



KONICA MINOLTA



AR INSIDE

USING THE POWER OF TECH FOR GOOD

USING KONICA MINOLTA'S AUGMENTED REALITY

Working together, The Big Issue and Konica Minolta have shone a fresh light on UK homelessness, offering readers a new way to access exclusive content in the magazine, through the use of Konica Minolta's augmented reality (AR) app, genARate.



Giving Shape to Ideas



“The partnership will ultimately help The Big Issue converge its vital print-based business model with new and innovative digital content, extending its audience reach and its impact in an ever-evolving media landscape.”

Ashley McConnell
International Business
Development Manager,
Konica Minolta

BACKGROUND

A chance meeting with a Big Issue magazine vendor and a spur-of-the-moment conversation, prompted Konica Minolta International Business Development Manager, Ashley McConnell, to think about how the company could help the organisation and its vendors, to combat some of the challenges they were facing as a traditional print publisher.

Konica Minolta committed to a year-long partnership with The Big Issue to enhance the print value chain and explore the power of AR for social benefit. The company co-invested in the application of its genARate AR platform to The Big Issue to create richer, deeper experiences on a bi-monthly basis, beginning January 2019.

Highlights include:

- Provides vendors with opportunity to reconnect with the public
- Delivers engaging digital content through the pages of the magazine
- Protects and differentiates The Big Issue’s physical vendor model

CHALLENGES

Launched 27 years ago, The Big Issue’s business model - giving people who are encountering poverty or social exclusion a hand-up, rather than a hand-out, has been a powerful agent for social change. The national title’s UK-wide vendor network sells over 80,000 copies every week, and in excess of one million magazines over the Christmas and New Year period.

With more publications being distributed freely on the streets, consumers preferring to consume content via digital channels, and potential customers glued to mobile phones walking straight past vendors, the organisation and its vendors’ were feeling the pressure.

Oliver Waddington-Ball, Head of Custom Content and Partnerships at The Big Issue said that although there is a far deeper motivation for customers to buy The Big Issue, these factors have affected the business. “In some ways, technology has actually

been a barrier to the crucial emotional connection and value exchange, and it has definitely made our vendors’ ability to attract peoples’ attention much harder,” he explained.

The organisation is always looking at new innovative ways to challenge misconceptions around its business model and reinforce its key messages and was keen to work with Konica Minolta to find a new way to use technology to innovate and extend the values and philosophy of The Big Issue.

“Selling the magazine has given our vendors structure, a sense of purpose and dignity. So it was really important for us to find a way to engage and empower a wider audience through digital channels, whilst not compromising on our physical vendor model,” Oliver added.



SOLUTION

The Big Issue was the first street newspaper to implement augmented reality. With the AR app genARate, publishers are able to overlay video, animations or 3D models onto printed materials to create rich media communications.

The first AR powered magazine which hit the streets in the New Year, when sales are high, featured AR interactions throughout the publication, including the cover, that could only be unlocked through the genARate app. To incentivise customers to download the app, the editorial team created a set of exclusive, enhanced content including videos from ex-Razorlight drummer and Snowman and the Snowdog composer, Andy Burrows and Notes on a Nervous Planet author, Matt Haig.

The goal of the partnership is to provide enriched content for readers, improve the lives of vendors through increased sales, and ultimately dismantle the social stigma and common misconceptions around The Big Issue vendors. "The 'Tech for Good' special sponsored by Konica Minolta, was designed to recognise the increasingly important part that science and technology is playing in the fabric of our society, and how AR can support a social enterprise like The Big Issue," Ashley explained.

As part of the partnership, Konica Minolta will also provide the magazine with support and strategic advice on how to embrace digital transformation. "The partnership will ultimately help The Big Issue converge its vital print-based business model with new and innovative digital content, extending its audience reach and its impact in an ever-evolving media landscape," Ashley added.

BENEFITS, RESULTS AND FUTURE PLANS

Homelessness is at an all-time high in the UK, and the revenue received by vendors from sales of The Big Issue can really make a difference to their lives. The partnership with Konica Minolta has enabled The Big Issue to increase the perceived value of its physical print product and provide additional incentives for customers to purchase. The enhanced magazine also provides a fresh opportunity for vendors to engage with the public and ultimately drive sales.

One of the highlights of the AR powered special edition was a series of vendors' personal stories sprinkled throughout the issue. This included the cover story, starring vendor Ann Warke who turned to The Big Issue when she couldn't afford to pay her rent after losing her job. Ann appeared on the cover wearing The Big Issue tabard, then when readers applied AR, she was featured in business like attire.

"This execution in particular, really reinforced our key messaging around vendors running their own business and not begging. It was a powerful way to address the social stigma and common misconceptions around The Big Issue vendors," Oliver said.

The inaugural AR powered issue was a real success with the number of interactions far exceeding expectations. Initial analysis revealed almost 6,000 clicks to video content, 1,200 interactions with images and nearly 400 click-throughs via buttons. The real-life front cover story featuring Ann, also proved to be popular with 1,657 recorded interactions, compared to 1,892 hits to video content created by celebrities Matt Haig and Andy Burrows.

"With AR, we have truly pushed the boundaries of what print magazines can achieve. The real value-add has been the ability to give readers enhanced insights into the lives of

"With AR, we have truly pushed the boundaries of what print magazines can achieve. The real value-add has been the ability to give readers enhanced insights into the lives of our vendors, as their stories come to life right in front of their eyes"

Oliver Waddington-Ball
Head of Custom Content
and Partnerships,
The Big Issue

our vendors, as their stories come to life right in front of their eyes," Oliver added.

The use of augmented reality within the pages of the magazine enables readers to immerse themselves in enhanced, rich media content. This technology provides a new and innovative way for The Big Issue to drive sales, communicate and increase understanding of the organisation's mission, its business model and its vendors' lives, as well as to tackle misconceptions surrounding homelessness.

The ability to converge its print and digital business and give greater opportunity for readers to share content, has also delivered additional commercial benefits to the organisation by extending the reach, impact and influence of The Big Issue.





KONICA MINOLTA



GENARATE

WATCH YOUR ALL-IN-ONE IT PLATFORM COME ALIVE THROUGH OUR AUGMENTED REALITY APP

Follow the simple steps below to download our augmented reality App genARate

Step 1: Scan the QR code with the camera on your device to locate the genARate app.

Step 2: Download the app to your device

Step 3: Open the genARate app. Click 'Start to Scan and hold your device's camera over the front cover that displays the 'AR logo'.

Step 4: Once your camera has recognised the page, our exclusive content will come to life, right before your eyes!



LET'S TALK

Contact us to find out how our Konica Minolta can support, protect and optimise your business today and in the future:

info@konicaminolta.co.uk
www.konicaminolta.co.uk