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IDT590-Current Topics In Instructional Design:
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Altered Reality

Virtual Reality has been around for a while but has made great strides in recent years. Currently it is being used to train employees for situations that are best experienced in the first person. In her article, “Finally, a Useful Application for VR: Training Employees”, Rachel Metz follows the creation and success of a company called STRIVR. The company started with providing 360 camera footage shot for Virtual Reality googles of American Football plays, but has branched out into retail, construction and education companies. I really like this idea and I can definitely see the potential for learning from this approach.

In his article, Alchemy, Innovation and Learning, John Cavanaugh speculates on what a learner’s experience in 2025 attending a college virtually might be. I agree with his conclusion that “Immersive learning will surpass active learning, which in its day surpassed passive learning in effectiveness.” However, the article was a bit sensationalist and I am not sure what a student would really benefit from having a virtual reality tour of a campus and meeting other class mates in the virtual space. Will this ever really replace meeting people in the real world? It does not appeal to me. It seems this might work for a later generation of people.

Augmented Reality is an offshoot of virtual reality that allows you to visualize “virtual” items or holograms that share the space you are in. The technology that is used to do this is constantly growing but includes ODG smartglasses and HoloLens. Wearing these eyeglasses allow you to have experiences in your current space, interacting with holographic images superimposed over the backdrop of reality.

Mixed Reality is a version of Augmented Reality that takes the concept to a higher level. In Mixed Reality the user is in an environment were the physical and the digital can interact. The tech used to achieve this is the Microsoft HoloLens. Mixed Reality is the topic here that I am least clear on. Both Virtual Reality and Augmented reality are concepts that I have seen fist hand but Mixed Reality is something that I have yet to experience.

There are a number of companies that are applying this technology in very creative ways in the world of learning. I would very much like to be involved in such creative work. I would like to get set up to take some 360 degree videos and try this technology out for myself so that when I have the opportunity to perhaps use these platforms I will have some experience. I do not see a future for Virtual, Augmented or Merged reality in the industry of Medical Insurance so I will simply have to find a new role.

I wanted to know more about what Merged Reality is and I found a related resource that dives deeper into that topic. In Adi Robertson's, 2017 article titled: "Intel is cutting plans for its Project Alloy 'merged reality' headset" she reports on Intel's plans to cancel their Merged Reality Goggles project called Alloy. Claiming that there is more support for the Microsoft version, which is simpler and apparently borrowed, much of Intel's research and well, *Intel* on the topic. Robertons defines Merged Reality goggles writing: "They're wired virtual reality headsets with inside-out tracking capabilities, compared to an all-in-one design that could scan real-world objects and mix them with virtual environments."

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