet, the best year-round catalog ever.

Because the internet can use multiple media types, an online catalog can now show much more than a static picture of a product or place. If virtual reality is used, there can be interaction with the product, greatly enhancing the shopping experience.

Some other methods of achieving this interactivity are very expensive. If computer modeling is done, programming is involved and cookies must often be created, which many consumers object to. Renaissounds VR can be done economically, with many more products in the catalog being covered for a given budget. There is no need for the expense of hours of programmer time to get results.

Because this technology can enhance the online shopping experience, it can also increase the kind of traffic we all want - paying traffic. When a customer can handle an object online, there is more likelihood that the customer will use your site as a place to buy instead of 'just looking.'

Depending on the type of merchandise or service you have to sell, VR technology can enhance other types of business as well, including training and customer support applications. There is also the holiday catalog effect, where customers will return just to see the technology in use. The 'wow' factor and human nature combine

to boost return visits to your site. More visits will mean more sales, and therefore higher profits.

Consumers with faster internet connections will be able to enjoy high-quality controllable VR images in seconds using a free software plug-in for any browser on any computer likely to be used for surfing the internet. Even those

Why should your customers see only *one* view of your garment if they *could* see it from all sides?

without cable or DSL can see objects in your catalog from all sides, since even the smaller 'thumbnail' images used as links rotate if their browser supports normal animation. Even if the consumer has a 28K modem, each detailed interactive version will still load in about a minute or less.

All this can be done economically, at rates similar to those for other types of commercial photography. How can VR from Renaissounds enhance *your* customer service and profits?