Poplar raises £1.7M to meet a greater demand in AR

Poplar received £1.7M ($2.1M) from Fuel Ventures to push its ambition to become the world's leading augmented reality (AR) creative platform.

Temps de lecture : minute

28 May 2020

Since the pandemic lockdown in March, AR engagement has spiked by 19% as consumers turn to social, web and mobile for alternative ways to engage with retailers and brands. This seed round, which sees Haatch Ventures, Ascension Ventures and Super Ventures join as investors, will help <u>Poplar</u> deliver on-demand creation of premium AR and 3D experiences to accommodate the growing demand for branded AR campaigns.

Poplar's platform automatically assembles teams of certified and trusted AR and 3D creators to build premium immersive digital experiences - such as at-home virtual try-ons, branded face filters, product visualisation and other interactive AR experiences- for retail, fashion & beauty, entertainment, food & drink and gaming brands. The platform has over 1,600 certified 3D/AR content creators who have delivered more than 120 campaigns for the likes of Speedo, Universal Music, L'Oréal, Disney, Jack Daniels, Nestlé and more.

Poplar's expertise and collaborative community mean it is one of TikTok's first technology partners for AR Branded effects creation, as well as a Trusted Partner for Google's 3D display advertising format, Swirl. A 3D Google Swirl ad was recently produced through Poplar's platform for the promotion of MG Motors' new compact SUV, which resulted in eight times

more engagement than standard rich media format and 4,600 engaged hours.

> *"With COVID-19 dominating our lives, brands are turning more to digital and social channels to reach consumers in new, immersive ways. Augmented reality is central to that and success will be determined by the quality of the experience. We are growing our platform to bring the very best AR creators together to quickly deliver premium campaigns, without the huge price tag. With 75% of consumers expecting retailers to offer an AR experience and 11 times more likely to make a purchase when AR is available, retail is definitely leading the way in terms of adoption. We expect more industries will follow suit, particularly with the challenges that social isolation is posing to every industry." - David Ripert, Co-founder and CEO of Poplar*

Built out of the Founders Factory studio, Poplar is the bridge between retail brands and social platform or mobile browser campaigns. It provides a seamless, simple experience for building AR campaigns that can increase brand awareness by up to 70% and command conversion rates

of up to 80%. With this new funding, it plans to expand internationally and grow the platform, which makes AR and 3D campaigns more affordable and accessible.

> *"Augmented reality has been on the rise but now, as a result of the pandemic lockdown, is its time to shine. I believe it represents the future of commerce - from being able to see a car in 3D without being in a showroom to trying on clothes in virtual changing rooms. Poplar sees the future of content creation in this medium and I am excited we are on board to help Poplar's journey to making AR technology more accessible, as the technology grows further in popularity." - Mark Pearson, Founder and Managing Partner at Fuel Ventures*

The proliferation of AR across social platforms such as Snapchat, TikTok, Instagram and Facebook, as well as mobile browsers such as Chrome and Safari, has been steadily on the rise, and the technology's dominance alongside emerging 3D tech is set to grow further. Poplar's platform data shows that, while Snapchat reigns supreme, Instagram has become the go-to platform for branded AR experiences.

The on-demand AR platform also found that Facebook made up 25% of all experiences while app-based AR added up to 7%. WebAR experiences have also proven popular thanks to its lower barrier of entry for end-users, making up 18% of all effects created through the Poplar platform.

Read also
The company boosting site traffic with original virtual experiences

Article by Maddyness