Bringing history alive

Kenninji Temple, one of over 1700 historic Buddhist temples in Kyoto, is Japan’s oldest “Zen Temple”. Today, the teaching of Zen attracts many people who are busy with their daily lives. Kenninji Temple wanted to convey the meaning of its artwork in a unique and innovative medium, to blend the old with the new in order to provide greater depth of understanding to today’s audience.

Kenninji Temple partnered with Hakuhodo, an advertising agency committed to innovative forms of communication, to create a new type of experience.

A transformative experience

Partnering with Microsoft’s Mixed Reality Capture Studios, Hakuhodo crafted a mixed reality (MR) experience for Kenninji Temple’s ‘Wind God and Thunder God’ painted by Tawaraya Sotatsu.

The MR experience takes the audience through the intentions behind the piece, examining the origin of the subject and its impact on later cultural works.

Igniting public interest in the arts

The new experience generated massive public interest. Featured on 204 independent media outlets, Hakuhodo was able to help generate roughly 140,000,000 Yen in ad revenue.

The mixed reality experience helped re-ignite interest in an important piece of the region’s unique cultural history. As Japan’s first project using volumetric video, the project laid the foundation for a new generation of art, tourism, and education.

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Hakuhodo

The world of marketing and advertising has evolved. Where once it was enough for an ad to briefly highlight the benefits of a specific product alongside a simple use case, now, with advertising saturation at an all-time high, successful agencies have adopted more creative, interactive approaches to advertising and marketing. Hakuhodo, a full-service advertising agency in Japan, works with companies—not just brands—and its creatives pride themselves on being able to develop a deep understanding of its client's business in order to develop effective, immersive experiences.

Bringing history alive

Kyoto is truly one of the world's must-visit cities, with massive numbers of tourists passing through every year. Additionally, Kyoto is the host city of I-COM 2019, the International Council of Museums. Kyoto has over 1700 historic Buddhist temples competing for visitors. One of these, the Kenninji Temple that houses many famous works of art, partnered with Hakuhodo to create a transformative, educational experience centered around a historic piece of Japanese art.

A transformative experience

Partnering with Microsoft's Mixed Reality Capture Studios, Hakuhodo crafted a mixed reality experience for Kenninji Temple's 'Wind God and Thunder God' painted by Tawaraya Sotatsu. The famous painting, recognized as a National Treasure of Japan, has a rich history, with several notable artists having recreated or referenced the work in homage to Sotatsu's original.

In partnership with Microsoft, Hakuhodo used mixed reality technology to create an interactive exhibit for the Temple. Hakuhodo developed a series of immersive, interactive experiences that engage visitors and breathe new life into the 400 year old masterpiece. Tourists and visitors are afforded an immersive, educational experience that explores the painting's background in greater depth. 3D capturing technology was used to make a storyteller, one of the temple monks, appear to be physically present as he acts as a docent. Visitors are educated as well as entertained as they learn the story behind the painting and compare the work across time and space with the other pieces it has influenced.

Igniting public interest in the arts

The new experience generated massive public interest as people flocked to the temple. Featured on 204 independent media outlets, Hakuhodo was able to help generate roughly 140,000,000 Yen in ad revenue. What's more, the mixed reality experience helped re-ignite interest in an important piece of the region's unique cultural history. As Japan's first project using volumetric video, the project laid the foundation for a new generation of art, tourism, and education. Regarding the success of the project, Creative Engineering Director Yoshiya Okoyama said, "Informed by the latest technology, we were able to bring about change in how people see art, and I was thrilled to see what I had imagined come to life. I'm very grateful to Microsoft."

"I think temples owning old artwork have the mission of handing it and its meanings down to posterity. It is wonderful that people can experience the art this way, I had never dreamed of myself being captured in 3D."

- Shundo Asano, Monk at Kenninji Temple and the first monk ever recorded over volumetric video

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