



NVISION®

Augmented Reality and Marketing

By NVISION Insights and Innovation Team

A smile.

If you've ever demonstrated an Augmented Reality (AR) experience to someone in person, you'll recognize that as the universal indicator of success.

It's not what they say. It's not the 27-page findings of a focus group.

It's a smile.

Baked into that smile are a number of factors that have catapulted AR technology from its military origins in the early '90s, to its mainstream adoption with Pokémon Go, all the way to its rapid expansion within marketing that we are seeing today.

The reason?

It's AR's ability to create an experience. To create a smile.



A smile. It's AR's ability to create an experience to create a smile; the universal indicator of success.

We lay out what AR is (and what it isn't), what it can do, the data, and why as a marketer you need to start paying attention to what it can do for your brand.

A Tech & Terminology Crash Course

There are several technologies and “realities” that are sometimes hard to keep straight. Below is a snapshot of the world.

Augmented Reality (AR)

- Virtually overlaying content on the real world
- No spatial awareness
- Tech Needed: mobile phone, tablet, or wearable Device

Virtual Reality (VR)

- Immersion into a fully virtual world
- Occludes your vision
- Tech needed: wearable device

Mixed Reality (MR)

- Introducing virtual experiences that can interact with the real world
- Reacts & responds to your “space”

Extended Reality (XR)

- The umbrella term under which all the experiences above reside.



Augmented Reality

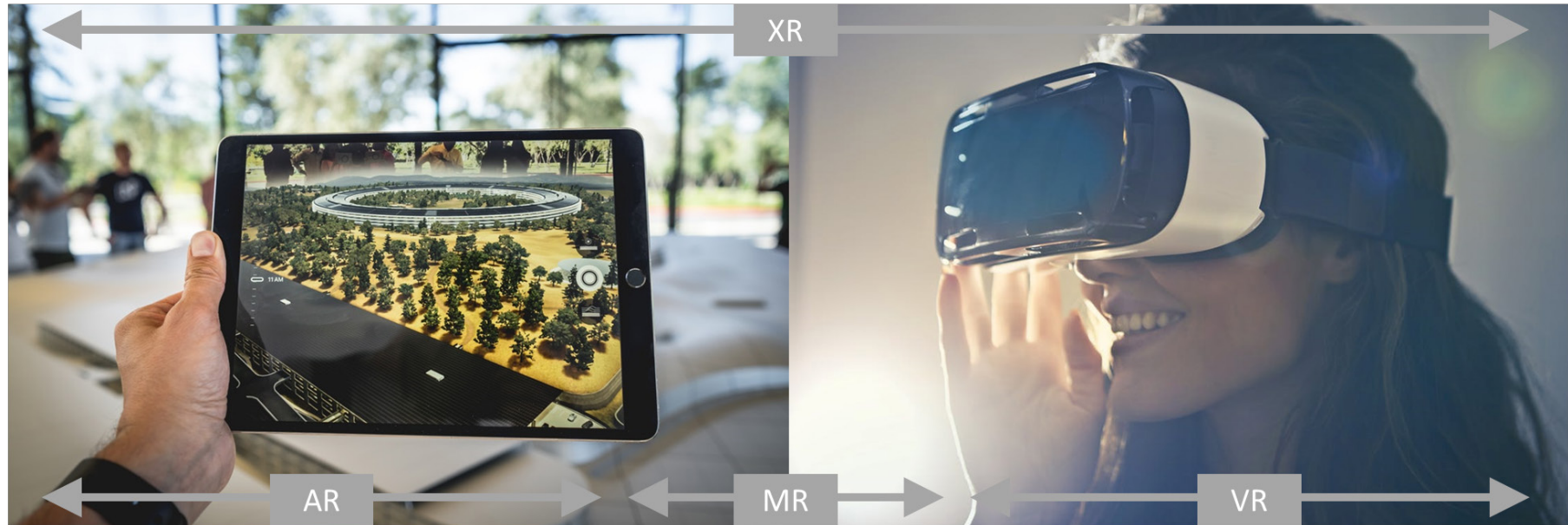


Virtual Reality



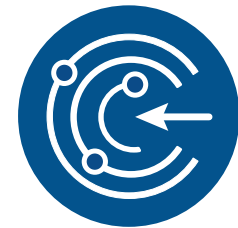
Mixed Reality

Extended Reality



Of these 3 technologies, AR's ascension in the marketing sphere has primarily been due to its accessibility.

Unlike VR that requires headsets, the only piece of hardware necessary to create an AR experience is a smart phone... something most people have.



Accessibility of AR is a massive advantage to marketers since most people have a smartphone.

The 3 Essential Parts to an Augmented Reality Experience

1. The Marker

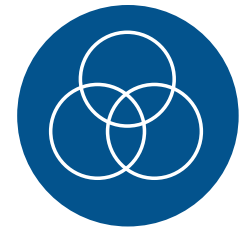
This is the object you're looking to augment. This can be a sign, a physical object, or an image on a screen. It can be something small enough to fit in your hand, or as large as a skyscraper.

2. The AR Asset

This is the augmented overlay that appears on your screen when your camera detects the Marker. This can be an audio file, a 3D image, a video, 3D graphics, games, etc.

3. The Platform

To tie them both together you need an app that allows the camera on your phone or tablet to recognize markers, and trigger the associated assets.



3 essential part to an augmented reality are marker, AR asset and platform.

Putting These Pieces Together

Marketers are experimenting with AR and continually pushing the boundaries of what it can do. From turning New York's Time Square into an "ARcade," to using one's own smile as a way to determine a discount code, the possibilities are endless.

Augmented Reality is being used as a platform to expand not just the conversation, but the type of conversations brands are having with their audience.

They're creating experiences that not only delight – but are doing so in ways that can produce data which can be used to assist with the customer on their journey.

Which journey though, and at which point can vary. Are you creating top-of-mind awareness to an existing client? Or introducing yourself as a brand to a prospect?

Are you simply trying to create a memorable experience? Or are you promoting a social media campaign?

AR can help with all the above.



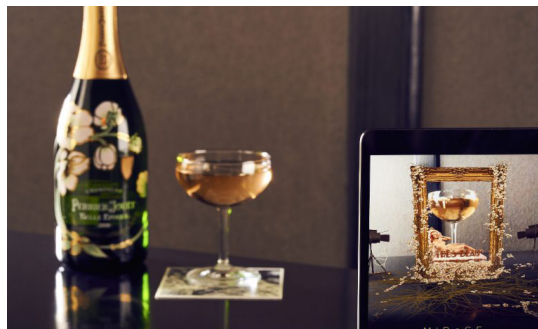
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How? Many of the traditional approaches fall within the buckets below.

Filters:

You've seen people taking pictures of their food. Give them a simple filter to post #yourproduct.

Or, you can make something more elaborate like DSW's "Smile Meter," which provided users coupons based on their level of happiness, determined by their smile.



[Source: Tech Trends](#)



Photo credit: Fabric Media for DSW

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Info Overlays:

Take a static piece of collateral and add creative or informational overlays to bring it to life. Expand beyond the printed word with videos or audio, and bring your physical marketing materials to life in all new dimensions.

Tours:

Turn landmarks, way-finding signage, or even museum exhibits into an immersive experience.

Gamification:

Mars Inc. turned Times Square into an “ARcade” by augmenting their billboards with popular arcade games.

Visualization:

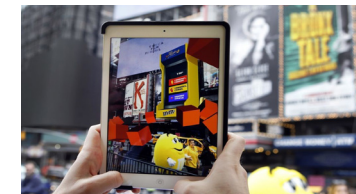
Turn a concept into reality by having it jump off the page. Even if it’s as large as a cityscape.



Source: [BundlAR](#)



Source: [Think Mobiles](#)



Source: [Mobile News](#)



Source: [Cushman & Wakefield](#)

Photobooth:

Take a picture with your favorite spokesperson, mascot, historical figure, or even dinosaur.

Drive Sales:

Turn any piece of printed collateral into a digital bridge to your e-commerce space where your customers can easily purchase your product.

What makes AR technology exciting is its near limitless potential to create the experience you're looking for. If it can be created on a computer, it can be applied as an asset to a marker.



Source: [INDE](#)



Source: [BundlAR](#)

How Has the Market Responded to Augmented Reality?

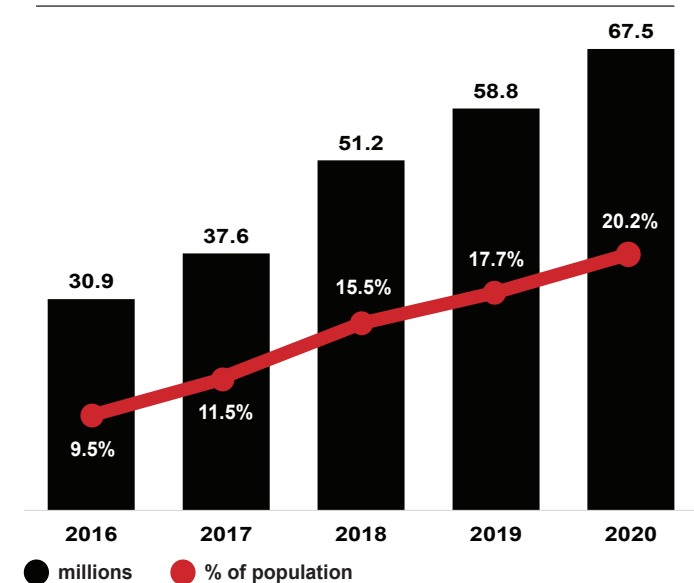
As opposed to just a few years ago, we now have the benefit of seeing how the market has responded to AR technology.

Specifically, are people using it?

Which industries are embracing the technology? And how are they employing it?

With regard to adoption, the numbers already look good and are projected to get even better as evidenced by a study from *eMarketer*.

Augmented Reality Users
US, 2016-2020



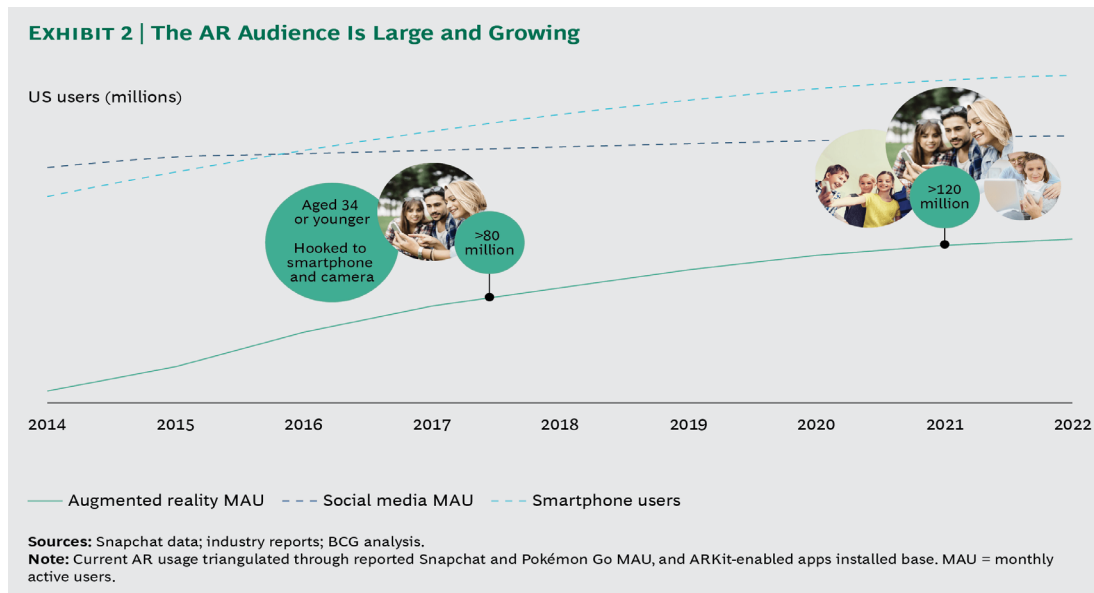
Source: [eMarketer](#)

One of the most promising aspects of AR is not just how many people it is attracting, but, as a *Boston Consulting Group (BCG)* report states, who it is attracting:

"We estimate that more than 80 million people in the US, or roughly one-third of all smartphone users, engage with AR at least monthly. The consumers using AR applications are a particularly attractive segment for advertisers: most are millennials (aged 19 to 34) or Generation Z consumers (aged 18 or younger). They use their smartphones and cameras continually throughout the day, communicating via images and video as much as they do through text and voice. This behavior opens up an entirely new method for engaging with consumers—an interactive approach where the advertiser is a participant in the "conversation" or activity rather than a company delivering a message."



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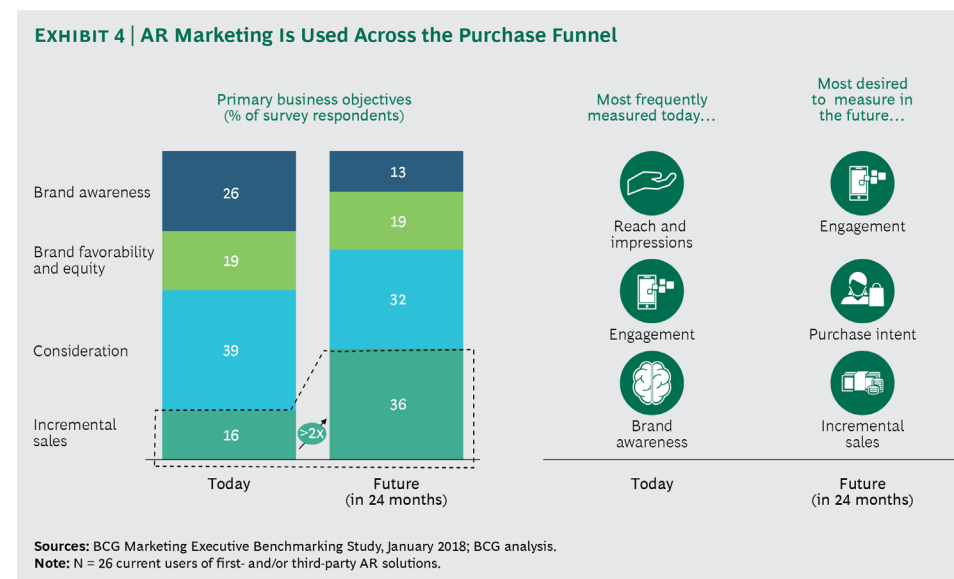
Source: [Boston Consulting Group](#)

MARKET RESPONDS TO AUGMENTED REALITY

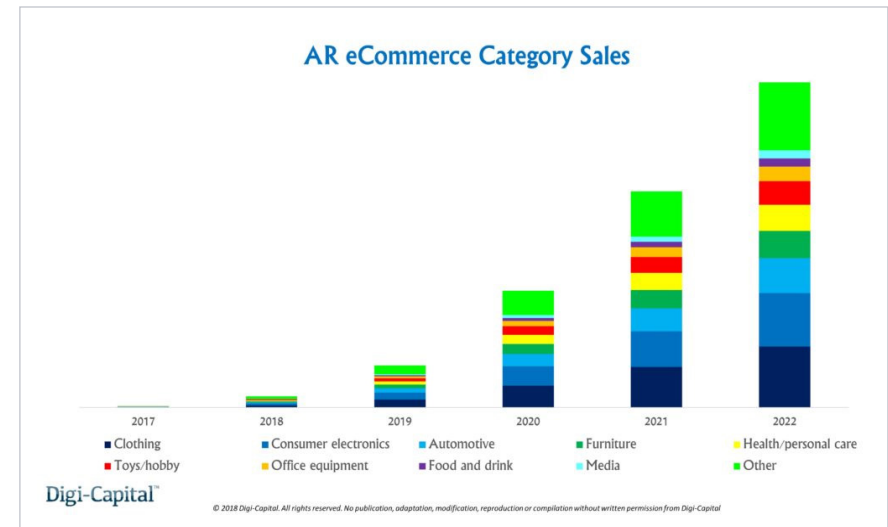
This type of audience is likely a major consideration in the technology's adoption within marketing departments across a variety of verticals as outlined in the *Digi-Capital* chart on the right.

Finally, it's important to understand from a marketing perspective how AR tech is being applied.

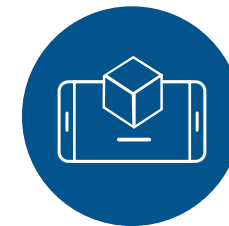
As outlined in the BCG chart below, AR is being utilized to create brand awareness. Over time, though, that is estimated to morph into an increasingly important role in closing sales.



Source: [Boston Consulting Group](#)



Source: [Digi-Capital](#)



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How Do You Go About Integrating AR Into Your Marketing Mix?

The first step is to recognize that AR is a commitment. You wouldn't just run one banner ad, send one email, or create a single social media post – and AR is no different.

You can't roll out an experience and expect it to transform your brand.

There needs to be a strategic focus on its individual role, as well as how it will interact within your existing marketing mix.

Next, assuming you are not going to build it in-house, is to find a trusted partner that can help you develop an app with all the tools to bring your AR platform to life, while also navigating:

- **The Goal** – What are you looking to accomplish by developing an AR experience? What content will be the focus? What is the trigger? What action would you like the audience to take?
- **The Need** – Creating an experience just to have one won't serve much of a purpose. How are you going to create an experience people will want to engage with? What's the hook?



- **The Features** – Do you want the experience to link to your website? Do you want videos to appear? Do you want 3D animations to appear that people can interact with?
- **The Design** – Much like a website landing page, you need to determine what the experience will look like. What will remain in the real world? What will be augmented?
- **The Build** – Are you trying to integrate AR into your existing app or do you need to build one from scratch? What backend integrations are required? What data needs to be captured?

The idea of creating an AR app may seem daunting.

It's not.

The landscape of companies and the quality of the experiences that can be created continues to expand, while the price and time required to execute those experiences continues to shrink.



Wrapping It Up

AR has transformed from a futuristic technology for the bold few into an everyday reality. It's not just for Facebook, Microsoft, Amazon, and other tech giants.

Brands from all sectors and sizes are beginning to take advantage of the immersive and memorable experiences AR can create.

These companies that are embracing a test-and-learn philosophy with AR are the ones best situated to capitalize on its expanding size of the marketing pie moving forward.



Ready to learn more?

Contact us at **866-203-7141** or nvision.na.com