
Interactive 360° Video Diagnostic Tool

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Are you ready for interactive 360° video?

Video has always been a great tool for learning, but as our capabilities grow and change we can explore new uses for it, generating great video content that is more immersive, contextual and interactive than ever before.

Interactive 360° video is the next step in this journey and we're exploring its vast potential for use within learning. But just because we can, doesn't mean we should. As always when it comes to designing learning, we need to ask ourselves, is this the best solution for the learning need?

Questions to ask yourself...

1. What is the learning need?

If the issue is soft skills based, focusing on one-to-one interactions, 360° may not provide the appropriate learning experience. If it's environmental or situational, then a 360° approach is certainly something to consider.

2. Who is my audience?

Is your audience an appropriate one to use this technology with? If they are not particularly tech savvy or they have computers from the 1980s, perhaps this isn't the right solution...You'll need to check their kit can handle the large file size this approach currently requires, or consider a photosphere.

3. What do I need?

So, you've decided to create a 360° video or photosphere. You're going to need a few things, including:

- A camera that shoots in 360° and someone who knows how to operate it – there are a lot of things to think about, such as filming ratio, 360° is best shot in 4.3 for example, turning on all the cameras at the same time, and the importance of natural light.

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- The right post-production software and editor to stitch together the footage or photographs.
 - A player to play it in.

4. How do I plan my shoot?

A few basic things to remember when planning a shoot for 360°:

- Location, location, location. Decide on a location for your learning experience and plan what's going to go in it and what will be made interactive. You'll have to consider things from a completely different perspective than a normal video shoot. The onus is now on the audience to direct their own experience and find what you have placed there as part of their learning. Think about the cues that will make them look at what you want them to look at.
- Consider the perspective of the audience – are they still? And how is this part of the experience? If the camera is moving, make sure it's steady otherwise your audience could get a little queasy. Either way, make sure you give them time to get used to their surroundings.
- You will need to use a monopod for the cameras, not a tripod otherwise you will see the legs in your shots. This also goes for positioning things too close to the camera, don't do it!
- Film the floor before you begin where the camera is going to be positioned so this can be edited in afterwards.
- Make sure that where possible your objects are in the shot of one of the cameras, not where it will need to be stitched together.
- Hide your microphone! Sound is incredibly important and requires a lot of thought. Sound can be used as well as visual cues to direct your viewer.
- Hide your camera operator! Where are they going to go? Can they hide behind something, or become part of the scene?
- Set the camera height at the same as your line of sight to create the best experience possible for your viewers.

5. How do I make it interactive?

Consider how you can maximize the use of 360° video through the interactive elements, how you implement these within the shoot and the post-production process will make or break your experience.

So, good luck!

Feel free to drop me an email with your questions or let me know how your 360° video project is progressing!

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