

SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT:

Augmented and Virtual Reality in Pharma

The augmented/virtual reality field is growing remarkably and the pharmaceutical industry has been quick to see the benefits & adopt this exciting technology. There is a big push in the industry to constantly innovate and AR/VR is predicted to become one of the key ways how we can better interact with technology and data. In the run up to our September congress, we interviewed one of our key speakers, Andrew Garrood from Novartis, on his expert views in this area to search for answers to the question as to how AR/VR will allow us to look at data science from a different perspective in 2020.

The AR/VR field is rapidly evolving. What do you think are the key factors driving innovation in this area?

I think as devices become more affordable and manageable for enterprises it makes them more practical to use which then opens up the potential use cases. So its the usual case of tech getting faster and cheaper until it becomes ubiquitous which gives people more ideas for use cases. I expect innovation will be driven both by internal enterprise groups but also by ideas from the gaming industry, academia and home hobbyists.

Could you please tell us about your role at Novartis and the areas you are currently working on.

I`m responsible for end user client devices so I`m looking at the devices Novartis needs to support our business goals today and into the future. I`m also working on Digital workplace strategies. So I`m constantly looking at the ways in which people work today and in the future to try to ensure we have the right devices

available for them to run their applications on. As new demands emerge we need to look at the form factors people will use to interact with applications and data. All the great software in the world won`t help you if you can`t access it.

What challenges do you think the AR/VR field faces currently? How could we overcome these?

The transition from consumer tech to enterprise ready. Deploying one device is easy but how to deploy 1000`s. Then of course applications. At the moment most are games or custom developed. Its coming but there isn`t an Office 365 for AV/VR yet. Although it does work. In addition we`ll probably have the same challenges of adoption that all technology has as we transition from the early pioneers to mainstream use. Once the devices become easy to use it will take off. At the moment we`re where smartphones were before the iPhone.

What do you think the future holds for the field?

ANDREW GARROOD

Global Service Delivery Manager End User Computing Client Devices, Novartis



Andrew has 22 years of experience in the Pharma industry, always working at the boundary between business and IT to help scientists focus on their work and not their IT problems. His current area of interest is in the devices and software combinations that help deliver modern digital working environments - encompassing everything from IOT devices, through personal devices, to smart meeting rooms. Andrew has been the IT lead on several digital workplace projects including the Novartis Lab of the Future. Currently he is responsible across Novartis for the end user experience on all client devices, from phones to laptops.

It will become one of the key ways we interact with technology and data, just as the keyboard, mouse and touch screen did. I think we`re going to see a surge in interest in the ability to interface with technology without physical contact. So whilst now it seems cool, exciting and futuristic it won`t be long before we just expect it as part of our devices we work with. Nobody thinks twice about having a mouse or using a touch interface on their smartphone. Just like both of these inventions it will revolutionise how we work and we`ll wonder how we ever lived without it. I think AR will be the technology that really has the most impact as it will integrate into our physical and virtual worlds. VR will probably remain with a niche for games or simulations for training.

What are some of the key unexplored opportunities AR/VR may have an impact on in the future within pharmaceutical/ data sciences?

It will allow us to literally look at pharmaceutical/ data science from a different perspective and its hard to imagine what some of that will look like. I think its coming at a time when people are going to be swamped with data and AI tools on top shouting information at us. We are going to need more natural and visual ways to handle that, something a phone screen or laptop currently limit due to their physical constraints. AR and VR will remove those boundaries. No more scrolling Excel tabs it will be in front of you, and behind.

What do you expect to achieve at the 18th Annual PharmaIT & Data Congress?

Meet peers and learn from their experiences to help drive innovations back in the office. Its always beneficial to hear about the challenges and successes of other organisations, share war stories and come back refreshed with new ideas to try.

Andrew Garrood will be presenting at our PHARMATEC SERIES 2020



Would you like to meet him? Find out more here >>

