VR/AR Association Industry Leaders Discuss XR Enterprise Value and Onboarding – GenAI, VR Headsets, Immersive Training and More

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Lucky Gobindram, and Ron Thompson, discuss their recent work on an XR onboarding whitepaper to help introduce the value of AR/VR/MR to international businesses

MIXED REALITY INSIGHTS

Published: September 5, 2024

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The enterprise XR industry is rising. During the metaverse hype-wave, virtual services became mainstream, as immersive solution providers championed the ability to leverage virtual meeting rooms and other immersive procedures to ensure enterprises kept productive as the world was recovering from the international pandemic. At the same time, Meta rebranded and put a then-unseen amount of time and effort towards marketing the Quest 2 as a pioneering consumer-grade VR headset, truly making VR mainstream.

However, the XR industry is not new, especially on the enterprise side. Those deep in the industry know its storied history, rapidly improving sophisticated technology, and how, leading into the 2020s, companies experimented with AR/VR/MR solutions for various professional sectors.

The dust has settled, however, since the metaverse boom, but interest in the next era of paradigm-shifting business technology is as strong as ever. The rise of genAI is partly to thank for this rise in interest; the technology's ability to optimise a broad range of workflows is allowing the emerging technology space to flourish.

Following the rise of XR earlier this decade, the 2024 genAI hype train is now also boosting XR to new heights alongside it, as genAI can not only help with simplifying XR development cycles but provide value as an integrated tool within those services to enable new bespoke opportunities for use cases such as collaboration, training, and workplace simulations.

With all the history, promises, and aligned technologies, XR can be hard to navigate at times, especially for XR champions within a business trying to communicate its effectiveness and value to decision-makers who may not fully understand the market.

That's where the VRAR Association comes in. The group is well-known and respected in the XR industry. Recently, the group and its members started working on a series of whitepapers, making digestible reports on the business value of AR/VR/MR. Ready to introduce decision-makers to XR.

To explore the VRARA's whitepaper effort, XR Today spoke exclusively to the **Co-Founder/President of CXR Agency and advisor to the VRARA New York chapter, Lucky Gobindram,** and **Ron Thompson, the CEO of CAIL,** to discuss their work on a report covering enterprise XR onboarding.

Introducing Enterprise XR Onboarding

Thompson noted that the VRARA XR Onboarding Whitepaper contains "very powerful metrics about improved business outcomes," which should help executives understand XR's strengths. The report uses leading industry examples to showcase how XR brings business value today from service providers such as STRIVR, AppliedVR, Talespin, Taqtile, and countless others.

The whitepaper also reported end-user success; for example, the VRARA noted that Walmart saved roughly $38 million thanks to reduced training time and travel expenses. On the other hand, the documentation highlights how immersive training in healthcare is leading to a 70 per cent increase in efficiency and more than $16.9 million in potential annual benefits for hospital systems—"there are some great hard metrics in different industries, but there are also some very important significant benefits," Thompson remarked.

Thompson added:

> ***The idea is to have a senior executive give the document to someone who either heads up innovation or will look into XR and identify use cases in their organization.***

Thompson and Gobindram are specialists in the XR field, and their insight provides excellent value to senior team members trying to visualise and communicate the potential of AR/VR/MR and driving the adoption of immersive technology.

Gobindram has been an experienced AR/VR/MR service builder for roughly 16 years, becoming an international leader in software development. Thompson's firm, CAIL, is deeply experienced in bringing transformative software solutions to global enterprise clients. Through its venture investing avenue, CAIL entered the XR space.

With this insight, Lucky, Thompson, and other VRARA collaborators created the white paper as an initiative to support increasing awareness and opportunities for XR.

Thompson explained:

> ***We view the heavy visualization capabilities and interactivity with XR as very important, especially when you combine that with AI. This combination is very synergistic and creates significant opportunities for new experiences, new capabilities, and new ways of doing business. That's why we did the whitepaper: to give insight and trigger innovation opportunities.***

Echoing Thompson's comments, Gobindram's knowledge of building immersive services for enterprise clients allowed him to contribute significantly to the whitepaper and create "resources and understanding of what's going on in the industry."

Gobindram added:

> ***Today, there are a lot of disparate sources, but nothing that correlates, in a clean way, on topics that are relevant to decision-makers and stakeholders at the enterprise level. What they don't see is that there's a lot of success occurring, and a lot of their counterparts, colleagues, and others know about it. The industry is taking risks and having huge gains across the board.***

Answering Common Industry questions

Thompson expressed a "need to get executive attention for XR." However, this need for attention is creating a "general conundrum with all new technologies outside of AI. " Therefore, a clear and concise understanding of emerging XR—and AI—solutions is critical for enterprise XR adoption.

"We've been saying XR is coming for a long time and we've been saying the same thing about AI, now they're both at this inflection point where they're both going to push each other forward together," Gobindram explained.

Navigating the XR tide can be tricky. The waters are filled with various metrics and technology terms that may alienate certain professionals.

XR is an incredible technology partly due to its ability to integrate multiple RT3D immersive content types and aligned technology to form a unified tool leveraging tech from digital twins to genAI and full body tracking; however, understanding the value is still new to those outside the XR bubble.

It is essential to understand how XR and its aligned technology can positively affect a business and create innovative XR use cases, such as immersive training.

Thompson explained:

> ***AI is hoarding all the time, and significant resources. To get attention, you've got to show you complement an AI strategy by adding intelligence processes, proving outcomes, reducing risk, and making more money. But to make that happen, in many cases, requires much better visualization to help the brain quickly learn.***

Humans learn visually, and XR significantly boosts worker proficiency by leveraging this fact. Moreover, genAI can also solve several enterprise challenges in XR adoption, with the best outcomes appearing when the technologies are in tandem.

By creating the onboarding whitepaper, the VRARA helps businesses understand how to leverage, at times, hard-to-understand XR hardware alongside AI initiatives so that companies can keep up to date with technology cycles and stay ahead of the pack.

Thompson notes that if a business doesn't "catch the current cycle, they might miss it, and over time, it becomes problematic."

Finding New Opportunities

Gobindram noted that "effective onboarding of XR has been proven to improve productivity, proficiency, satisfaction and engagement." According to Gobindram, XR can position "organizations to better perform and advance new business opportunities."

Gobindram explained:

> ***The theory here was to give examples in use cases from Walmart and Bank of America of what they're seeing from this and how it could benefit them, whether enterprise or SMB, and help them build a solid foundation. It's very evident to us, but how do we make it evident to others?***

Moreover, the XR industry is evolving rapidly. Market forecasts predict that AR smart glasses and MR headsets will rule the XR market as the decade approaches, painting a future that general audiences may not have expected in years past.

As Thompson stated, staying on top of industry technology trends is critical for businesses. Suppose a business lags behind today in technology like XR head-mounted devices, 3D spatial monitors, or genAI. In that case, that business may struggle to climb the innovation ladder in the future—whatever that future may bring.

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