Checklist for virtual reality

The process of making VR can be split into three parts: planning/pre-production, shooting/production and editing/post-production.

❏ Start by asking yourself WHY you want to create a VR experience? Does your idea/work lend itself better to a digital rather than live format?

❏ Brainstorming and writing. Decide on the theme/story and your desired emotional output:
  • What is the story or theme?
  • What is the narrative?
  • Is the viewer going to be passive or active?
  • How can you get the audience to care about what is happening?
  • What do you want the audience to feel during the experience?
  • What kind of emotional output do you want the audience to have after the experience.

❏ Keep in mind:
  • In VR there are no laws of gravity and no laws for architecture.
  • We relate to scale through our body size. In VR you can break that scale. A viewer can be anything from a microscopic bacteria to a giant body in space. If you want to give the viewer a feeling of being one in a group of people, set the camera to chin height.
  • Sound is very important when creating your VR experience. It can guide the user and create different emotional states. Bringing in a sound expert early in the process can make a big difference to your final production.
  • Lighting can be used as a trigger to help the viewer understand what to focus on. It can also affect the user's emotional state.

❏ Consider what VR technology you need to use to achieve the experience you are after. Do you have a big enough budget for that, or do you need to rethink the execution of your idea?

❏ Create a storyboard. Use it as a base for working through interactions and improvisations.

❏ Carefully plan the production team, who do you need to realize the project.

❏ Test your work, on yourself, and on the target audience.

❏ In your VR experience it is better to give the viewer hints, rather than a guided tour. Let the user discover.

❏ When the viewer is in a headset they can feel quite vulnerable, make sure they feel that they are in a safe place.

❏ Start the experience in the real world. Create a physical space to lead them into your story. When they exit the VR experience, it is important to let them decompress in a physical offboarding space.

❏ Remember that VR is potent and you have a responsibility for the viewer.

❏ Keep in mind that post-production is very time consuming!

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