From chasing critters to chasing work projects: Our 9 to 5 futures may be tied to AR

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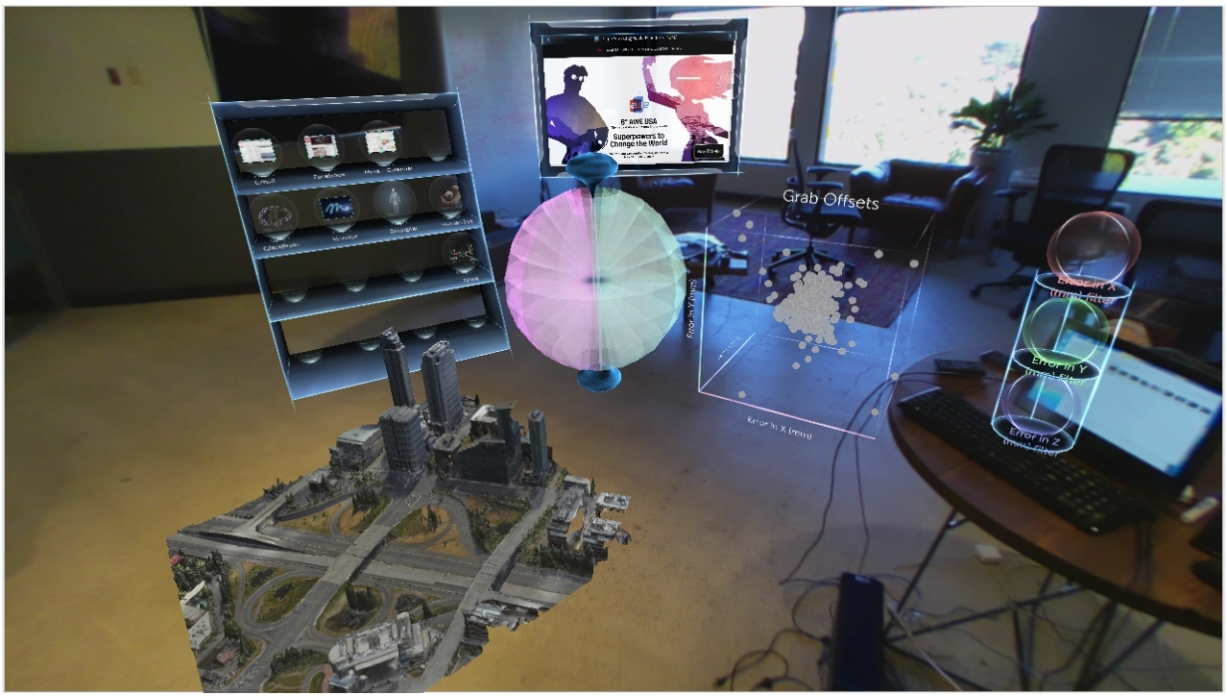

Meta CEO Meron Gribetz unveiled AR operating environment Meta Workspace at AWE 2017. This photo of Meta Workspace was captured through the Meta 2 headset. Credit: Meta

(Tech Xplore)—We've seen the many videos, showing gamers and just plain curious friends chilling at home with the AR experience, wearing

headsets and moving, kneeling, waving, stepping back and forth as they get immersed in what they see before them.

What about augmented reality out of the homes and into the offices? What would that be like?

Meta's CEO earlier this month took to the stage to introduce its new Meta Workspace, an operating environment for augmented reality. Workspace is after people who, literally, work.

"Our customers want to do more than chase digital critters and monsters: 80 percent of them are coming from industry, only 5 percent entertainment," Meron Gribetz stated.

So how would AR figure into a work day? Some examples are designing products in life-sized 3D, and viewing holographic multiple monitors to free traders and engineers from their screens.

Gribetz made the introductions at AWE 2017 (Augmented World Expo) and the company was named Best in Show among augmented reality nominees.

One of the features that he showed was a 'Reach out and grab' (Airgrab), interface that follows the design of an office environment, said *VRFocus*.

Gribetz demonstrated that, with the Airgrab feature, users get to grasp holograms with one or both hands and manipulate in the AR environment.

Tommy Palladino in *Next Reality* noted the presence of "shelves" for organization content. He also wrote how "Gribetz held out his smartphone and, using the Airgrab gesture, pulled content from the

device directly into the Meta Workspace.

The company blog had a picture of Meta CEO and founder Meron Gribetz taking a sticky note from the iPhone and placing it in the Meta Workspace.

Basically, the Meta concept revisits the real-world work setting with this AR interface.

As for underlying technology, Palladino wrote that the operating environment is based on the Spatial Interface Augmented Reality Design Guidelines that the company made available for download, as well as feedback from Meta 1 Developer Kit customers.

The company site talked about the guidelines. "For the past two years, Meta's research, neuroscience, and user experience (UX) design teams have been working on design guidelines for augmented reality (AR)." The guidelines range from learning how to see 3D space as a medium to figuring out how best to organize holographic files and tools in user environments.

As for user training, the company said its philosophy begins with the single idea: minimizing time and effort to understand an interface and take action. "Ultimately, every guideline is founded on this goal, with its logical conclusion being the eventual arrival of a true, zero learning curve experience."

The brain is the gatekeeper; with "the world of spatial computing, the foundation of interface design is neuroscience."

The BBC's North American technology reporter Dave Lee had a go. The video shows him holding the headset, and he reaches and grabs from the shelf, pulls the image of brain out, and, with his saying oh wow, has a

hologram in front of him. And when he opens his first, he releases it! Then, he is told he can place his hand inside it and move it around. Then he places it on top of a structure, of his choice. He is told he can stick his head inside the brain. Another oh, wow.

What are we really talking about here? What are the components of this Workspace? Rachel Metz spelled it out in *MIT Technology Review*.

The software, Workspace, uses a series of shelves with icons as its desktop metaphor; you're meant to open applications by grabbing them from a shelf with your hand, she said. The software that was unveiled works with the Meta 2 headset, "which is shipping to some early developers and is planned to be generally available this summer."

According to a company description, the Meta 2 development kit enables creating holographic apps and experiences. The headset displays holograms and digital content, comes with a software development kit (SDK) built on top of Unity and includes the Workspace AR operating environment based on their AR design guidelines. The price appearing on the page is $949.

The Meta 2 DK Includes the headset, Workspace; SDK to build and share apps and experiences.

In December, Meta began shipping to select individual and enterprise developers the Meta 2 Development Kit. "The company anticipates mass shipping its product in summer 2017."

More information: www.businesswire.com/news/home … Augmented-World-Expo