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Print Media and Augmented Reality

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Up until this point in time, the real world and the digital world have been two separate articles. As time moves forward we can literally see the gap close. It's quite extraordinary to witness this transition. Last quarter *The Dingley Press* put out a White Paper addressing the amplification of Big Data. The amount of information circulating online isn't just immeasurable, it's infinite.

With the use of such instruments as Google glass along with data recognition software, we are so close to having everything we see with our own eyes also be seen by a community of eyes. Everything we look at constantly recorded.

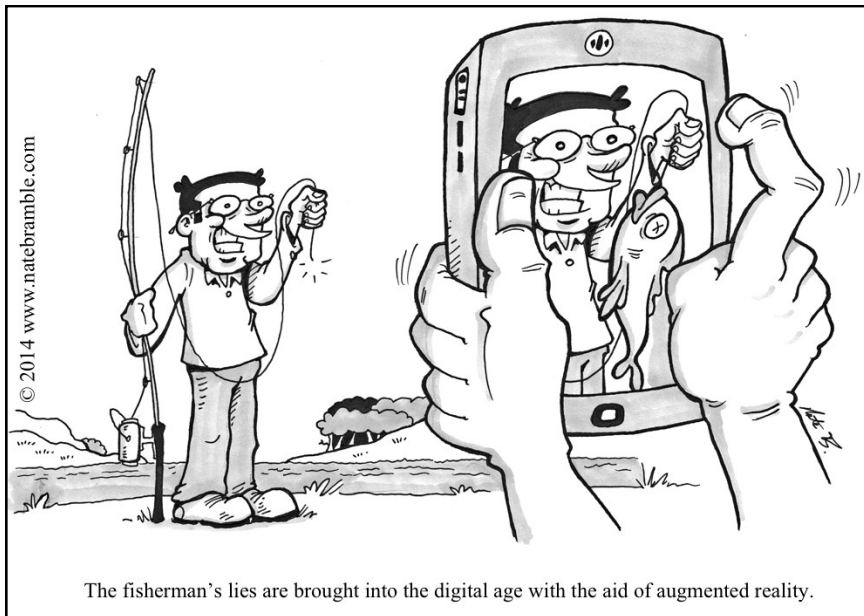
Imagine this. You are in the grocery store and you are wearing AR contacts. You look at the shelves. They are lined with hundreds of choices of packaged

goods; nothing new there, however, as you look at each brand, you also look at a stream of friends you are linked to via social media that have bought the same brand in the past. At the same time you see options to read about the company, watch a video about how the product is made, or text your friend to see how they liked the product. What's going on

here is Augmented Reality—or image recognition and a digital overlay accompanying the real world.

The world of Augmented Reality is huge. The implications that it has on our future is infinite. For the purposes of this White Paper, we will take a look at

Augmented Reality as to how it affects Print Media currently and its possible residual effects into the future. Before we get to that, however, let's take some time and explore its origins and its place in the real world today.



Return to Zero



What EXACTLY is IT?

Augmented Reality versus Virtual Reality

Augmented Reality is different than virtual reality. In the scenario of virtual reality, the world becomes replaced in a person's mind with a simulated world. Take the movie The Matrix, for example where people are enslaved by machines in a digital/virtual world. In the case of Augmented Reality, however, the real world becomes mixed in with a simulated, digital, world. The two worlds mix together until they make up a new reality in the mind of the recipient.



guidance.

The truth is that AR has actually been around for a long time; its origins date as far back as the 60's. Up until now, however, the technology has been expensive, cumbersome, and simply not accessible to the general population. An article from <http://www.pocket-lint.com/> explains:

The History of Augmented Reality

Augmented reality first came into mention in the early 90's when researcher Tom Caudell invented a device (a pair of goggles) that would help instruct

workers in a facility how to operate a machine. The device was hooked up to a matrix of images and used data recognition software to receive and send visual step by step

“Until 1999, AR remained very much a toy of the scientist. Expensive, bulky equipment and complicated software all meant that the consumer never even knew of this growing field. As far as they were concerned, explorations into virtual worlds had died along with the [Lawnmower Man](#). All that was to change though when Hirokazu Kato of the Nara Institute of Science and Technology released the [ARToolKit](#) to the open source community. For the first time, it allowed video capture tracking of the real world to combine with the interaction of virtual objects and provided a 3D graphics that could be overlaid on any OS platform” (Read more of this article [here](#)).





technology. That thought scares people. And perhaps it should!

You may remember the movie *Minority Report* with Tom Cruise? Chief John Anderton (Cruise) does his research on a virtual computer screen that has actually been overlaid on his real world environment. Although, we don't yet have a trinity of psychics preventing murders before they happen, we have Augmented Reality, and it's really not

The Future of Augmented Reality

Much excitement, speculation, hope, and even fear is associated with Augmented Reality in the future. On one hand, AR is a breakthrough technology that is able to enrich what would otherwise be an everyday experience. On the other hand, it's a big technology that could easily get out of hand. We have so much information stored in the universe of data that it is possible with the use of image recognition software and accessible data, people could know personal things about you simply by scanning you with the AR

that far away from the virtual computer portrayed in the movie.

The fact is that AR is still in its infancy. If you wanted to compare the technology to cell phones, it would probably look something like the first cell phone did back in the 70's. As cool as the technology is already, it is nowhere near complete. We cannot fathom as to where this technology is headed or where it will be in five years.



Increasing Direct Mail Response

If you could create an experience for your customers that was interactive, engaging, and educational, why wouldn't you want to do that? Statistics show that personalization is key to reaching your customers through direct mail marketing. Here's how it works:

Builds customer loyalty through engagement

Augmented reality isn't just about selling. It can be used to engage your customers and create a loyal following for your brand. When you incorporate augmented reality in your selling, you create more than a simple advertisement for your consumers, you create an entire experience.

Creates trust through education

One way to achieve loyalty from your customers is to gain their trust. Education is one of the fastest and most productive ways to achieve that goal. You've heard the content marketing hype over the past five years. The theory behind content marketing is simple: educate your consumers, create interest, and mark a trusted voice of expertise in your field. Educating your customers is extremely effective. Augmented Reality can be used as a portal from your catalog to a whole world more of information about a product.

Benefits your business

An article published on clickz.com talks about how Augmented Reality benefits both the customer and the business. The article explains: "Many brands correctly want to help their customers, and augmented reality enables them [to] do that. Yet we can't deny that there are lots of business benefits" (you can read more [here](#)). For one, incorporating Augmented Reality in your catalog planning will set you apart from other catalogers. It won't be long before this technology is adopted by companies everywhere. Why not be one of the first to use it? Look at Ikea. They have a great program and



they have already created a spot for themselves in this new digital world. The article continues to say: "Projecting an image, video, and message of your own making to customers allows you to control the conversation. The unique format of augmented reality adds novelty to a store's atmosphere." Here are a couple more ways that AR can benefit your business:

- You can use AR to collect surveys from your customer
- You can keep track of how effective your AR campaign is by monitoring your URL traffic in Google analytics

Drives traffic to your website

An article put out by the Ex Squad explains that “the number of mobile addicts increased from 79 million in March 2013 to 176 million in March 2014” (read article [here](#)). The article continues “This “love affair” between users and their mobile devices gives companies an excellent opportunity to leverage the relationship. Marketers have long known that engaging customers and building a loyal base of repeat buyers are critical to a company’s success. One crucial part of succeeding at these tasks is to ‘go where the customers are.’ Since they are on their mobile devices, it makes sense that that is where you need to be also.” By simply being present where they are already, by using Augmented Reality, you are simply offering them a route for their vehicle.

Brand recognition through fun

One of the greatest assets of AR is that it’s fun for people! Crayola has a great app called Color Alive where you can scan a coloring book and bring alive the images that have been colored. What a perfect way to give a child an engaging interactive creative multi-sensory experience. IKEA and Moosejaw are good at interacting with their consumers in a fun way. Creating a fun and unforgettable experience for your consumers is one of the best ways to create brand recognition moving into the future.

Can have a greater emotional impact

Data has a greater emotional impact when looked at in the real world in real time. When we are present in the physical world, our brains respond differently than when we are in the digital world. Everything is more real. We are more likely to laugh, cry, and learn.



The Future of Print and Augmented Reality

The Power of Augmented Reality in Print

The Business2Community website put out an article titled [The Role Of Augmented Reality in the Future of Retail](#). In the article, Vignesh Subramanyan states that “Online shopping is a very lucrative market segment for retailers, but customers are typically skeptical to buy products that they cannot physically interact with. Augmented reality offers a solution to this problem by providing users with a tangible experience that combines the two spaces.”

The idea here is that with the use of both print and digital working together, we are now able to create a well rounded and combined experience for our consumers. This is something that up until now has not been possible. That’s the power of print and digital working together.

The Future of Augmented Reality for

Catalogers

What does all this mean for catalogers? A 2014 article published on the Augmented Reality Trends website explains:

“With augmented reality increasingly being used by majority of retailers and consumers, it is necessary for the retailers who are yet to venture in this space, to start using this technology. Including AR in their marketing strategy will prepare them for the future when the use of this technology will be indispensable.

With a proper AR strategy in place, brands can get past their competitors and reach out to their prospective consumers in a much better way” (read article [here](#)).

Print has been around for hundreds of years and that is not going to change any time soon. It is so much a part of who we are as human beings; from the first printings on cave walls to the most up to date printing technologies. That said, we cannot ignore this obviously very powerful digital influence. The future of catalog printing should not be looked at necessarily as being at odds to digital technology, but rather as being a counterpart to it.



Click on this image
to watch Honey
Nut Cheerios AR

Cornerstone brands partnered with Marxent Labs to release an Augmented Reality application that allows their customers to experience print while at the same time offering an ecommerce buying experience. What they did is allow you to purchase each product in the catalog with the AR application. Simply point your device at the object in the catalog and add it to your cart and purchase using your device (see more [details](#)).

Augmented Reality is not a fleeting trend. It is the toddler of what is to come. Even the USPS knows this, which is why they run their postal promotions whereby they require catalogers to embrace the technology. Who else more suited to invest in the future of catalog printing?

The best thing that catalogers can do is begin by embracing the technology. For more information about incorporating Augmented Reality in your catalog, feel free to [contact us](#) now!