

## **Virtual Reality based case studies –Strategic management never felt so real...**

Ithai Stern- INSEAD, Niron Hashai- The Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya

Over the last 60 years, one of the major ways of teaching strategic management was through written case studies. This approach, which was pioneered and led by Harvard Business School is still dominating in most leading business schools around the world. The main idea behind the case study approach was to put students in real life situations where, typically, they read about one or several protagonists who share their strategic dilemmas with the students. Through a class discussion, students are exposed to relevant models and analytical tools to help them guide the protagonists to solve their dilemmas. Yet, more and more strategy lecturers are feeling discontent with standard written case studies. Written case studies have the inherent disadvantage of not being able to bring into the classroom subtle dilemmas. They cannot really convey tension or other feelings in human exchange. It is also unclear how many students actually read case studies before classes, and how engaged they become with them.

With the advancement of virtual reality (VR) technologies most of these issues can be resolved. VR case studies do not require much preparation on the students' part and provide a truly experiential and immersive way of "getting into" real life situations and solving strategic dilemmas. VR technologies can elicit in participants the illusion of being present in a simulated reality, experiencing environments, and social interactions as if they were real. The key to understanding the essence of the technology is rooted in the role that sensorimotor processing and body-centered interaction play in this technology. VR head-mounted-display devices track head movement in six dimensions and apply this information to correspond with the visual rendition of an environment – resulting in the sense of presence in its participants.

We suggest that VR may revolutionize the way strategic management is currently taught. The ability to place participants in a controlled and repeatable environment that allows them to experience valid simulations of social interactions makes VR an unprecedented tool not only for teaching, but also for research. Thanks to the rapid adoption in the industry, after 50 years of research and limited deployment, VR is ready for mass adoption.

Furthermore, VR content will play an important role in remote learning: a major challenge in remote learning is to keep students motivated and engaged. VR content, which we have recently integrated smoothly into current remote learning practices, partially addresses these challenges. Indeed, in recent months we taught programs where participants experienced VR content at home. In the longer run, parts of the teaching could take place in a collaborative virtual space or by using telepresence.

In the past 2.5 years we have produced several VR case studies in INSEAD and IDC Herzliya. We taught thousands of students via VR cases studies (650 MBAs last week alone), both in the classroom and remotely. In the proposed session, we would like to share our experience in producing and delivering VR case studies, present 2D examples of VR cases that we produced and discuss their advantages. We would further like to share our vision as to the future of incorporating VR cases study as a standard way of teaching strategy in business schools.

For more information please watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LdpRjz8Zfg>