Augmented Reality Narrative Infrastructure for Watt Street

The Novocastrian Time Machine

Inspired by Thomas Mitchell’s surveys of Newcastle circa 1800.

Virtual Reality Entertainment Systems Pty Ltd
City Evolution Project
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Inspiration

The “The Novocastrian Time Machine” concept draws inspiration from Thomas Mitchell’s surveys of Watt street, using a scientific measuring and surveying tool, known as a *Theodolite*. circa 1800

We use this historical event as our ‘window to the past’

By designing our own futuristic Theodolite as an Augmented Reality viewing device we allow people to look backwards, to “*See change*” that time has brought to pass in Watt Street.

Thomas Mitchells surveying station at the end of the old wharf on watt street.
- Storytelling Philosophy -

As if a rift in the space time continuum has occurred The Novocastrian Time Machine opens a portal to the past and a window to the future by bringing the real and virtual worlds together it helps us to create an innovative storytelling structure.

As voyeurs of history our audience are transformed from mere visitors and tourists into explorers.

Watt Street will become a new world where the laws of quantum physics appear to be suspended. A new reality, a place of evolution where a contemporary urban mythology unfolds.
We propose to juxtapose the technology developments of the Victorian industrial revolution with postmodernism, drawing on the design influences of Steam Punk.

With its roots in the era of the earliest science fiction writers such as Jules Verne, Steampunk is now a global phenomena and trendy contemporary movement.

Newcastle has a natural affiliation with this thematic style due to its industrial past and evolving contemporary future where 19th-century culture is intertwined with advanced technology developments.

Consequently our theme and street viewing ephemera devices will be inspired by Victorian design elements combining the past with the future.

Our aim is to build a visual dialogue in Watt Street that is in complete harmony with existing heritage buildings, enhancing the aesthetic of the entire streetscape.

When the bells ring at 6 O’clock we want to seed the idea that a shift in the Time Space Continuum has occurred in the vicinity of Watt street.
The Novocastrian Time Machine utilises many geo tagged Augmented media devices to deliver its content. The illuminated extravaganza transforms real buildings with large scale images and graphics creating another layer of augmented reality to enhance the virtual experience.

The featured viewing device, a large Theodalite acts like a telescope allowing users to see the city as it was in the past.

The content will be hosted on the web, second life, Google Earth 3D to attract further international attention and act as a visual focal point for the project.

People using their Smartphone's will be able to walk the entire length of Watt Street to explore historical content.

Old photos and other content will upload into their phones as augmented visual overlays.

Users with no phones will also be able to see 3D holographic Virtual content, via an array of augmented viewing devices placed in the street.

Content can also enter a phone automatically via Wi-Fi when in proximity to tagged sites.

Experiencing the virtual Watt Street will also be available to anyone who has access to the internet.

Further reach can be provided by iPads that can be hired out to view content. These can be hired via car rental companies and tourism outlets, library etc.

Our strategy allows for the largest demographic to access and experience the history of Watt Street.
1

- Novocastrian Time machine -

Imagine the power to time travel into the past, exploring a remarkable and wondrous local history from a 21st century perspective.

Peer into the time machine and a portal will open to the past. See with your naked eye the environment transformed.
Introducing the concept of “Doctor Watt”

The doctor is the ‘face’ of the Watt st Project as an image utilised in promotion and as a 3D animated character or live actor, who appears at openings and special events. Based on the historical character of Thomas Mitchell, this ‘traveller from the past’ acts as narrator and guide to the Watt St Experience.

“Doctor Watt” Costume Design

In terms of character development, it would be nice to use the original flash language of New Castle as documented by the convict James Hardy and for Dr Watt to have a humorous side to him.
The Ultimate Smart Phone

Upon picking up the phone Dr Watt would answer and give instructions on how to use the Listening device. As a portal, the device allows users to speak outside of the Time Space Continuum rift, to friends in far away places and different lands. (the phone only operates from 6 – 11)

we would like to locate the phone in Watt street, the post office, a pub or other location, preferably for free calls to anywhere in the world. It would be worth the publicity and cost approx $39 - 270 a month

Commercially available graphic covers for normal Smartphone we would custom design one to brand the Night Walk Experience.
We use the concept of the directory to develop a tourism tour guide to Watt street. The directory list locations of key sites and intriguing information supporting the historical narratives of our script. I.e. Newcastle’s first Telephone Directory for 1883 all 25 numbers!
The directory can incorporate animated paper and other special Fx technologies.

The Directory can give clues to our letterboxing site and other adventure concepts that can be played out in Watt Street. Letterboxing is an outdoor hobby that combines elements of orienteering, art, and puzzle solving where we hide a small, weatherproof boxes in a public place. There was an original site from 1838 in the bank building in Watt street, see newspaper clipping.
By theming the Train station we create content that works during the day and night. Most importantly it starts to create a holistic and integrated viewing area in New Enterprise Park.

If you don’t have a mobile, don’t worry one of our own time stations (Victorian styled LCD screens on the street) will get you connected to the content.

2 - Newcastle Railway Station
Multimedia lighting, soundscapes, Augmented Reality – the ability to transform

Featuring a different decade every month, this month it’s the fifties with steam Trains: “The Newcastle Flyer 3801”
2 - Newcastle Railway Station - (continued)

The site is Geo Tagged so when you use the time machine on your mobile, historical information related to the site will come up.

This is The Newcastle Flyer 3801 at Newcastle station (for real) She comes home every year so you can actually ride her of into the sunset when she next visits.

And this little baby train who hasn’t quite grown up yet, ran on the tracks in the 50’s to pick up employees and take them to work at various train stations.
Transport in earlier times

Mr Merry weather was an interesting character who invented the steam tramway motor.
The queen on her Australian trip in 1954

And Queen Victoria loved Cadburys

The crew - Honeysuckle train station -circa 1800

Newcastle coal train –circa 1800
If your bored waiting for a bus or train?

Check out the local news your mum or grandma read before you were born or when you were just a kid. Past newspapers would appear as posters or on LCD displays as well as on smart phones.

2 - Newcastle Railway Station (continued)
“See Change” - evolve the brand to include seeing into the past –

Old Newspapers from the 1800’s had very small print and don’t translate very well to reproduction.

So reconstructing newspapers from the 1800’s to feature true stories that happened in Watt Street would be fascinating to read …….

News, politics, fashion, the price of food and the types of jobs available, content that changes regularly and has context to our own lives.

Reproduced in the style of Harry Potter with moving pictures.

The technology exist to embed video in real newspapers so this could be explored to create a feature.
Real estate in past decades ... is your suburb here?
viewed via web/ Smartphone/ in situ on Steam Punk styled LCD screens / posters /
4 - Great Northern Hotel – Time Machine Viewing

When seen through the time machine the street will magically transform to what it looked like in the past. Historical characters will also appear to inhabit the street such as, Prince Albert and Mark Twain. We could hear Mark Twain’s comments on what he thought of Newcastle.

Ledged tells of a seafaring rogue known as “Black Harris” that would give Johnny Depp a run for his money. Children were terrified that Black Harris would steal them away to be placed on ships. Colonial mothers used the fear of Black Harris to keep many a naughty child in at night.

We are told that his ghost still roams the streets at night... With our special Time machine you can look back into the past and try to find him... we are told his favourite haunt was the corner of the Great Northern Hotel...
There was a Great Gala Ball held there in her Majesty’s honour - The Talk of the Town - The Ballroom now deserted and beyond repair .... faded memories of the past ... when viewed through the Time Machine we can peer through the windows and see people dancing in the upstairs ballroom if walls could talk ? We’ll If anyone could make walls share their secrets of the things they have heard ... it would be Doctor Watt. !!
5 - Post Office precinct – 3d illusions and audio scapes

The lower windows of the Old Post Office/ Council chambers are a potential site for 3d viewing and listening devices.

We can incorporate Newcastle's first telephone call with the ticking clock into one of the audio ephemeras.

We have already sourced a good collection of stories that were the gossip of the day. Being able to listen in and eavesdrop to hear these conversations would be fascinating.
Antique reproduction viewing and listening devices.

During the night or day content can be accessed via our array of Victorian steam punk inspired content delivery devices.

Antique looking telephones, telegraphs, 3D Holograms and other amazing viewing gadgets will feature Interactive soundscapes and miniature 3D holographic installations that will amaze and delight audiences.

All enhanced further by the illuminated extravaganza at night and the Virtual Watt Street experience.

Potential sites are:
- corner Watt and Hunter
- Corner Watt and King
- Corner Watt and Scott
design influences for viewing devices.
We would design the viewing devices to enhance the chosen location in support of the narrative and content. ie a maritime theme, a postal theme, etc.
the viewing device must stand alone as a piece of amazing sculptural intrigue to create an exciting streetscape.
further design influences for viewing devices

This is an example of a working stainless steel stereoscopic viewer. Ours are to be embellished, steam punk style, delivering 3D Augmented content and 3D stereoscopic historical photos with audioscapes.
**Illuminated extravaganza**

Dynamic coloured lighting will make many historical buildings in Watt street key features, and set the scene for a Night walk of discovery and adventure.
5 - The Post office, Telegraph office

This is the old post office – note the front structure and veranda that has been removed and the street level as there was a door down the side of watt street.

This is what content would look like when viewed via smart phone as it will match the position of the existing building. We plan to incorporate all historical images of watt street into the virtual streetscape.
The University of New Castle have a fantastic historical collection of handwritten postcards.

There are also many handwritten reports to Governor King. We can draw from those collections for content.

This postcard is from 1913.

It would be an honour to transcribe some of the beautiful thoughts and messages onto a wall of words at the post office precinct or other suitable location.

We can use either light or text based Moss art.

In keeping with the idea of The Time Space Continuum and the rift in space, we can also explore new ideas around postcards. Visitors could take a photo outside an illuminated feature in Watt Street and send it as a real postcard via Dr Watt's space telegraph using a mobile phone. It will arrive via snail mail to the addressee.

I know this can sound unusual but we already have a curious project with NASA with some of Julie's creative writing's embedded into a Chip on the Dawn spacecraft Mission. Her words are currently 980 million miles from earth travelling at 24,000 mph.

Time and space is a curious thing! And we must draw on all opportunities to engage our users.

So why not send a text message into space via Dr Watts space telegraph.
Moss Art text techniques are a safe way to attach words to buildings in an aesthetic manner that will not harm heritage buildings. If the moss dies it just changes colour. It's also possible to use artificial moss.
The Victorians loved topiary ....
As a living organism, topiary moss-based text can last for years, if it dies it just changes colour.
We have visualised the corner of Watt and Hunter to give you an idea of how it can be transformed at night.

Still images or moving images can create a dynamic effect.

The other most likely site for digital projection is the Great Northern to create an outdoor cinema style presentation and re claim the use of the park.
7 - Various Walls - Image Projection-

This is a historical painting of Nobbys as it used to be. We can also reconstruct Nobbys as a photorealistic panorama. The many original paintings of Nobbys can be Geo tagged and also seen either by the time machine viewer or smart phones.

We can project the jewels of Cultural collections of the Coal River working party and University of New Castle onto this wall and colour with light the surrounding buildings to complement the content.
7 - Various Walls - Image Projection - cont.

Placing large images on this building provides a lure to draw people further up Watt Street. Content can change throughout the year to feature different themes or decades.

The opening of Hexham bridge
images of circus performers who stayed at the Beach Hotel can feature in the devices; acrobats, Dwarves, bearded ladies, giants, snake charmers and much more can appear as 3D content.

The large white wall can also complement the content showing large images of the circus menagerie, such as elephants and other creatures that visited in the 1800’s.

The devices would appear magical at night as they would incorporate lighting into their structure to illuminate the footpath around them. They can also be battery operated and coin operated i.e. pay per view.
Muto scope Video Viewer
The muto scopes will allow those without mobiles to see our content, even in 3D.

The Muto scope if located on the corner of Watt and King can also change its content to feature different themes. To tell the Union Steam Ship Company story we would focusing on ships and ship wrecks bringing Newcastle's maritime history into the street. Soundscapes can also support the theme in this case stormy seas, lashing waves, bells and chaos to support the narrative.

New Castle ships circa 1800
So this is what would happen all along watt street hundreds of references to real events and people. An interlinking of true stories - the narrative of history being re-created. Smartphone’s, Victorian inspired viewing devices, large format slide projection, animation and lighting to create a multi-layered visual and audio experience.
Missing History

If something important is missing in our narrative we can re create authentic historical illustrations to re create the past, uploading Geo tagged images to the live virtual site.

If there are no photos of the Tattersall's club then some drawings or horsey narratives.

Here we have created a man in Victorian dress walking the street.
Chalk art is a powerful visualisation tool. We have some of the best chalk artists on our team and new techniques to make the art last up to 12 months. There is a key location outside the Post Office where a concept like this can be deployed. We can design the art in 3D and get our artists to execute the design, alternatively a 3D digital pavement sticker print can be laid on the ground for up to 2 years.

We can explore narratives such as

- the earthquake
- Underground terrains
- quirky time warp surrealism.
- floating black diamonds (as coal was once called) in the coal river.
image bollards can have digital or graphic content and can be located in several sites. Outside the Old Post Office, the lock up and telegraph buildings offers the opportunity to feature people in their various work attires associated to those buildings and businesses. As well as exhibition content.

We can feature different decades such as 1800 / 1920 / 1940 / 1970 / 1980 's to create an ever changing diorama of people .

The Westpac building opposite also offers an alternative bollard with its concrete cylinder. The cylinder is viewable from the Train station. We can also project from within using their glass façade .

The first Letter carriers and postmen. We can also feature policemen and convicts outside the lockup.
Illuminated Image Bollards cont..

These photos are from the “Library Time Machine” Sambourne collection in London. The subjects unaware of having been photographed.

We can curate this collection to appear here, or source from our own cultural collections.

We could also re-create the same style by photographing people in fashion from various decades, walking in Watt street outside recognizable buildings, as if they were captured in that time period.

Black and White transitioning into hand coloured images and then colour.
11 - THE ECO CUBE

drawing upon the success of this previous work we can translate the lighting design onto the grassed areas into Enterprise Park.

Making parks magical places to explore with lighting, helps the social fabric of a community. Giving people the power to choose the colours and patterns of a space make for a fun interactive chill zone.

The Eco Cube at Darling Harbour calmed younger audiences who had typically developed alcohol related problem behaviour.

This interactive element can also be deployed with other buildings, with street light fittings taking on a Victorian aesthetic.
12 – Various Walls - “See change” Holograph Peepholes

leveraging the brand to expand its meaning.

Little peep holes and keyholes are places we can embed content in tiny holographs. They can be attached to the outside of buildings or incorporated into street infrastructure. Site markers attached to street lamps, buildings or on the pavement will signal locations. A great location would be outside the old Tattersall’s club - maybe you see a horse or two? Windows are another option for placing the installation.
Historical documents circa 1800 prophesised a vision, looking hundreds of years into the future of what Newcastle would become. We take inspiration from what they imagined would one day exist and build the future city of their dreams, a city of possibilities, a city of evolution beyond there knowing.

Their prophecy however is coming true.

We propose to build a 3d holographic Diorama of what that future city would look like, the imagined world of their future.
“See change” what does Newcastle look like in 1000 years?

we can explore what Newcastle would look like in the Quantum world of the Multi Dimensional time verse, exploring a city fusion between Newcastle's sister cities of UBE Yamagachi in Japan and Arcadia in California. We can enroll their participation into the future vision, exploring their cultural heritage of sculpture and massive air balloons into a global multicultural future polis.

The 3D holographic panorama of the “New Newcastle” can appear in the tiny Peep holes & smart phones.
Fletcher park ideas –

Large sculptural elements can be constructed using hay bales to re create lost heritage, best used as silhouettes on main tourist routes.

Victorian turret - Big Ben

This castle was built in Tasmania from Hay bales

- temporary structures only for roughly 12 months -
12 - Enterprise park - lumber yard
Steel cut outs figures with illumination to animate the site.

We designed these characters to try to bring life to the lumber yard area they or similar designs can be located along the fore shore or other locations.
Steel cut outs - Previous work - The Heritage Highway - Tasmania

The barracks can come alive with cut outs

We could use cut outs and re instate the livery stable in Watt street

How the post got delivered in early colonial times
Steel cut outs - Previous work - The Heritage Highway - Tasmania

Thomas Mitchell's silhouette with his original Theodalite can be placed along the promenade at the original location where he set up and documented his findings. There are sketches he did that we can upload to the virtual site that are geo tagged to the location at the end of Wharf rd / Watt street. See map in previous geo tagged info.

Surveyor on the Heritage Highway

We would create new designs, more complex detailed silhouette afforded by advances in computer cutting technology.
12 - The George hotel reconstructed
we have calculated that we can map the old George hotel architecture onto the new building
restoring the original heritage vista at night.

Our illuminated extravaganza would illuminate other buildings in the style of vivid.
We would also explore a site for a digital screen to allow Enterprise park or Fletcher park to be used as an outdoor viewing area.
Buildings that could accommodate digital projection are the Great Northern Hotel and the Police Station.
12 - Enterprise park - Mosaic Topiary

organic sculptural elements and seating can provide much needed beautification of enterprise park.

We can draw inspiration from early botanical drawings and the perception of Australia being such a strange land full of disbelief in term of its flora and fauna. Newcastle's sister city of UBE Yamagachi in Japan has a huge tradition with its sculptural biennale, the next in 2013. We have an opportunity to collaborate with them.
12 - Enterprise park - moss art topiary
used in unusual locations to green the environment and tell a story
Concept image –

we like the message and the grass technique can be used to green areas for special events. Silhouettes of people, animals etc.
12 - Enterprise park - Mosaic Topiary
low maintenance decorative effects – Patterns

We can burn intricate patterns in the grass to create low maintenance decorative elements to enhance the Time Machine theme in Enterprise Park i.e.:
words / compass co-ordinates/ Lace etc.
We are able to translate any Victorian lace patterns or intricate postcard writings from the cultural collections into steel.

Perforated structures like this, when illuminated from within, cast huge shadows of the design onto the surrounding area, creating patterns and colour.
we can also play with the idea of Victorian style furniture replicas in grass or turf. Creative organic forms can be created to provide seating without looking like typical municipal seating.
Park Furniture  - in natural or artificial Grass -

Creative organic forms can create beautiful functional seating without looking like typical municipal furniture.

This method provides for a natural aesthetic and provides for maximum functionality.

They would work well in Enterprise park to allow lots of seating especially if a digital projection screen was installed opposite on the Great Northern Hotel.
Grass Art, Natural & Artificial Grass Furniture

ideas for street furniture in Enterprise park or foreshore areas
Our Aims

• Create a project that revolutionises the way public spaces are experienced

• Deploy innovative technologies to create an integration of virtual and physical media in an upstream narrative

• Use computer gaming, adventure, role playing, and interactive strategies to enrol engagement

• Draw on romanticised Victorian steam punk culture as a lead in to explore other themes.

• Be contemporary in the eyes of our youth

• Create inter-generational links that cross multiple decades; as our content spans the living memory of many citizens

• Engage cultural institutions and corporate partners to leverage the budget to maximise production values and branding opportunities.

• Explore further the historical archives to discover really exciting, unusual and interesting stories that will engage a contemporary audience.
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