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Going beyond with extended reality

JULY 19, 2021

7-MINUTE READ

In brief

- Extended reality (XR) experiences are growing in popularity—and offering huge potential for a new way of working.
- Breakthrough technologies are enabling companies, including Accenture, to co-create and prototype solutions—transforming the enterprise as we know it.
- Accenture believes the future of meeting, learning, and working together will combine physical and Virtual Experiences.
- XR transcends the real world to drive next-generation digital experiences—whether for our people, clients, ecosystem partnerships or acquisition teams.

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Driving better experiences

Virtual Reality (VR) is a three-dimensional, computer generated environment that can be explored and interacted with by a person.

Augmented Reality (AR) is a technology that superimposes a computer-generated image on a user's view of the real world to provide a composite view.

Mixed Reality (MR) is the merging of real and virtual worlds to produce new environments and visualizations, where physical and digital objects co-exist and interact in real time.

Extended Reality (XR) includes virtual reality (VR), mixed reality (MR), augmented reality (AR), haptics, holograms, and immersive tools and diverse worlds that use and enhance our natural senses.

As everyone embraces the virtual world to better connect, XR experiences are growing in popularity—and offering huge potential for a new way of learning and working. Industry leaders double down on such technology investments; in fact, when it comes [to technology and innovation adoption](#), we have found that leaders can grow five times faster than laggards.

Accenture has been assessing the opportunity for some time, looking for applications, testing and prototyping XR solutions and developing our strategy to be a leader in XR experiences.



Going boldly into the metaverse using virtual reality

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Two years ago we predicted [industry spending on XR](#) could expect to triple consumer spending by 2023, alongside five-fold increases in patent applications for AR/VR innovation and a surge in AR/VR start-ups. Analysis of workforce data showed XR augments workers' judgment, decision making, speed and accuracy.

New use cases for XR are on the horizon as well. The [Accenture Technology Vision 2021](#) revealed that 87% of executives agree that massive, intelligent digital twins—modeling whole factories, supply chains, product life cycles and more—are becoming essential to their organizations' ability to collaborate in strategic ecosystem partnerships. XR may present new and unique ways for enterprises to engage these models and drive more value from their real-world data.

"XR helps our people go beyond in-person experiences to discover the art of the possible. By experimenting and



Jason Warnke

SENIOR MANAGING DIRECTOR – GLOBAL IT, DIGITAL EXPERIENCES LEAD

Enables Accenture with technology to work collaboratively, including social, video and broadcast services, and digital workplace.

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How Accenture does IT

Are you ready for close encounters of the virtual kind?



Technology

Understanding the DNA of DARQ

co-creating with our ecosystem of partners, we've been able to reach new levels of workplace innovation."

— JASON WARNKE, Senior Managing Director – Global IT, Global Digital Experiences Lead, Accenture



Podcast: How VR fits into the digital experience

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XR excellence

Accenture is a leader in [delivering XR solutions](#) to our clients, and we are creating valuable XR experiences for our own people, too.

Building Accenture's XR program for our people involves engaging with their hearts and minds to create unparalleled XR experiences. Our strategy involves using XR to provide opportunities to develop a sense of community and enhance our culture. It focuses on three foundational pillars: hardware, application and content.

Hardware	▼
Application	▼
Content	▼

For us, differentiated XR experiences are:

- **Collaborative:** Nurturing global connection with immersive, Virtual Experiences.
- **Thought provoking:** Offering new learning experiences, such as onboarding programs for new joiners and inclusion and diversity immersive training.
- **Universal:** Industrializing the approach for scaled headset production and managing a 3D enterprise platform for our 32 geographic units involved.
- **Innovative:** Creating ecosystem partnerships where we can innovate together, such as our active projects with Microsoft to build new XR solutions. We aim to iterate with as many partners as we can to make unparalleled experiences that inspire business innovation.



Our XR journey

We want to fully immerse our people in unique experiences and work with them to show them new perspectives. From employee recruitment experiences to how we can reinvent our events, or make our offices come to life, we have been putting our XR strategy that we deliver to clients into practice for ourselves.

Here are some of the ways we are collaborating virtually to engage our people:

New joiners

We introduced a VR element, a virtual campus in AltspaceVR, to our onboarding program to redefine the new joiner experience so that it is more global, immersive, and continues far beyond the first few days with the company. It offers new recruits a collaborative experience, offering interaction across the globe—a focused experience that is tailored toward the key “need to know” elements of joining Accenture. We take on around 100,000 new joiners per year, and as part of our comprehensive new joiner training, we offer more than 2000 sessions per year across 32 geographic units.





Account leadership summit

Unable to get together for one of our annual strategy meetings with our client account leaders in person this year, we created an exclusive virtual lounge using AltspaceVR. The combination of avatars and realistic meeting spaces provided a deeper sense of connection and helped the more than 150 managing directors in 25 countries to enjoy face-to-face time from their own locations.



Cybersecurity training

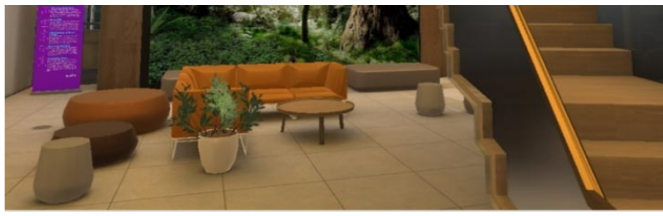
Our Information Security's (IS) new VR Cybersecurity Adventure experience takes people on an incredible, immersive journey through three exciting worlds set in both real and fantasy environments. The training asks users to defend themselves against hackers, scammers, fraudsters and cyberbullies as their knowledge of safe cybersecurity practices is put to the test using select VR headsets.



San Francisco innovation hub

We recreated our Accenture office in San Francisco as a digital twin using VR. It offers a virtual space to meet, collaborate and network and has the same look and feel of the physical office space so that our teams can collaborate in a familiar environment. The San Francisco Innovation Hub is just one of eight offices using the AltspaceVR platform; other offices are in New York, Sophia Antipolis (France), Madrid, Zurich, Bangalore, Brussels and London.





Meeting on the Nth Floor

Working closely with Microsoft and AltspaceVR we have devised a concept we call “[The Nth Floor](#).” It’s a mixed reality experience that enables people to interact with each other in person, regardless of geographic separation. Whether using it to host a virtual coffee break, conduct training, or host important all-hands meetings, the Nth Floor is a versatile, customizable and scalable solution for bringing a geographically distributed workforce together.



The future of collaboration

We want to help our people work more effectively together—to be with each other even when they can’t.

From bringing learning to life, enhancing the new joiner experience or experimenting with future XR applications, we are using technology to fuel our innovation.

Here’s how you can get started on developing collaborative experiences in your own organization:

- **Communicate consistently:** Introduce versatile communications solutions such as Microsoft Teams to bring your people, your clients and your ecosystem together.
- **Embrace video communications and broadcast:** Help to visualize and share information, easily and simply.
- **Develop new concepts to encourage interaction:** Inspire your teams with novel ways to meet and co-create.
- **Create the right environment:** Introduce people to the power of virtual reality through safe, immersive learning experiences.
- **Put tools in the hands of people that help them innovate:** Provide and manage the hardware, such as VR headsets, to take advantage of XR experiences.
- **Collaborate with partners:** Iterate and ideate with others to get the best possible solution from a like-minded ecosystem.

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Accenture's global IT organization is at the forefront of innovation, providing the infrastructure and services that...

Accenture Extended Reality (XR) services



The Accenture Extended Reality practice helps our clients imagine, create and deliver innovative XR...

Software and Platforms Virtual...



Shaping new virtual-first experiences that drive breakthrough business growth.

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