



Marcus Hotels & Resorts' flagship property, The Pfister in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is the first U.S. hotel to launch an augmented reality tour. The tour debuted in October for guests on smartphones, tablets and Google Glass wearables and works in conjunction with The Pfister's augmented reality app.

Participants are prompted on an interactive tour of the hotel's art collection. The experience provides a real-time, digital, full-motion tour with games, videos and other graphics.

"Anyone can sell rooms, but we are in the experience business, and augmented reality helps us add another element of discovery to the stay," explains Chris Anderson, senior vice president of sales, marketing and brand development at Marcus Hotels & Resorts. "If a guest has some sort of memorable takeaway, then we have done our job."

As augmented reality continues to gain popularity among marketers in the retail industry, Anderson believes it will become an essential tool for a brand to tell its story. "With the huge influx of Millennials in the marketplace and workplace, our definition of consumerism will be changed forever and force all hoteliers to communicate through technology," he says.

Anderson says in the first month of The Pfister's augmented reality tour, more guests viewed the hotel's art collection than in the entire fall travel season. The hotel also hopes to add additional pieces of The Pfister's art collection to the tour this year. "Eventually, this will be a very normal view of how people interact with their environment," Anderson adds.

