

Deloitte.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Stories of purpose and lasting impact

Driving fan experience into the future

Augmented reality helps golf fans immerse themselves in championship play.

NO TICKET? NO PROBLEM. AR BRIDGES PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL SPACES.

THE SITUATION

Some spiritual traditions hold that we have a third, invisible, mystical eye on our foreheads that some can access for insights well beyond what we ordinarily see—an augmented reality. Back here in the non-mystical realm, a different kind of augmented reality (AR) is attainable via the digital eye in our pockets. And those insights are available to anyone.

To wit: the U.S. Open AR app, developed by Deloitte in collaboration with the [United States Golf Association](#) (USGA). In a bid to provide greater benefit and engagement for its audience—particularly with a younger generation—the organization turned to technical innovation to unlock aspects of a sport often out of reach to casual viewers.

Augmented reality—[technology that superimposes digital images on a user's view of the real world](#)—is well suited for activities where additional information is available, and it can enhance an experience. AR's visual overlays (as seen through a mobile screen) can provide data and insights for learning or entertainment, enrich communication and collaboration, and create elevated, immersive experiences—features that were a good fit for the USGA, stewards of a sport in which a ball the size of ... an eye is launched hundreds of yards through the air. (Features that, not coincidentally, are driving a quiet consumer revolution.)



THE SOLVE

Golf fans, both at home and onsite, who downloaded the smartphone app got closer to the action by creating their own 3D viewing experience within augmented reality. The Live Play feature—available during U.S. Open and U.S. Women's Open Championships—provided 3D views of all 18 holes, along with (tracked) shots from players (and associated stats) in near-real time. Stats could be used for player shot comparisons and head-to-head custom pairings, even if players weren't playing in the same group.

Building such immersive, enriched, and on-demand experiences meant sourcing 3D models of the courses accurate down to each tree. It meant a back-end system that could process static and real-time data feeds, then serve them up to the AR app in any combination. It meant using those feeds in new and unique ways. Non-mystical feats maybe, but for a fan—who, now could watch more than 150,000 different shots on iconic layouts including the Olympic Club, Torrey Pines, Pine Needles, and The Country Club rendered in precise detail—only a little short of magic.

RENDERING 100+ BUNKERS IN **AR** TAKES
VISION AND BANDWIDTH

THE IMPACT

There have been clear, planned-for benefits to the U.S. Open AR app, as well as serendipitous ones.

In the planned column:

The app has brought a unique new way to enhance Championship viewing—the only way to watch any player on any hole at any angle and at any time. Downloaded more than 200,000 times, it's been a top-10 pick in the App Store for sports apps and viewed from locations around the world. It's been up for nearly a dozen awards.

In the serendipity column:

Fans prevented from attending competitions during the pandemic were still able to accurately follow every player on every hole from the comfort and safety of their homes. Both pre- and post-pandemic, onsite fans would use the app to fill gaps in their experiences: Who's that walking up toward the green? What was that shot just now? How'd that affect the leaderboard? In one case, a coach in transit was using the app to track his player's progress in advance of his arrival. Then there was the aspect of inclusion: Not every player gets extensive broadcast media coverage, but every player gets app coverage.

You can't get insights, it turns out, about something you can't see.



AR HAS DELIVERED INNOVATION TO THE USGA'S FAN BASE

LET'S CONNECT.

Do these challenges sound familiar?



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