

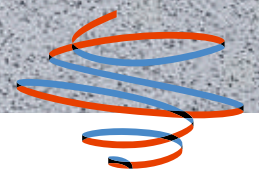
BREAKING DIGITAL BARRIERS

in the events industry

Messukeskus Helsinki
Expo and Convention Centre



Watch our
AR video:
messukeskus.com/ufi





Augmented Reality brings together virtual and real life encounters and provides both event organisers and exhibitors brand new business opportunities.

*Augmented reality is the consumer friendly implementation of the virtual reality trend. It adds a layer of information and experiences to the real world. Our AR implementation is accessed easily through a smartphone app, which makes it easy to adopt for a wide audience. The AR market is predicted to total 120 billion dollars and to engulf the AR/VR market by 2020.**

**) www.digi-capital.com*

THE IDEA - COMBINING GAMIFICATION AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

Messukeskus, the Expo and Convention Center Helsinki recognized that in order to maintain and prosper as the most entertaining event center in Finland and grow as the most wanted convention center in Helsinki we had to bring new ideas to the table. Therefore adding digital services is a key point in our strategy.

In the fall 2015 we took note of the AR trend and the gamification trend. Not only young people but also their parents were thrilled by Pokémon Go, an augmented reality game played in real life. How could we bring events to life with augmented reality? We found a collaborator from the Finnish start up scene and started to brainstorm on how to both serve our visitors better and make events more entertaining. In early 2016 the project was started.



We instantly knew we wanted to be part of this!"

*Sari Juurinen, Marketing Manager,
Olympia Kaukomatkat
/ Olympia Air Travel Ltd*



THE OBJECTIVE - NEW EXPERIENCES WITH A BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

We aim to provide the best customer experience in the events industry in Europe and create new business from digital innovations for us and our customers.

We split this goal into two: First, we were to serve our visitors better through interactive maps that not only direct you to the desired location but also give additional information on the exhibitors. Second, as we would gain users through better user experience at the events, we saw a real business potential in the AR solution.

Our goal for the next few years is to find new business from the digital world and AR as a marketing platform was proving potential. We were especially pleased with the way AR was a seamless experience at the exhibition area, easy to use and adding value to the events experience.





THE SERVICE – THE INTERACTIVE MAP RECEIVED PRAISES FROM VISITORS

The interactive map made our visitors experience at the expo much smoother. The old paper maps and street signs used for navigation were insufficient and after each event we received feedback that it was impossible for some to find the companies they were looking for. All though we do have an app and a map there, the interactive AR map had several advantages: it locates the user and directs him or her from where ever they are in the exhibition hall to their desired destination be it a restaurant, restroom or an exhibiting company. You can search for companies and services in the AR interface and then navigate to them. The app gives the users evaluated distance and real time directions much like a cars gps would.

In addition the AR app enables the users to find other users, friends who are at the expo and even make new acquaintances.

Our strategy states that we are to provide heart warming service and in our slogan we state that we provide real encounters, genuine experiences and a touch of the future. With these in mind we set out to serve our customers beyond expectations through modern technology and digital development.



This is amazing, we want to book this for next year too!"

*Kari Joronen, Marketing Manager,
Volvo Cars Finland*

THE IMPLEMENTATION – PHYSICAL CONSTRUCTION AND APP DEVELOPMENT

Together with our AR partner Immersal we developed a full, 360° AR world in our exhibitions halls. The solution is globally unique and as to date we are the only company in the world to have created a B2C AR solution of this magnitude. The visitors use the AR maps and other layers through a smartphone app which was released in January 2017.

Immersal is an exciting new company from Helsinki. The founder Jufo Peltomaa had previously established Zen Robotics and ventured in the robotics market. Now he approached us with a proposition for an AR world for large spaces. It was both thrilling and refreshing working with a start up. We learned new, lean ways to lead a project and we were impressed by the developers' can-do -attitude. Their passion for their work and team play was something we want to bring into our everyday.

To realise the AR world our exhibition halls had to be covered with AR markers (much like QR codes). They had to be hung from the ceiling high enough not to bother exhibitors' stands and low enough for the app connected to them.



THE CHALLENGES – IT IS NOT ALWAYS EASY TO BE THE FIRST

As always when working with something that has never been done before we had several challenges. For example the schedule did not hold and we got the app to Apple App Store only few days before the launch.

One of the biggest things to learn from in this project was working with a start up instead of an established provider. In this project we had to combine the technical skills of the developers and the enthusiasm of a start up with the understanding of events and business opportunities from our side. Communications were key to keep the dialogue going and so we started a Slack channel to help effortless communications with Immersal.

However we do find that working with start ups develops our business fast and with a passion. We have a lot to learn from the low hierarchy, the flexible roles in a start up and the fast adaptation of ideas that all are typical for a start up. Being encouraged after working with Immersal we did a hackathon





in the fall 2016 and picked two additional projects with start ups in addition to the AR app.

Putting the AR solution into practice required heavy communications both inside our own organisation and externally to exhibitors. Selling the idea to the first customers was challenging since they had no previous experience or even knowledge of AR technology. Internally our sales teams had to be very well briefed on the new AR opportunities. The whole business potential does lie in our own ability to sell the solution to our customers.

THE OUTCOMES – BRAND VALUE, NEW BUSINESS & BETTER SERVICE

Our objectives were to rise our brand value, create new business opportunities for us and our clients and serve our visitors better. So far we have reached all objectives:

We gained brand value through wide publicity in press and media both nationally and globally.

We created new business from commercial AR implementations. The basic commercial set up is to have the exhibitors logo hovering above the stand. But Qatar Airways and Volvo Cars Finland opted for a more gamified experience. Their stands at Matka Travel Fair and our Boat show respectively had a virtual animal that was the key to take part in a competition. Both implementations resulted in engaging 30-40% of the app

users. Meaning 30-40% of app users made their way to Qatar Airways or Volvo Cars' stands and looked for the virtual animal.

And finally we helped our customers to create more meaningful encounters and leads. We excelled in providing better customer service, which resulted in positive feedback.

AR is just the start. We will continue on developing our digital services and ways of working in order to grow our business.



We provide real encounters, genuine experiences and a **touch of the future.**"

- *The Messukeskus slogan*

ABOUT US

Messukeskus Helsinki, Expo and Convention Centre, promotes Finnish welfare by enabling effective face to face encounters at exhibitions, meetings, conferences and other events. Exhibitions are the seventh most used marketing medium in Finland. Face to face encounters make the most impact, are the most social and create experiences like no other medium. In 2016, 75 exhibitions and over 2200 meetings and congresses were held at Messukeskus Helsinki. 9 000 exhibitors and 1.1 million visitors took part in the events.

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Messukeskus



THE NUMBERS

– *what does the data show us?*

Data as of launch Jan 19th till February 12th.

500

DOWNLOADS
FOR iOS DEVICES IN 1,5 MONTHS

134

MEDIA HITS
IN FINNISH AND GLOBAL MEDIA

36-39%

*Participation rate among app users
for commercial AR implementations*

3

*Big outside renters are very
likely to implement the AR
experience to their events*

2.7

*An average user used the
app 2.7 times during a visit*

1-2

*Commercial AR-implementations
in each of our fairs since launch*