

Gaming-Yes. But what else?

Predictions From the Oculus Rift Founder.



It's a lock. Oculus Rift is the future of gaming. That industry will never be the same with virtual reality now leading the way. But how about some of the other industries that could be turned upside down with this new technology. According to Oculus VR founder, Palmer Luckey, we could be in for some big changes in the medical, architecture, education and business meeting niches.

As many folks know by now, Facebook is the proud new owner of Oculus Rift to the tune of \$2 billion. And there isn't even a product for sale yet. So far, the company is so young that it's only taking pre-orders for its consumer headset. It's called the Oculus Rift.

In spite of the fact that this technology isn't anywhere near where it's going to be, Luckey feels it will be offered by many companies, affecting the way companies do business in the future. Today's VR is being followed mostly by gamers, because of the large following by developers in the gaming world. But the talent is out there in other industries, just not on a scale like we're seeing in gaming.

Here are a number of applications that Luckey sees in the virtual reality future.

No. 1: Medicine

It's entirely possible for virtual reality headsets to be used to help in the teaching of doctors. A med student could use it to learn about a specific surgery, and

could zoom and rewind until he has it down pat. The student would have a lot more control over how he views his teaching. You could also have hundreds of students viewing the same surgery, which would be impossible in a traditional operating room setting. (Keep in mind that the Rift is not a medical device and is not approved by the FDA.)

No. 2: Architecture

Just think about how architects and designers could use an Oculus Rift headset to create and navigate the space before they ever break ground. You could make all the changes you want before you ever start moving stuff around.

No. 3: Education

Schools have been sending kids on field trips for years because they realize the value in that experience. On a recent trip to the Nation's Capital, Washington, D.C., Luckey was particularly struck by the exposure kids have to the Smithsonian.

However, Luckey realized that opportunities to visit museums and sites with historical value were often not available to many students, because of where they are located and the lack of funds to sponsor these trips. With virtual reality devices, like Oculus Rift, kids would be able to experience these sites virtually, where logistics and funds had been limiting factors before.

No. 4: Business Meetings

Luckey isn't a staunch advocate of business travel, but thinks that virtual reality could potentially eliminate much of it. He thinks it's very interesting to imagine that this technology could replace much of this need and allow people to get the same experience and input without wasting all of that time and expense.

Yes, there are a lot of possibilities for Oculus Rift and the virtual reality technology. Gaming is going to be very different in the future, which means potentially new experiences and fun. But we also may be living our lives quite differently, due to the possibilities offered by virtual reality. And this may just be the beginning of new technologies that will dramatically change the way we live.