

A man with a beard, wearing a maroon and grey hoodie, is sitting on a bed. He is holding a brown cardboard VR headset over his eyes with his right hand. He is also holding an acoustic guitar across his lap with his left hand. The background is a bright, minimalist room with a white wall and a teal headboard.

Inside Google Marketing: Three Predictions on What's Next for Entertainment

Published
September 2016

When Aisling Finch, Google Australia and New Zealand's head of marketing, thinks about the future of entertainment, she sees consumers, video, and reality itself coming together in exciting ways. Here are her three predictions on where it's all headed (and yes, thoughts on VR and AR included).

think with **Google**

It has been said that there are only two things people do more than watch video: sleep and work. Australians now spend over three hours a day consuming video¹ and the explosion of digital video is a big contributor to that, with YouTube now reaching over 15M Australians.²

For one thing, digital video, especially on mobile, has changed the role of the audience. We can interact with what we're watching like never before and our expectations for great, engaging content are higher than ever. Case in point: over half of YouTube watch time is now on mobile devices.³

As we expect more, consume more, and engage on mobile more, entertainment is due for a revolution. Here are my three predictions for how all these forces will come together and change entertainment for the better.

Entertainment will get up close and personal

Nothing beats that moment when a DJ reads the room, knows exactly how you're feeling and what you want to dance to, and gets the next song just right. Or that friend who knows you so well and always delivers spot-on book recommendations. On the flip side, how frustrating is it to be in the mood for a movie, but can't find one that would hit the spot as you aimlessly search through the catalogue?

Entertainment of the future will likely do away with endless scrolling and hunting for what we want. It'll function much more like your best friend or that next-level DJ, recommending the perfect thing at the perfect time.

And it all starts with mobile.

I believe strongly in the future of 360-degree videos and VR because they're the first types of video that give you a better experience on mobile than you can have on your desktop or on your TV.

Imagine this: you walk into a gym and your phone not only knows that you're in a gym, it knows what time of day it is and what music you love when you're exercising. Your smartphone (or wearable) knows the pace of your running—and as if by magic, it recommends the perfect high-energy tune to keep you going.

Google's investment in machine learning to get us to this future is [Google Assistant](#). It's a conversational assistant that understands your context and helps you get things done in the real world. It's right in line with what I see for the future of entertainment: the right piece of content, delivered to the right person, at the right time, and in the right format.

Machine learning will help develop smarter recommendations, eventually being able to anticipate moods and delight users the world over.

The lines between entertainment and reality will blur

Next, I think entertainment will feel more like it's in the real world and less like something we sit and consume through a screen. We'll walk into the action, be part of the theatre, and create simultaneously. You may one day be able to have your favourite band come and perform in your home for your birthday. Or explore a stage from behind the scenes while the actors are performing.

At Google, we started simple, with [Cardboard](#). For a small cost, anyone can have access to a completely immersive VR experience that works with any smartphone. Over 50M Cardboard-enabled apps have launched since we first rolled it out two years ago. Cardboard kickstarted the ecosystem and since then, we've been working on things that are more immersive, comfortable, and [richly interactive](#). [Daydream](#), which will be out later this year, is built to offer a high-quality, mobile virtual reality.

I believe strongly in the future of 360-degree videos and VR because they're the first types of video that give you a better experience on mobile than you can have on your desktop or on your TV. We know mobile video

is exploding, so formats that lend themselves to [mobile storytelling](#) will grow along with them.

Augmented reality (AR) is helping blur the line between entertainment and reality even further. [Tango](#) is a new technology that gives your phone the ability to see virtual objects displayed over your real-world surroundings. I can't wait to do things like see furniture in my living room before I buy it or watch my kids learn about animals by bringing them to life in the living room.



[Tango: See more with a new kind of phone](#)

Thanks in large part to mobile, VR and AR will be truly democratic. Right now anyone can watch 360-degree videos on YouTube, and soon anyone with a smartphone will be able to watch any video on YouTube with Cardboard. VR and AR are no longer for those with huge disposal incomes, making them primed for growth.

Education will be kicked up a notch

Education and entertainment are also coming together in the best possible way. Kids learn as they play—and as we understand more about education and what works, mobile video and VR and AR will lead the way.

The classroom of the future will be inherently mobile, interactive, and personal.

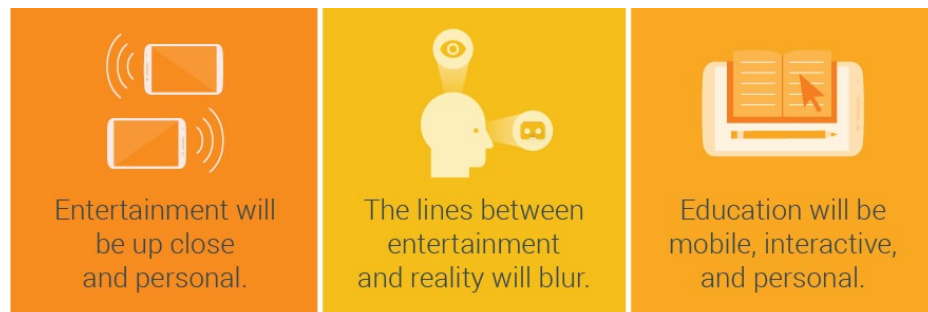
Salmon Khan is a pioneer in online education. As a hedge fund analyst in Boston, he started tutoring his cousins in New Orleans. His cousins went nuts over his videos, and the word spread. Eventually Khan left his job to start [Khan Academy](#), a YouTube channel where millions come to learn and unlock their potential.

Add VR to this kind of success, and that's the future I'm looking at. Imagine students not having to learn about ancient Rome just through lines in a textbook but actually being able to walk around an ancient Roman marketplace virtually, guided by their teacher.

On top of all this, when you think about what can be explored with Google Maps, [Street View](#), and the [Cultural Institute](#) (home to art galleries and famous monuments), we're looking at a world where anybody anywhere can learn anything.

The [classroom of the future](#) will be inherently mobile, interactive, and personal.

Predictions for the future:



The show will go on—and we'll all be in it

I don't know about you, but this peek into the future has me very excited. As machines get better at understanding our contexts and preferences, we'll have the perfect entertainment for our mood right at our fingertips. We'll have richer ways to experience entertainment as virtual reality

grows in leaps and bounds. And the “edutainment” revolution will stretch our capacity and ability to learn.

I'm looking forward to seeing how developers and creators will use these technologies to entertain us in the years to come.

Sources

- 1 Nielsen, “Australian Connected Consumer Report,” 2016.
- 2 Nielsen, “Digital Ratings Monthly,” Australia, July 2016.
- 3 YouTube internal data, Australia, June 2016.