



**HOW ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE
IS AUGMENTED REALITY FOR BUSINESS?**

How Accessible and Affordable is
Augmented Reality Marketing for
Business?

The 3 Tiers of Implementing Augmented Reality Campaigns

Various industry reports are concluding that augmented and virtual reality will be taking over in the next few years. Digi-Capital forecasts revenue from AR and VR to hit \$120 billion by 2020! Thought leader Aviram Eisenberg simply states, “Mixed reality is the next phase of computing.” Interestingly, \$30 billion of that is VR while \$90 billion is AR. Trends are indicating that in this first wave AR will be 3 times as profitable as VR for businesses.

We’re still in the early-adopter phase. This is a challenge, as most businesses don’t understand AR, think it’s too expensive and assume it’s not for them. But of course, a challenge is an opportunity and those who get ahead of this trend can gain serious competitive advantage. Think of the rise of the computer and how those who adopted early became major winners. The arrow of progress indicates AR is the next step and, as Moore’s Law has made clear, it will happen very quickly.

So let’s address the affordability and accessibility question many have about using AR for business. There are three tiers of AR campaign creation and depending on your budget, you can pick the right starting point:

The High End: Completely Custom AR Apps

The biggest companies have the budget to hire leading AR development firms. They build a custom app experience completely unique to the brand. Early adopters at this level include Coca-Cola, Disney, Nike, Heinz and TaylorMade. Firms provide a team of software developers, 3D artists, graphic designers, marketers and a project manager.

Use Cases: Some of these custom projects are for entertainment value, such as the [Jurassic Park experience at Universal Studios](#) which makes waiting in line mindblowing. [Pokémon trading cards come alive](#) as the character jumps out of the card and onto your table. They may be more for education, like enabling tourists to see fun facts about buildings as they walk around. Some apps are created for product marketing purposes, such as [IKEA’s AR catalog](#) which allows you to see furniture in your room, making you more confident in a purchase. In-store applications may involve a kiosk that displays products with AR, such as [Lego’s](#).



Image credit: Indestry

Pricing & Turnaround: Costs for these fully custom apps can range enormously. It depends on features, quality, end-use platforms... just about every variable in the project. As a ballpark, the top AR firms charge around \$25K - \$300K. We've heard of an app that cost \$2 million! Huge cost, but if done right it has the potential for huge return. Turnaround time also depends on complexity, with some projects taking 3-6 months, while the most advanced take up to several years.

The Mid-Tier: White-Label AR Marketing Campaigns

The next tier down in cost is a popular entry point for established brands. This is where you hire an AR platform company that has a pre-built app you can customize for your brand. These white-label apps are often used in promotional marketing campaigns. Image recognition and geolocation drive the tech. Examples of companies leveraging this tier are Budweiser, Volkswagen, Best Western, Cisco and EPSON. This hybrid model saves money by building off an existing platform, rather than from scratch.

Use Cases: The AR content is often animated 3D elements or 3D overlays on a product that a user can change, such as [car apps](#) that allow you to see different color options, look around 360° inside the car, and click parts to see more info on features. For simpler uses, some platforms allow you to add informational notes to 3D pictures and scans of rooms. You can give an [immersive tour of a building to promote real estate](#) or show your company's office.



Image credit: Volkswagen

Pricing & Turnaround: Prices again can vary widely depending on the type of app. A ballpark puts this tier in the \$5K - \$25K range. There are ongoing costs to continue offering an AR app, such as licensing and maintenance. This is doable for big companies and some that are mid-size and growing rapidly, but it's still out of range for many mid-size companies and small businesses. Turnaround times are quicker than fully custom apps, typically around 1-3 months and even shorter for the simplest use cases like adding basic notes.

The Entry Level: AR-Enhanced Print Materials

Many businesses are turned off by the price of those more advanced apps and are not aware that there is a more inexpensive entry level for them to start leveraging AR. These are essentially do-it-yourself platforms. While they aren't fully custom with sophisticated 3D animation, if done right they create a wow factor and are proven to drive business results. Users range from a freelancer with next-to-no budget to startups just beginning to invest in marketing and even bigger companies that want a quick and easy AR solution.

Use Cases: These entry-level techniques typically involve taking a company's video content and overlaying it on print marketing materials. When a user views your business card, a flyer or tradeshow booth through their phone, it comes alive with a video about your brand and products. Companies using this technique have found that candid video messages, like a person talking to the camera, are very effective as it shows a face behind the company and feels like a more genuine connection. You can customize multiple call-to-action buttons that overlay below the video. This drives conversions when viewers are captivated by the experience. The virtual call-to-action buttons allow viewers to instantly RSVP, visit a website, email, or share promotional material on social media.



Image credit: REVEALiO

Pricing & Turnaround: A big plus of this tier is the affordability and quick turnaround, making it the most accessible for businesses that want to adopt AR now. Pricing can be as low as \$100 to link your video content to print materials and add call-to-action buttons. Custom solutions are available too with a range up to \$25K depending on complexity. Turnaround can be as quick as 3 days, mostly depending on the company's delivery of video content, though if needed some AR platforms offer video production services, as well.

Using augmented reality for marketing is more within reach than most companies realize. The high-end custom apps are very expensive and only fit with large companies at this time. White-label apps are more realistic for established companies that want a more affordable option. What's not as well known currently is that there is an entry level option that enables

businesses to test the AR waters with little risk, making their print materials come alive to build brand loyalty and awareness.

To learn more about entry level AR marketing, [click here](#).
