



THOMAS COOK

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Keith Andrews, Head of Retail Portfolio & Innovation

HOW TO BRING THE EXCITEMENT OF A HOLIDAY TO THE HIGH-STREET?

Booking a holiday should be fun – getting excited about the sandy beaches, azure sea, warm sunshine, and learning all about your chosen destination. But, as Thomas Cook’s UK Innovation Manager Mat Wilde, explains: *“The challenge for Thomas Cook is that you come into our stores and you don’t generally walk out with anything; you spend a few thousand pounds and you walk away with a piece of paper. For us to make that more tangible, we need to give our customers something that will make them want to part with their money and come into the high-street.”*



USING VR TO GIVE HOLIDAYMAKERS A GLIMPSE OF THEIR DREAM DESTINATION

Thomas Cook’s Discovery Store is designed differently to most high-street travel agents. It reflects the way today’s travellers book holidays and brings to life the entire experience of taking a trip abroad. We provided a broad range of technology, including wearables and large format displays, to tempt holidaymakers in, add some excitement to the destinations and encourage additional bookings.

“Our partnership with Samsung has helped us to utilise technology online and throughout our stores. They’ve given us an integrated strategy, and the blueprint of this is within our Discovery Store. They’ve introduced apps, touchscreens and wearables. Our store managers use the Samsung Gear S2 watch to improve our scheduling. Our window displays are Samsung large format screens,

and they’ve helped us increase our footfall by 38%. And most excitingly, together we’ve developed a VR sales tool,” says Discovery Store Manager, Peter Ryan.

The introduction of virtual reality really helps customers get into the holiday spirit, transporting them from the store they’re standing in to an exotic escape or bustling city centre. VR gives customers a life-like look at a hotel before they book and a real feel for how holiday excursions can enhance their trip.

VR is bringing More Good Days to Thomas Cook by encouraging additional bookings. And it’s doing the same for customers too, enabling them to make more informed choices and building the excitement before they set foot on a plane.

“The virtual reality experience for our customers and us has been great. It allows a fully immersive experience for our customers to really understand what their hotel and surroundings will be like, and what excursions they might like to go on. And if they’ve started their journey online, they’re already really engaged with what they’re going to buy when they come into our store,” explains the company’s Head of Retail Portfolio & Innovation, Keith Andrews.

“We’ve seen an 80% increase in excursions on our New York VR video and we’ve also won a Mobile Innovation Award. I just can’t wait to see where it’s going to take us next.”

Mat Wilde, Thomas Cook’s Head of Innovation

CONTINUING THE VR JOURNEY TO BRING MORE GOOD DAYS TO NEW DISCOVERY STORES

Thomas Cook plans to continue working with Samsung to roll out technology that creates More Good Days inside the 70 new Discovery Stores they plan to open over the next three years. *“The relationship with Samsung is more than just a partnership; it’s around sharing innovation and new ways of working, which is really helping our colleagues and our customers,”* says Andrews.