



DIUS 
WHERE IDEAS ARE ENGINEERED

Case study :

REA Group

Australia's first virtual reality property app



REA Group enlisted the help of DiUS to develop Australia's first virtual reality property app; giving consumers an exciting new way of experiencing property.

REA Group is a global digital advertising business specialising in property. Its operations include Australia's leading residential, commercial and share property sites; realestate.com.au, realcommercial.com.au and flatmates.com.au, as well as property sites in Asia and significant investments in North America and India. REA Group is listed on the Australian Securities Exchange and has the ambition to change the way the world experiences property.

Developing an app for busy property seekers
Wanting to build an app that would save time for busy property seekers, whilst allowing the company to experiment with the latest in virtual reality technology, REA partnered with Matterport to develop a virtual reality app that would allow consumers to experience property in a new and exciting way.

Looking for a technology partner to join the team, REA enlisted the help of DiUS to support the 3D development and help with productionising the app. REA wanted the app to showcase a selection of properties featured on realestate.com.au that had a Matterport 3D scan, as well as a number of off-market properties across Australia that would allow consumers to seek inspiration and daydream like never before.

Launching on Google Daydream

With the impending release of Google's Daydream View virtual reality headset, the team wanted to develop the app in time for the November (2016) launch. Working closely with Google, REA worked with pre-release software and hardware, along with a direct line into Google's Daydream production team.

The team used Unity3d for the game engine, Matterport provided the 3D scans and Google technology was used to support the build. The team chose Amazon

Web Services CloudFormation to productionise the app, allowing them to focus on continuous deployment with a test driven mindset - testing locally, identifying bugs early and applying fixes prior to pushing changes to the cloud and into the Google Play Store.

Working with software and hardware at various stages of completion, along with both Matterport and Google production teams being located remotely, created some challenges for the team with coordination and tight feedback loops. However, with such a strong relationship, two REA team members were deployed on the ground in North America and the final stages of the product development were completed using distributed teams.

User Experience (UX) in virtual reality presented a new area for DiUS software engineers involved. Whilst many principles of UX design remained the same, there was an immensely interesting area to explore around vestibular reasoning and virtual reality.

Launching realestate VR

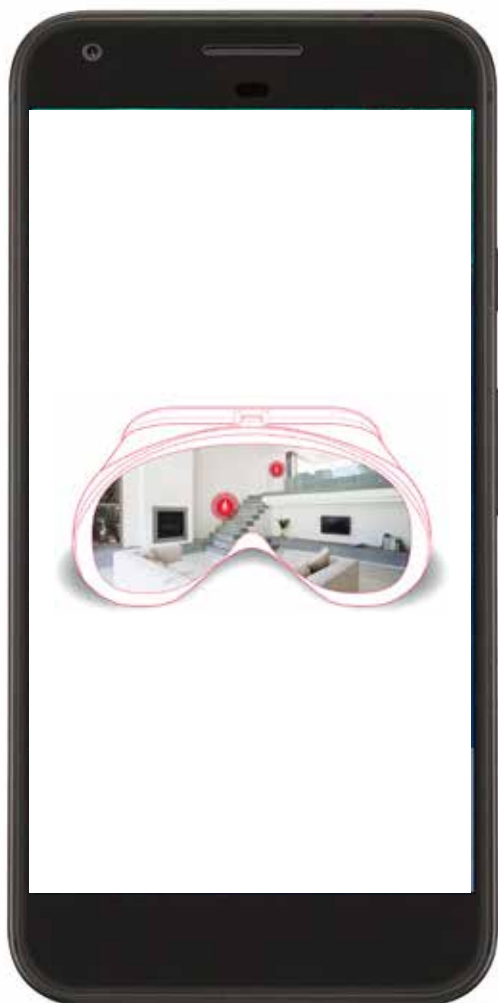
reasoning realestate VR was launched on 11 November 2016, becoming Australia's first dedicated virtual reality property app. Developing the app was a milestone for REA's product and innovation team as the company continues to be a major player in the evolution of property technology around the world.

Given REA's focus on invention and the future of property technology, a move into virtual reality was an obvious one. The development of the app has given the company a place to experiment with the possibilities of virtual reality, whilst giving Australians exciting new experiences.

realestate VR launched with 25 listings and has since evolved to include any property listed for sale on realestate.com.au that includes a Matterport scan. Between November and December, realestate VR saw an impressive 400% increase in total downloads[1]. REA is anticipating that the VR audience will continue to grow as more customers adopt the Matterport software when listing their property for sale and VR technology becomes more commonly used.

Changing the way people interact and engage with property Virtual reality has a unique ability to give people back time. REA believes the technology will change the way people interact and engage with property and related content as it continues to evolve. Developing realestate VR was therefore seen as the first step in building the company's 3D product future. By 2020 it is predicted that most Australian homes will have virtual reality headsets, and REA is confident the leading real estate agents will embrace virtual reality to create a brand new experience for a whole new generation of property seekers. The current time-consuming process of having to rush across town to view properties, either to purchase or rent, could be done in the privacy of the consumer's own home, in just a matter of minutes.

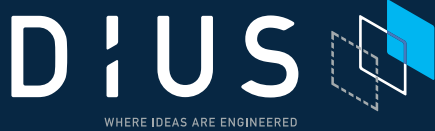
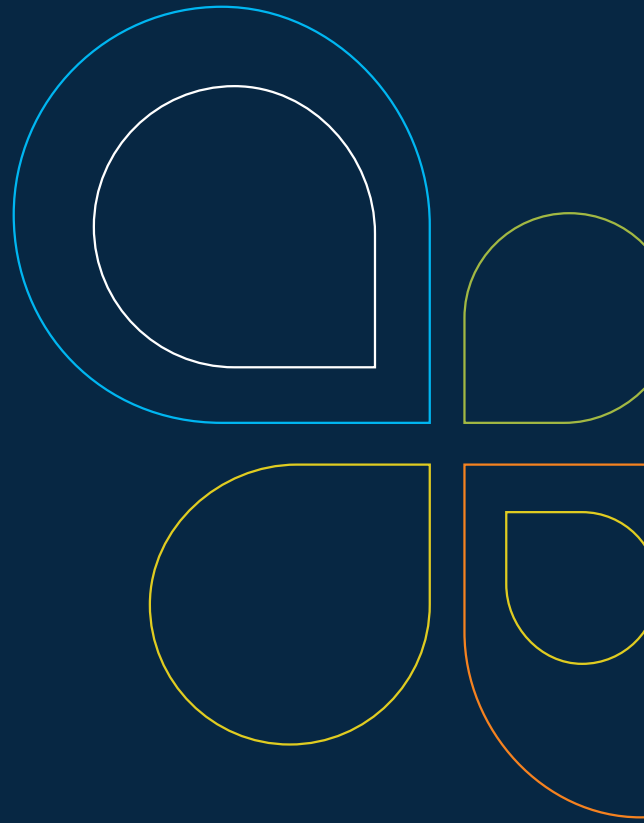
Want to know more, experience realestate VR:
www.realestate.com.au/vr/



realestate VR app

[1] Total number of downloads, Google Play Analytics, November & December, 2016

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Celebrating 12 years of helping companies innovate and grow. We make it happen by delivering the right solution to get an idea to market or make a business of any size more responsive.

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