



4D Theater / Immersive Displays

Crossing the vast exhibition space to look at the wide spectrum of technology entertainment systems populating the digital out-of-home entertainment scene, the share popularity of 4D was self-evident. But along with the drive for theater technology there was also the appearance of new applications.

As one of the powerhouses in the 4D theater, motion seat and 3D content sector, Torrance, CA interactive technology house **MediaMation, Inc. (MMI)** held two key presentations at IAAPA 2014. Within a customized mini-theater, **MMI** showcased their '*MX4D/5D*' motion EFX Theater and seat systems in both a theme park variant and a cinema version. The latter reflects the growing trend in the movie theater industry to capitalize on the immersive aspects of the 4D theater seat system. The brand new '*MX4D*' seats build on the success of the '*X4D*' platform. '*MX4D/5D*' seats are redesigned for better efficiency and can include a new, unique arm rest technology that uniformly launches effects such as wind, scent, water and air blasts.

In concert with the 4D theater presentation, **MediaMation** unveiled what they dubbed in a tag line - '*VR4D*' "The Ultimate Immersive and Interactive Entertainment Experience." Introducing a demonstrational prototype created in partnership with developer **RUST LLC**, the twin seat '*EFX*' system harnessed two **Oculus VR** Rift DK2 (Development Kit 2) head-mounted displays (HMD) - enabling players to take part in a sweeping space-based travel game. This configuration allowed players to use their head positioning to spot and collect virtual "gems." The aforementioned technology was promoted in **MMI** marketing messaging as "game-changing," and was linked to future projects using immersive pods, thus adding interactivity and immersion to their 4D and 5D experiences.

It was this new marriage between the experience of 4D theater designs and the emergence of Virtual Reality technology fuelled by the meteoric rise from obscurity engendered by the start-up and recent **Facebook** acquisition **Oculus VR**. Where last years' IAAPA had only one example of VR (Dome3D), IAAPA'14 was littered with many examples for those who looked for them. One of those was **AET/Amusement and Edutainment Technologies**, the Belarus company took the plunge and brought their two seat 5D ride system '*Motion Sphere*' to Orlando, running the **Oculus VR** DK2 (audio mounted in chair) - the seat was running 4D ride-film played through the virtual reality headset, and the seat even included spritzer and leg ticklers along with enthusiastic motion (the company states they have movies and games created by themselves, in 360 degrees, specially created for virtual reality glasses). Representatives for the company confirmed that their intention was to demonstrate the opportunity that they have already successfully operated in a number of Eastern shopping malls, though were mindful that they needed to find a new HMD to field for sale with the motion seat in Western markets.

One of those showing their VR-wares was **Dome3D**. The only VR exhibitor last year, the company came again with their **Oculus VR** DK2, illustrating their '*Space Park 360*' dome theater content, and a glimpse of some of their immersive media solutions. On the booth for Korean developers **Electronics and Telecommunications Research Institute (ETRI)**, along with their new '*Magic Cube*' projection mapping digital puppetry concept, the company also had two examples of VR demonstrations, including their '*Air Glider*', using an elaborate harness allowing the player to imagine controlling a parachute powered glider - viewing the world in this "*Virtual Soaring*" style experience, with the guest able to rudimentarily steer the craft (viewing the PyeongChang scenery location of the 2018 Winter Olympics). Another example of a VR demonstrator was '*Virtual Safari*', an African animal experience, mixing a virtual petting zoo with a safari.

Two unusual approach to demonstrating VR on the IAAPA show floor were seen from **Zamperla** in a presentation that saw guests sitting in an actual ride seat from their latest coaster (*ThunderBolt* in New York), and donning a HMD (**Oculus VR** DK2), then being taken for a virtual ride on the coaster. The presentation was very low key and

the rendering was crude, but it was still effective enough to give a glimpse of the ride experience. One of the dynamic presentations on the IAAPA'15 floor was from the partnership between **INTAMIN** and **Attraktion!** The companies came to the event with their innovative '*Dome Ride Theater*' concept, which places the audience in the heart of the experience. Dubbed as the "next generation in media based attractions", the booth included a scale model of the dome projection ride experience. But in order to give a new dimension to the presentation the company had a virtual reality recreation of the unique view the guest receives inside the ride - using an **Oculus VR DK2** headset worn by passing exhibition visitors. **Attraktion!** is attempting to lead the application of innovation in the market, and this is an example of another way in which VR is immersing into this sector.