



TAKE A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

El met with Charles Pearce, Founder of a new immersive software platform called ImersU, offering installers the chance to deliver a whole raft of new in-home experiences.

Working from an impressive demonstration space at the London HQ of the Grosvenor Group, one of the oldest real estate companies on the planet (founded in the 17th century), ImersU delivers immersive fitness, wellness and multimedia experiences designed to transform indoor fitness and wellness activities. With 30 years' experience in the high-end property market, Charles has a keen eye for the high-net-worth residential sector and created the system to offer a versatile content platform and additional revenue stream for integrators. A key aim for Charles was the opportunity to feel close to the natural world when at home. Whether exercising or relaxing, the system provides the chance to spend time in nature using sophisticated AV experiences, even including scent when appropriate. The system can also be used as an entertainment space, watching content from any online app or via a hardware content delivery system through HDMI.

ImersU provides all the software needed to operate the system as well as an in-room panel to serve as the main control point. There is also a control app available. Any integrator wanting to use the system combines the software with projectors, speakers, microphones and

lighting across up to three screens or walls to deliver a complete in-room experience. ImersU is supported by multiple graphics cards with resolution capabilities of 4 x 4K or 8K and 33 million pixels to ensure visual quality. Other hardware that can be employed includes Advatec Light Controls, HDFury EDID emulators and Casambi Gateway controls for the scent and switches for routing and cross-server connections. The system can also communicate with any DMX control system and use NDI technology to connect multiple servers and content sources. ImersU also offers a plug and play option for laptops, games consoles or other HDMI-capable devices.

TRUE IMMERSION

The most immersive experience is achieved when using three displays or walls in partnership with three or four projectors. This can deliver up to a 14m+ x 2.8m display across three walls, giving a 220° field of view. The majority of 16:9 content can also be mirrored on all three walls for enhanced wellness or fitness experiences.

The platform can also be used with a single projector; in this mode the content is presented in super-size at around 5m wide and 2.8m

high, augmented with sound, light and visual references. If two projectors are employed, an ultra-wide experience of about 9m wide and 2.8m high can be delivered.

The hardware integration does not stop at the equipment needed to make the AV and communication aspects work. ImersU can be integrated (usually over Bluetooth) with treadmills, turbo trainers and ergos, as well as content providers that stream yoga, pilates, mindfulness and HIIT classes. Charles explains, "We also have the ability to bring in life-sized trainers into the space via video call for personalised one-to-one sessions. When you realise that approximately 70% of communication is non-verbal, this feature allows for a deeper human connection when being physically together is not possible."

For content such as Peloton, instructors can be viewed in repeat mode across three walls, a good option for studio training as the user's view of the instructor can often be obscured by their own body if the only view is directly in front. Charles explains that another feature in development is to allow trainers to appear at eye level with the client to promote better communication.

Charles reveals that the company has created some of its own experiences that also serve as useful proof of concept. Users can experience indoor exercise using the exclusive ROW and ENVIRONMENT content or optimise any online fitness application to promote focus and a more immersive experience.

IN DEMONSTRATION

With the technical aspects understood, *EI* was keen to experience the system and it is highly impressive. The 220° field of view (FOV) is particularly important. The human eye’s total horizontal FOV is about 210–220° (including peripheral vision). However, only about 120° of that is covered by binocular vision (where both eyes overlap for depth perception); the rest is peripheral, but still detected and still very important. A display or projection with a 220° FOV can fill nearly the entire natural horizontal view, creating a strong wraparound effect. Because of the way humans have evolved, when our peripheral vision is engaged, our brains are tricked into feeling more present in the scene because the edges of the image do not break the illusion. When using the system, this is its most powerful aspect. You really do feel ‘in’ the scene, not just looking at it. The AV experiences are of genuine quality with believable movement, right down to the wind blowing the vegetation on the pinewood walk *EI* experienced. Even the scent part of the system, which could have been a little gimmicky if not delivered well, adds a pleasant



extra layer. The ability to switch the time of day and type of weather is also very impressive — want to go for a walk in a thunderstorm at midnight? No problem. Another strong feature is that in the nature experience mode (albeit faster than normal) time passes, so if you stay in the room the content shifts accordingly. Users, or those assisting them, can also capture their own footage and play it back on the system, reliving past experiences or simply their favourite places to exercise or relax. Aimed at immersive fitness, wellness and multimedia experiences, the sky really is the limit in terms of what you can

get the system to do and each client can have experiences built exactly for them.

Charles concludes, “We want to talk with integrators who feel they have the client base and experience needed to deliver these unique and fulfilling experiences. It’s a totally new concept to offer your customers and we feel that in partnership with *ImersU* integrators can deliver truly bespoke and fulfilling solutions. “We offer integrators full design, installation support and training, while we assist through to handover and induction for the end user to ensure the ultimate *ImersU* experience.”

