

Virtual Reality in Hotel Industry: A Case of Marriott



Source: Unsplash (2021)

Background

Virtual reality (VR) is changing the first step of the customer journey by allowing potential guests to experience and educate themselves about the product, the property and services provided, through immersive tours before deciding to make a purchase. This can foster trust and confidence within the booking process. In recent years, the use of VR for marketing has also gained a lot of attention due to its storytelling and immersive abilities (Bilgihan & Ricci, 2023).

In 2014, the Marriott Hotel Group made its first investment into VR with the #GetTeleported campaign in partnership with the Oculus brand (PR Newswire, 2014). Stepping into the phone booth-like ‘Teleporter’ device, guests will be taken to a black sand beach in Maui, Hawaii and top of a skyscraper in downtown London. Each ‘Teleporter’ device is equipped with an Oculus Rift DK2 VR headset, wireless headphones and suite of onboard 4-D effects system, which generates sensory elements such as heat, wind and mist (PR Newswire, 2014). Together with the 360° live action video mixed with computer-generated imagery, the device can provide a highly realistic experience for the guests (Elkayam, 2023).

At the same time, Marriott also sought to bring the VR experience to the guests’ room with the launch of “VRoom Service”, where guests can rent a set of VR headset for up to 24 hours and have it hand delivered to their room along with simple instructions (Marriott International, 2015). The experience is supported by Marriott’s virtual travel content platform – “VR Postcards”, which offers 360° immersive travel stories across the globe in 3D (Marriott International, 2015).

Challenges

Nevertheless, it appears the Marriott group has discontinued its VR experiences, including the virtual ‘teleporter’ and ‘VRoom Service’, after showcasing at several Marriott hotels for limited time. On the other hand, as one of Marriott’s competitors, Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts has been offering their own version of ‘VRoom Service’ and ‘VR Postcards’ since 2016 (Business+Tech, 2024). Besides VR gear rentals, Shangri-La also uploaded 360° videos of its properties and destinations around the world to the group's YouTube channel, offering free access to everyone (Shangri-La, 2016). Moreover, Shangri-La recently opened a VR Room at its property in Tanjung Aru, Malaysia featuring exciting VR games for guests to enjoy (Shangri-La, 2024). It seems that the Shangri-La group is more willing to make long-term investments into VR, while Marriott sees VR as an opportunity to create urgency through limited-time experience offerings.

Discussion Questions

1. Why might Marriott have chosen to discontinue its VR experiences, while Shangri-La continues to invest in them? What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of offering VR experiences as limited-time events versus long-term services?
2. Say you are the management of the Marriott group, would you have chosen to withdraw or continue to invest in VR technology? Why?
3. How might upcoming advancements in VR technology revolutionize experience offerings in hotels?

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Keywords

- Virtual reality (VR)
- Immersive experience
- Technology
- Hotel
- Investment
- Customer experience

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This case study is based on and adapted from the work of Master's student Daniela GARDERE from the School of Hotel and Tourism Management at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

虚拟现实在酒店业的应用：以万豪酒店集团为例



Source: Unsplash (2021)

背景

虚拟现实正在改变客户旅程的第一步，它可以让潜在客人在决定购买前，通过沉浸式导览来体验并了解产品、物业及所提供的服务。这可以在预订过程中培养信任与信心。近年来，利用 VR 进行营销也因其叙事性和沉浸式能力而备受关注 (Bilgihan & Ricci, 2023)。

2014 年，万豪酒店集团首次投资 VR，与 Oculus 品牌合作推出了 #GetTeleported 营销活动 (PR Newswire, 2014)。步入这个电话亭般的“传送站”设备，客人将被带到夏威夷毛伊岛的黑沙滩和伦敦市中心摩天大楼的顶部。每个“传送站”设备都配备了一个 Oculus Rift DK2 VR 头显、无线耳机以及一套机载 4-D 效果系统，该系统可以产生热量、风和薄雾等感官元素 (PR Newswire, 2014)。结合融合了计算机生成图像的 360° 实景视频，该设备能为客人提供高度逼真的体验 (Elkayam, 2023)。

与此同时，万豪还通过推出“VR 客房服务”将 VR 体验带入客人的房间，客人可以租用一套 VR 头显长达 24 小时，并由专人将其连同简易操作说明送至房间 (Marriott International, 2015)。此体验由万豪的虚拟旅行内容平台——“VR 明信片”提供支持，该平台提供全球范围内的 360° 沉浸式 3D 旅行故事 (Marriott International, 2015)。

挑战

然而，万豪集团似乎已停止了其 VR 体验项目，包括虚拟“传送站”和“VR 客房服务”，这些仅在部分万豪酒店限时展示过。另一方面，作为万豪的竞争对手之一，香格

里拉酒店及度假村自 2016 年以来一直在提供其版本的“VR 客房服务”和“VR 明信片” (Business+Tech, 2024)。除了 VR 设备租赁，香格里拉还将旗下物业及全球目的地的 360° 视频上传至集团 YouTube 频道，供所有人免费访问 (Shangri-La, 2016)。此外，香格里拉最近在其马来西亚丹绒亚路的物业开设了一个 VR 房间，提供刺激的 VR 游戏供客人体验 (Shangri-La, 2024)。看来，香格里拉集团更愿意对 VR 进行长期投资，而万豪则将 VR 视为通过限时体验创造紧迫感的机会。

讨论问题

1. 为什么万豪可能选择停止其 VR 体验，而香格里拉却持续投资？将 VR 体验作为限时活动提供与作为长期服务提供，分别有哪些潜在的益处和缺点？
2. 假设您是万豪集团的管理层，您会选择撤资还是继续投资 VR 技术？为什么？
3. VR 技术的未来发展可能会如何彻底改变酒店的体验服务？

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关键词

- 虚拟现实
- 沉浸式体验
- 技术
- 酒店
- 投资
- 客户体验

致谢

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虛擬實境在酒店業的應用：以萬豪酒店集團為例



Source: Unsplash (2021)

背景

虛擬實境正在改變客戶旅程的第一步，它可以讓潛在客人在決定購買前，通過沉浸式導覽來體驗並了解產品、物業及所提供的服務。這可以在預訂過程中培養信任與信心。近年來，利用 VR 進行行銷也因其敘事性和沉浸式能力而備受關注 (Bilgihan & Ricci, 2023)。

2014 年，萬豪酒店集團首次投資 VR，與 Oculus 品牌合作推出了 #GetTeleported 行銷活動 (PR Newswire, 2014)。步入這個電話亭般的「傳送站」設備，客人將被帶到夏威夷毛伊島的黑沙灘和倫敦市中心摩天大樓的頂部。每個「傳送站」設備都配備了一個 Oculus Rift DK2 VR 頭顯、無線耳機以及一套機載 4-D 效果系統，該系統可以產生熱量、風和薄霧等感官元素 (PR Newswire, 2014)。結合融合了電腦生成圖像的 360° 實景影片，該設備能為客人提供高度逼真的體驗 (Elkayam, 2023)。

與此同時，萬豪還通過推出「VR 客房服務」將 VR 體驗帶入客人的房間，客人可以租用一套 VR 頭顯長達 24 小時，並由專人將其連同簡易操作說明送至房間 (Marriott International, 2015)。此體驗由萬豪的虛擬旅行內容平台——「VR 明信片」提供支持，該平台提供全球範圍內的 360° 沉浸式 3D 旅行故事 (Marriott International, 2015)。

挑戰

然而，萬豪集團似乎已停止了其 VR 體驗項目，包括虛擬「傳送站」和「VR 客房服務」，這些僅在部分萬豪酒店限時展示過。另一方面，作為萬豪的競爭對手之一，香格里拉酒店及度假村自 2016 年以來一直在提供其版本的「VR 客房服務」和「VR 明信片」(Business+Tech, 2024)。除了 VR 設備租賃，香格里拉還將旗下物業及全球目的地的 360°影片上傳至集團 YouTube 頻道，供所有人免費訪問 (Shangri-La, 2016)。此外，香格里拉最近在其馬來西亞丹絨亞路的物業開設了一個 VR 房間，提供刺激的 VR 遊戲供客人體驗 (Shangri-La, 2024)。看來，香格里拉集團更願意對 VR 進行長期投資，而萬豪則將 VR 視為通過限時體驗創造緊迫感的機會。

討論問題

1. 為什麼萬豪可能選擇停止其 VR 體驗，而香格里拉卻持續投資？將 VR 體驗作為限時活動提供與作為長期服務提供，分別有哪些潛在的益處和缺點？
2. 假設您是萬豪集團的管理層，您會選擇撤資還是繼續投資 VR 技術？為什麼？
3. VR 技術的未來發展可能會如何徹底改變酒店的體驗服務？

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關鍵詞

- 虛擬實境
- 沉浸式體驗
- 技術
- 酒店
- 投資
- 客戶體驗

致謝

本案例研究基於並改編自香港理工大學酒店及旅遊業管理學院碩士研究生 Daniela GARDERE 的作品。