

4 ROADS

Hitachi Vantara CASE STUDY



OVERVIEW



CLIENT:

Hitachi
Vantara



TECHNOLOGY:

Augmented
Reality



TIMEFRAME:

Under 2 months



CHALLENGE:

Use augmented reality as a tool
for customer self-maintenance

BACKGROUND

Hitachi Vantara is part of the Hitachi Group, the 38th biggest business in the world.

However, despite already being a global name in the world of technology, Hitachi had an ongoing ambition to support, expand, and grow with prospective mid-market customers.

For a business primarily focussed on securing high value contracts for a small number of enterprise clients, the pivot to the mid-market meant a fundamental change in their offering.

4R CASE STUDY



CHALLENGE

Hitachi's model for enterprise customers revolves around clients getting a dedicated account and support team. This means they don't need to worry about being self-sufficient. Hardware is proactively maintained, and issues are fixed with little to no interruption.

However, to ensure a profitable entry into the mid-market (more volume based, lower value contracts), they could not offer a dedicated support team to these customers.

Mid-market customers need to be self-sufficient. They need to be able to diagnose any hardware faults and resolve, where possible, any support issues themselves.

This principle of enabling and empowering customers isn't new, but Hitachi wanted to explore how immersive technology like augmented reality could be beneficial in ensuring customers continue to get a great experience.

And so, Project Sight was born.

4R CASE STUDY



SOLUTION



4R CASE STUDY

To deliver this innovative project, Hitachi Vantara needed a partner that could deliver a digital solution that would bring its product range to life in a new and exciting way.

Based on the success of the Virtual Rack Configurator solution we previously delivered, Hitachi felt confident awarding their augmented reality project, Project Sight, to 4 Roads.

"4 Roads won the bid because of its history of innovative solutions, and because it engaged the Hitachi Vantara leadership with its customer-centric approach.

Intelligent Self-Service is at the backbone of how 4 Roads approaches digital solutions, so the use case Hitachi were looking to fulfil aligned perfectly with our experience and expertise."

- Rob Nash, Founder, 4 Roads

Business use of augmented reality is still in its infancy, despite its successes in the Gaming industry. 4 Roads, however, recognised that this **immersive technology** could be used to provide visual representations of real time data points.

SOLUTION

This enables a deeper depth of product information to be demonstrated in a way that wasn't previously possible.

Data is presented in a simple, accessible way that is easy to understand at a glance, a key consideration for persuading customers to maintain their own hardware.

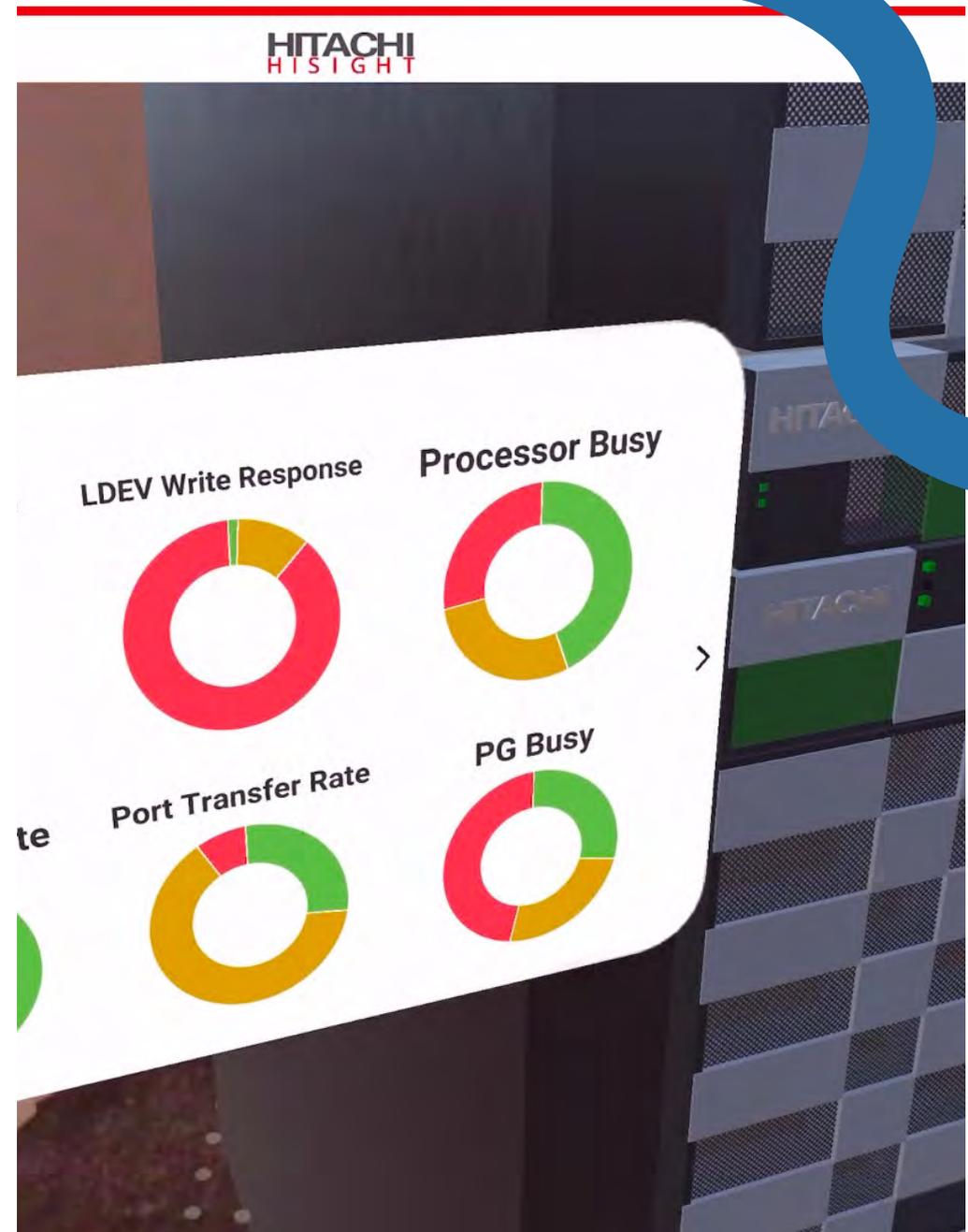
Here a few ways we visualised data from Hitachi's hardware:

Scenario 1:

Through a QR code located on the rack, users can launch an app which is integrated with a number of 3rd party systems actively monitoring hardware performance.

The AR solution is able to provide a visual representation of how those racks are performing, for when someone is on site and able to interact physically with Hitachi's hardware.

No tapping or other user interaction is required for this to happen. It simply involves pointing the device at the QR code, without needing to get close to it.



SOLUTION

Hardware Performance

Users are shown the status of their chosen hardware, colour coded based on key indicators, giving users the ability to check if hardware is running smoothly at a glance, considerably speeding up maintenance:

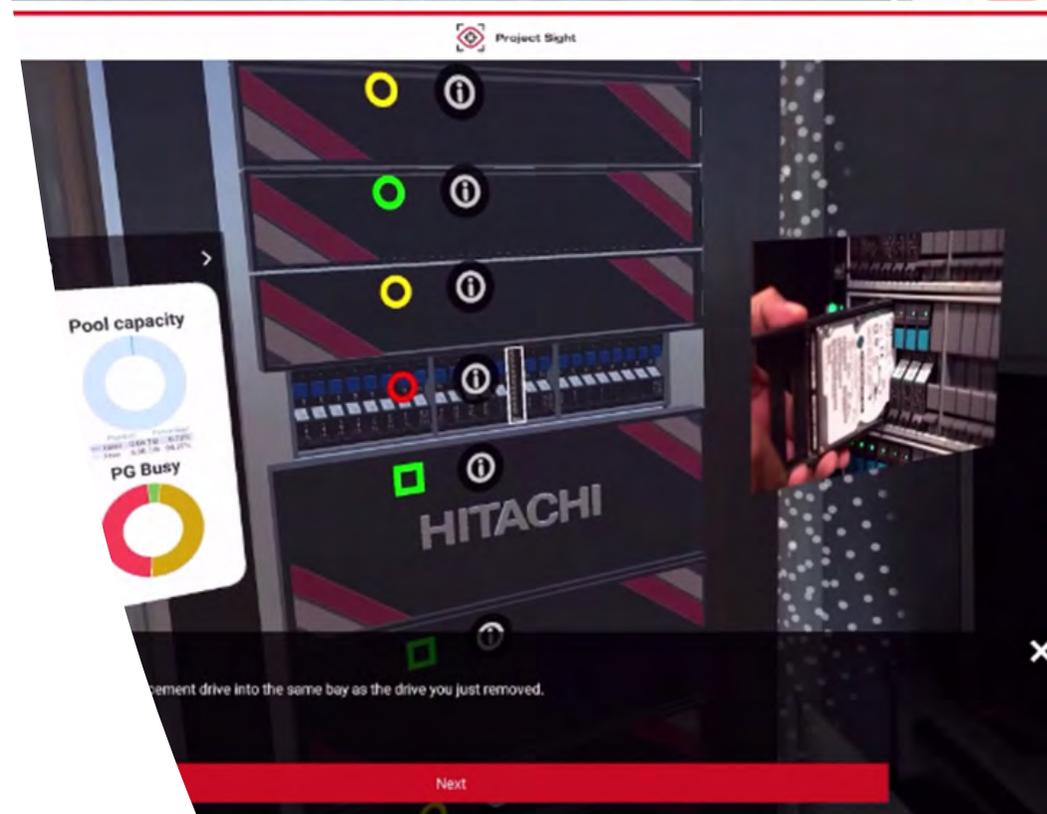
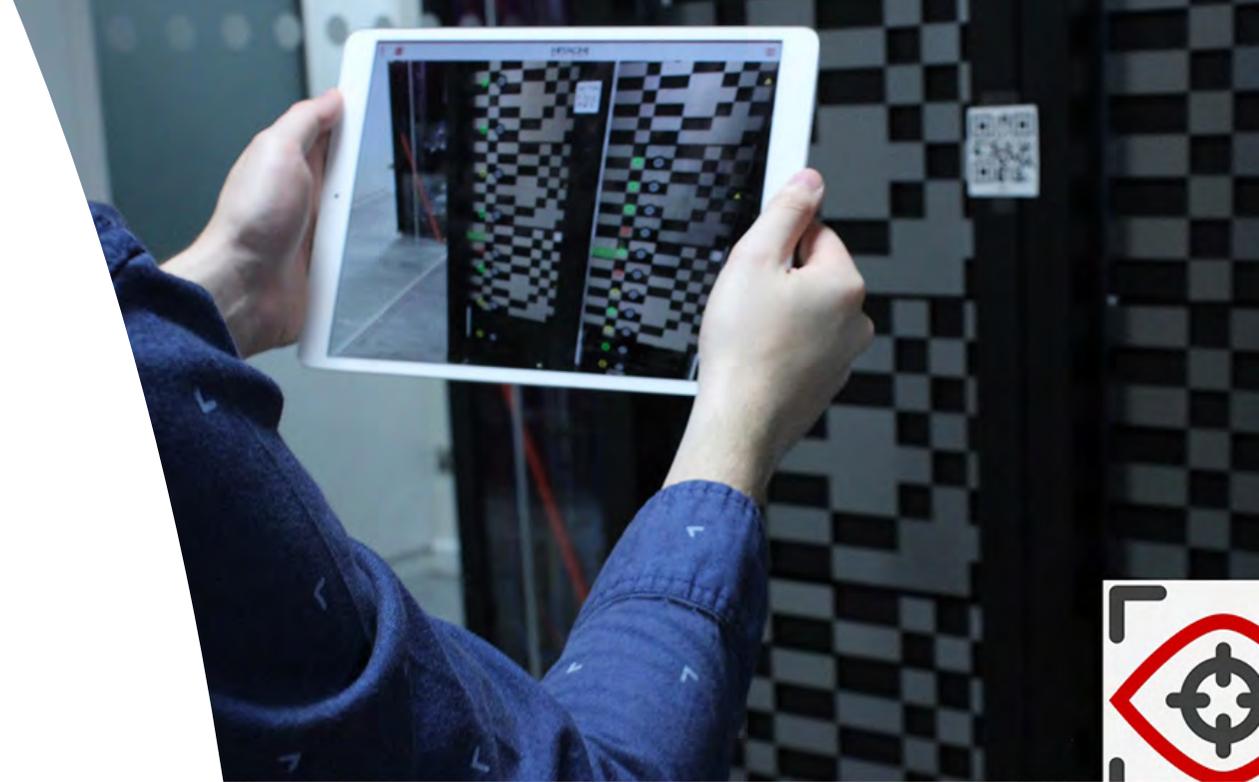
- Green status indicators suggest the server is running well.
- Yellow indicators show there is something of note, such as old hardware that should be upgraded.
- Red indicators show there is a fault, such as a failed drive.

Guided Maintenance

The goal of guided maintenance is to enable mid-market customers who don't have full Hitachi support to maintain their hardware with minimal risk, as well as giving immediate live guidance.

For this project we integrated videos in the user's field of view to guide them through complex actions. For example, unmounting the correct drive before removing it. This can be used by both Hitachi customers and partners.

4R CASE STUDY



SOLUTION

Thermal Performance

Under performing cooling can cause subtle problems which build over time, resulting in unwanted throttling. By tapping into thermal data from servers, technicians can see a 3D heat map.

This thermal image is not built using a special camera. It uses the rack information to build a This gives a much richer understanding of the heat structure of a rack.

Displaying data in this format helps to visualise the internal thermal status of the hardware in real time, giving technicians a much richer understanding of the heat structure of their racks.

For a customer monitoring their own hardware, this gives them an easy way to diagnose overheated equipment.



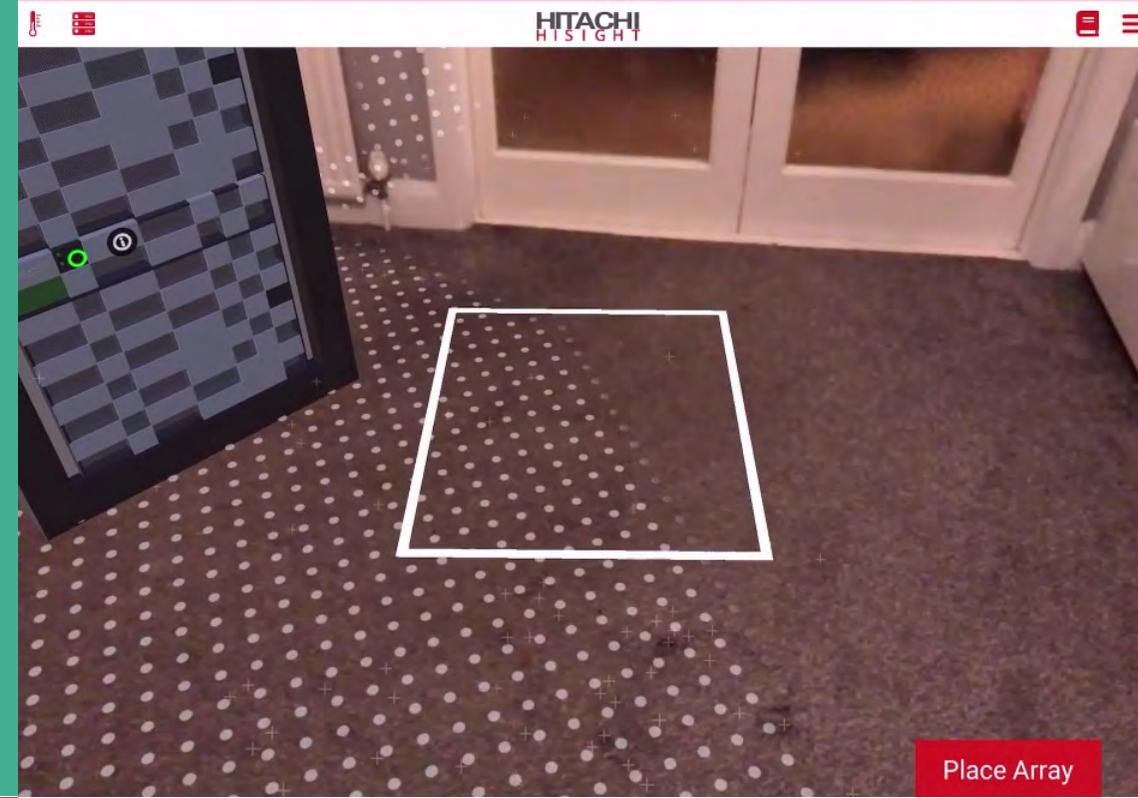
SOLUTION

Scenario 2:

You have a CIO or CTO who isn't on site. Project Sight enables them to have a visual representation of their rack configurator and interact virtually with the hardware.

Viewing From Your Library

In the library view you'll find a list of saved arrays, which you can add to to build up the library of arrays you maintain.



Here you can select between 5 arrays which can then be placed in your surrounding environment, giving you a 3D visualisation of the equipment.

When one of these library options is selected, you'll see it using your device's camera. As you move around, a white indicator shows where the array can be placed. Multiple arrays can be placed at the same time, too.

Once a 3D array is placed, the user experience is the same as being in front of the physical rack. Scan the QR code and you can see a full metric diagnostic dashboard for that particular server.

RESULTS & FEEDBACK

The hype surrounding Project Sight peaked when it was showcased at Hitachi's global conference, Hitachi Next. As well as being presented in a number of high-profile executive keynote presentations.

By leveraging immersive tech like augmented reality, it shows how quite a traditional business can be innovative.

In an industry where it can be a struggle to differentiate themselves, showing any kind of innovation is something that piques the interest of customers, partners and analysts alike.

With the feedback from customers and analysts being overwhelmingly positive, the immediate aim is to take Project Sight from proof of concept and roll it out across the business.



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THANKS FOR READING!

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