

Augment your reality

Technology is the driver in a rapidly changing world. But what are the next big things in technology and how do they impact you?

BY JESSICA ABELSOHN

Augmented reality allows you to view your real-world environment in a sensory way through sound, video or graphics. The technology enhances reality by allowing interactivity and digital manipulation. Information about the environment can be overlaid on the real world.

While augmented reality is not necessarily something new, its use in real estate has been minimal. Until now. Real estate professionals, however, are finding that it provides the opportunity to market your property to anyone, anywhere, at any time.

Augmented reality allows homebuyers to walk through a home without stepping foot in the door – even homes that haven't been built yet.

Augment your marketing

The Caxton Property Group, together with James Bell from McGrath Lane Cove, is currently using augmented reality marketing to showcase the new Chapman Green development in Beecroft.

"We wanted a marketing campaign that stood out from the crowd, captured the essence of Chapman Green, and gave interested parties an increased sense of awareness and understanding of the project," Director of Caxton Property Group Paul Selig explained. "Because AR is enormously scalable across anyone's smart device (combined with a simple printed page), it becomes a kind of view-anywhere version of our sales centre. This is great for overseas

investors and for potential buyers who want to give their family and friends a similar experience to the one they had with one of our sales agents."

Once users download the specially designed app, Chapman 4D, they are able to walk through the property at their own pace, unlike virtual tours which seem to speed through. Also, by pointing the app at the on-site signage, buyers can see what the building will look like on completion and by clicking on the top floor, buyers are transported to the penthouse where they can see the actual view that will be available to them.

Mr Selig said that they've even used public transport. "At Epping Station, a large billboard on one of the platforms transforms into the entrance of Chapman Green with James Bell from McGrath standing out front and introducing the project, before revealing buttons that allow users to call him straightaway or view the website."

According to Mr Bell, augmented reality extends potential buyers' overall experience and this won't be the last time he uses it to market his properties. "It is also great for people to view things from the advertising and brochure prior to their inspection. The marketing strategy appealed to a broad range of buyers and age groups. Even the less computer savvy people were blown away by it."

While Caxton Property Group and Mr Bell also used traditional marketing methods, they believe the augmented reality space they created helped with

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their success, with over 90 per cent of the project sold within the first two weeks.

Get appy

It's no secret that apps open up a whole new world of marketing and organisation. Today's user wants instant information and having to scroll through a website just sometimes doesn't cut it.

For property managers, you'll be amazed at how one simple app can change the way you organise your information.

Applications save you time and money when it comes to managing your properties and creating reports. Some even allow you to imbed video inspections into your reports so your clients can see exactly what their property currently looks like.

When it comes to selling real estate, apps such as Snaploader are quickly taking over. David Newton, Principal at Newton Real Estate, uses Snaploader for his listings. "More than 53 per cent of buyers prefer to browse for a property on their mobile device or tablet. Snaploader brings traditional marketing methods into the 21st century. Brochures, window displays and newspaper advertisements all become interactive."

The app works by matching an image from a property to

the information about that property and its surroundings. Plus, it gives the buyer your contact details so they can get in touch straight away. It also provides the ability to follow up with buyers, connecting you to interested parties. "Snaploader provides agents with an ongoing link to buyers who have snapped a property," Mr Newton said. "The agent is able to provide updates about that property and message them [potential buyers] important and relevant information as it happens." ♦

