

AUGMENTED REALITY IN MARKETING

Augmented reality (AR) is an interactive tool that allows brands to create fantastic content. Brands that have already realized the power of augmented reality marketing have successfully used AR in their marketing campaigns, achieving greater visibility, more pleasure and, as a result, revenue growth [1]. It is one of the most promising trends in marketing, arts, education, entertainment and media. The purpose of the research is to find out why companies should use augmented reality technologies in their strategy, and in which business areas it can be applied.

Augmented reality is a technology that allows us to complement the world around with digital data in real time using special devices (smartphones, tablets, AR glasses, lenses). AR allows us to overlay visual objects on the physical space and effectively combine them: 3D graphics, video and audio playback, switching to a website, messengers and social networks using call-to-action buttons are possible. Augmented reality offers marketers an innovative way to interact with consumers. By integrating virtual elements into the real world, brands can create immersive experiences that captivate the audience [2].

With the largest share of technology users, the younger generation is the top adopter of the latest technologies. Around 35% of AR users are between the ages of 16 and 24, and another 35% are between 25 and 35 years old. Nearly 27% of AR users are from the 35 to 44 age group, and only 3% are 55 to 64 [3].

Augmented reality is actively used in various professional fields and directions, such as:

- Gaming industry. AR technologies are implemented in games so that users can interact with virtual objects and characters in a real environment.
- Navigation. Apps like Yandex Maps and Google Maps use augmented reality to make it easier for users to navigate. Virtual inscriptions and signs are added to real images of streets and buildings.
- Education. AR technologies enhance educational experiences, making them more immersive and interactive, complementing printed materials with 3D objects and animation.
- Medicine. AR technologies are used to train doctors and treat patients. With the help of special programs, surgeons can train to perform operations.
- Art and Entertainment. AR technologies make it possible to hold virtual shows and create interactive installations. For example, museum visitors can learn more information about an exhibit by pointing a smartphone camera at it via a special application.

Augmented reality can be used to enhance marketing in various ways. According to the survey conducted, there are many advantages of using AR in the marketing strategy. Here are some of them.

Firstly, it allows for an interactive and immersive experience for customers. AR allows customers to interact with products and services virtually, which enhances brand engagement, awareness and recall. A memorable AR experience is likely to stick in the minds of customers better [4].

Secondly, product demonstration in reality. Any potential buyer will appreciate and willingly take the opportunity to see how a lamp will look on his shelf, and whether the chosen painting will fit his interior. Any product in which external characteristics are important can be digitized and made interactive.

Thirdly, AR provides an opportunity to try. This is useful for cosmetics brands when the buyer can choose the color of lipstick or blush without using a physical tester.

Finally, the most important metric: sales. The use of augmented reality technologies can attract new customers and increase sales. According to the survey conducted, only about 440 million people were using augmented reality in 2019, nearly doubling to 810 million users in 2021. Mobile AR users have increased gradually over the years and crossed the 1 billion mark in 2022. There were 1.4 billion mobile AR users in 2023, and this number is expected to rise to 1.73 billion in 2024.

The revenue of the mobile augmented reality market has been consistently increasing after the pandemic. AR market generated around \$21.07 billion in 2023, up from \$12.45 billion in 2021. Estimates suggest that the mobile AR market will generate \$25.84 billion in revenue in 2024 and will reach \$36.26 billion by 2026.

Augmented reality has practical applications in advertising where advertisers create interactive ads depending on the customers' needs. The revenue from advertising through AR is growing steadily: it crossed \$1 billion in 2023 and is expected to reach around \$1.22 billion in 2024 and \$1.64 billion by 2027 [3].

To sum up, augmented reality is reshaping marketing by providing dynamic, memorable experiences. Augmented reality provides a unique way for customers to engage with products. Brands that use AR can connect with consumers on a deeper level, driving sales and loyalty. As technology evolves, AR will continue to play a pivotal role in the future of marketing.

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