

H4 Consulting Brief

Augmented Reality

Publicly funded organisations tend to be large and complex, casting large and complex digital shadows. These shadows grow rapidly, as large workforces generate masses of new data every day and the sheer volume of data becomes a barrier to finding useful information. These looming digital shadows can be overwhelming for people trying to process and navigate this enormous, constantly expanding virtual reality, on top of their actual reality.

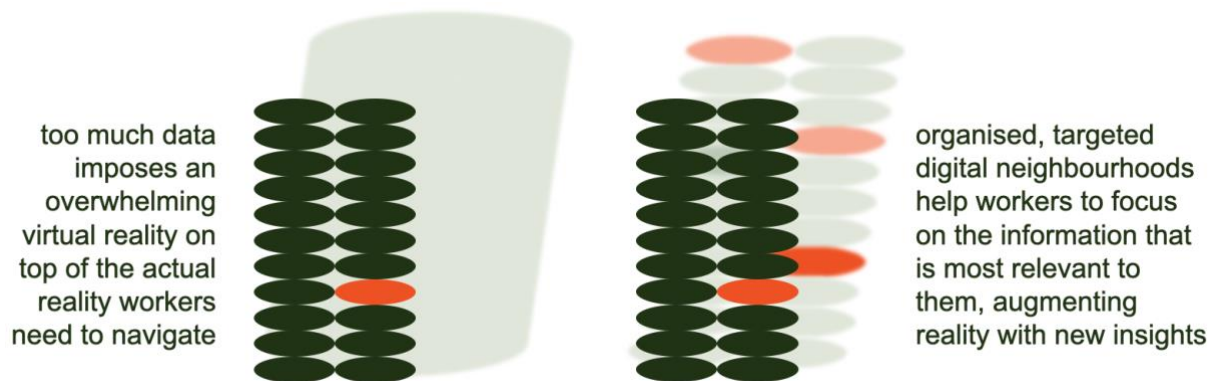
Technology projects in publicly funded organisations tend to prioritise digitising existing workflows over organising the data generated by these workflows to facilitate insight. This contributes to ever-expanding volumes of data being generated, and often retained.

Most people work in small, well-connected networks. The limitations of traditional methods of local, physical record-keeping replicated with this human scale. The bureaucratic technologies that now seem hopelessly archaic made public administration at scale possible by augmenting human capacity with written records. Digitisation has given the same people, often in the same teams, access to unprecedented amounts of data from across whole organisations and beyond, including a great many irrelevant data points.

People often assume that access to more data must be better, but increasing the volume can quickly become overwhelming. Already busy people can end up wasting time wading through irrelevant information trying, and failing, to stay up to date with too much.

The noise and distraction of too much data also makes it harder to identify genuinely useful insights. Even the most theoretically useful information has no value to users if it is too hard to find, recognise, or apply.

Ready access to more data means more people working with unfamiliar data from outside their areas of expertise. People who are not well equipped to judge its value may use low quality, or irrelevant, data to inform poor decisions. Even good data can easily be misinterpreted by people who do not understand it.



Organising the vast universe of potentially available data and information into smaller, human-scale digital 'neighbourhoods' helps people to navigate the digital environment more quickly and intuitively. Sorting and presenting information in networks organised around common use cases can help people to find and use just the most relevant information and insights to improve their work, without feeling overwhelmed.

Narrower information pathways streamline searches by excluding irrelevant or low-value data and sources, just like a curated newsfeed that includes only topic-related stories from reputable information sources. Role and task-based visibility of all and only the most relevant details can inform better, faster decisions, and can even reduce the risk of human error.

Access to more data is only useful if people can find and interpret it efficiently and, even then, only up to the point where it becomes a distraction from their core work. Smaller neighbourhoods of related, relevant information are fast and easy to navigate, saving time and reducing the risk of misinterpretation. Organising and presenting relevant insights effectively can take some of the burden of searching and filtering information away from individuals, improving the speed and quality of decisions.

Extending the focus of technology projects beyond digitising more work to organising the data created by that work will help people, and organisations, to work better as well as faster. The looming shadow of virtual realities can be illuminated by augmented reality.

To find out more about how you can use this approach in your organisation, contact us: info@h4consulting.com.au
Find additional resources at www.h4consulting.com.au/resources