

The Wall Street Journal launches VR app on Google Daydream

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The Wall Street Journal's entry into VR is being facilitated by Google Daydream

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By [Rakin Azfar for Mobile Marketer](#)

In the midst of reformatting its print edition, The Wall Street Journal is launching a virtual reality application in hopes that consumers looking for an alternative to cable news will gravitate towards immersive business and financial reportage.

The app is called WSJ VR and is viewable through Google Daydream in conjunction with select Daydream-ready phones, including models from LG, Samsung and of course, the recently announced Google Pixel and Pixel XL. WSJ's newest offering comes at a time when a number of publications within the stratum of high news journalism are rolling out dedicated VR components of their newsrooms.

"We've tried to differentiate ourselves from our competitors by creating a live platform in VR for news, video and interactive market data that users can come back to multiple times a day," said Roger Kenny, design tech lead of VR at [The Wall Street Journal](#). "The live hologram of the stock market is something that could only exist in 3D space.

"It's not just visually compelling but also useful in that it creates a new, interactive way to consume market data. Never before has anyone had such a simple way to grasp this level and density of market information so quickly and efficiently. That's a huge deal."

WSJ VR

Users of the app initially find themselves inside a virtual room specially designed for the app, and are presented with a large screen comprised of the day's news. Also included are live markets data visualizations and access to WSJ's content repository, including interactive 360-degree videos.

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Users are introduced to the platform in this virtual room

The first such video on the app tells the story of cyclist Denise Mueller, who is seeking to become the fastest woman ever on a bicycle. The video follows her attempt at the record on Utah's Bonneville Salt Flats.

The most marked difference between WSJ VR's debut 360-degree installation and that of its competitor, The New

York Times's The Daily 360, is in gravitas, or lack thereof: where The Times sought to give the viewer a look inside the ruins of a bombed social hall in Yemen, The Wall Street Journal chose a more intimate approach, following an extraordinary individual attempting to do an extraordinary thing ([see story](#)).

The variation in style for the two maiden installations may also evince one in approach: it would make sense for The Wall Street Journal's immersive video coverage to be lighter in tone, perhaps acting as an auxiliary experience for business professionals initially entering the virtual room for a better look at market data.

Further iterations of WSJ VR's 360-degree video will include reports on multimillion dollar classic cars, the jungles of Colombia and the set of a hit primetime TV show.

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Professionals can access real-time market data

Immersive reporting

The WSJ VR app arrives on the heels of the publication's successful pilot into VR, the NASDAQ interactive 360-degree interactive video that offered a guided tour of the past 21 years of the stock index. Integral to the effect was the vantage point: viewers rode the market's shaky bull and bear periods up and down like a roller coaster, and The Journal provided in-experience commentary cards for context.

The WSJ VR app is now available for download on Google Play.

"In some ways VR specifically Daydream presents the opposite use case than our typical view of mobile, which has been focused on brief interaction on-the-go," Mr. Kenny said. "Despite being on a mobile platform, Daydream content feels very big and engaging.

"It takes over your field of view and opens up a new realm where you can travel anywhere in the world and walk through data visualizations. We're continuing to experiment with how we tell stories in the space - and that's very exciting."

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