

BOXX Advantage: Support, Warranty, and Expertise

Helping Visrez take their services to the next dimension.



Visrez, a digital marketing agency based in Dublin, Ireland, specializes in the travel & tourism industries, building apps and providing digital marketing services on behalf of clients ranging from small businesses to multi-national brands. Founded in 2005, the agency works with over one hundred clients across Europe. To give us a take on their BOXX experience, Visrez director Nicky Morrogh recently spoke with BOXX senior copywriter and video producer John Vondrak.

1. Which BOXX system do you use?

3DBOXX 4050 XTREME.*

2. Within the travel and tourism industries, what types of projects is Visrez involved with?

We build iPad apps, websites, and run digital marketing campaigns on behalf of hotels, conference & event venues which generate millions in direct annual revenue for our clients.

I'd prefer not to mention names, but you can find case studies on our website which feature client details.

One of the areas we felt was traditionally overlooked was adequate floor plans for hotels, venues, and conference centre clients. These plans were usually one dimensional, along with a capacity table saved as a PDF for download on a clients' site. In 2011, we began

to experiment with 3D floor plans and photorealistic room renders by taking client floor plans and photographs and creating 3D room models and interactive capacity charts. The feedback from our early efforts was positive, so we soon began offering it as a service to other clients. Within a few months, we were experimenting with 3D animation—using a floor plan and photographs in order to create a video walkthrough.

3. Take us through your creative process, i.e., the steps involved in a typical project.

After we receive images and plans, we create a 3D model of the room, matching it in terms of texturing, lighting, furniture and fittings. When we're happy with our sample render, we submit it to the client for feedback. Once they give us the green light, we set up the animation render and then handle the post-production in Adobe® After Effects® to finish out the project.

4. What are some of the major challenges involved in this process?

The biggest challenge for us is producing high quality, photorealistic 3D content at an affordable price. Right now, for the majority of our clients, 3D is considered a “nice to have” option rather than a “must have,” so we pitch our costs at a level which makes them attractive for clients but still works for us.

5. You obviously consider 3D floor plans a “must have” option. If I were one of your clients, tell me why I need 3D rendered images and animation—what are the benefits?

We are not selling the 3D on its own—it is delivered within a custom built iPad sales app for the client. The most effective method of selling such a product is to allow the client to see it for themselves, download an app, and play around with it. This moves the process along quicker than any other sales tactic. No one likes to be sold anymore, so you have to let people discover your product for themselves and then they get in contact.

Traditionally, I think the cost of 3D was too high for consideration in an annual marketing budget, but as these costs come down and the quality improves, it starts to make sense. Anyone who uses one of our apps or sees a 3D video online says, “Wow, these are great! We love them, but I bet they cost a fortune.” We’ve heard this many times and have learned that the more expensive we quote, the longer it takes for a decision—increasing the chances of it not going ahead. Selling online makes it even harder because inquiries come and go much faster since you are not meeting prospects face to face. However, there is no doubt that in a few years, clients will be comfortable with ordering such a service online.

6. Describe your production workflow and the software applications you rely on.

To produce a floor plan or animation, we use Autodesk® 3ds Max®, and V-Ray® render. Here the BOXX workstation is central to our workflow. We also use Adobe® Photoshop® or After Effects, Creative Suite for video. Once we are happy with the final image, it goes to the client for feedback. Once they’re happy, it gets

integrated into their preferred format, whether it be an app or a website.

7. You mentioned your BOXX workstation. Prior to this system, what type of workstation were you using?

Before BOXX, our system (and we still use it as second PC) was an Intel® Core™ i7 first generation 920-based workstation that we built, buying the parts separately and assembling it ourselves.

8. So how did you become aware of BOXX?

A little bit of research—spoke to some contacts in the industry. Most of them said that if we need a quality render workstation with a good balance between render power and price, we needed to consider BOXX. We looked at all the main hardware makers, but felt we needed something more specialized.

9. And why did you go with BOXX, instead of building another DIY workstation?

We felt that our time would be better spent getting our modeling skills up to scratch rather than spending time building machines. We chose BOXX because of the support and warranty. (BOXX sales consultant) Rich Petit was extremely helpful. Our call wasn’t transferred offshore to a call center and we liked the fact that we were immediately speaking to someone who knew more about 3D than we did. It is nice to know you have that back-up when you are getting into a new area.

10. Describe the experience of working on your BOXX system.

The 3DBOXX XTREME provides us more speed and flexibility within our workflow. We outsourced our first couple of test animations to a render farm in China. It’s something we would not recommend for commercial projects, but as a way of getting started, it worked. Once we got our first order, we knew we had to invest in our own in house rendering capability or there was no way the project would be finished. Having our own in house rendering capability has allowed us to constantly experiment, improve, and tweak our projects. We can agree deadlines and make multiple changes and revisions without any additional costs.



11. Discuss the future of your work and how you see BOXX as being part of that future.

We see great opportunities for using 3D in the production of images and videos for marketing campaigns. For example, the planning and costs involved in setting up a large venue for a photo shoot are significant in terms of staffing and photography costs. By creating video and image assets digitally, we are streamlining this process and locations are not an issue. We can provide the same services to clients globally without the need to travel to each destination. In the future, clients may order such a service online and we would like to be the ones providing it. As we continue to develop, our plan is to expand our 3D facility and there is no question we will stick with BOXX. As we expand our services, we are particularly interested in the renderPRO and render-BOXX solutions.

To learn more about 3DBOXX 4150 XTREME: <http://boxxtech.com/Products/3dboxx-4150-xtreme-workstation>

To learn more about BOXX rendering solutions visit: <http://boxxtech.com/simulation-rendering-solutions>

Editors note: The 3DBOXX 4050 XTREME referenced in this interview has now been replaced by the new 3DBOXX 4150 XTREME, a compact, liquid-cooled, workstation featuring overclocked fourth generation (Haswell) Intel® processor technology (4.3 GHz) and a new space-saving chassis design (32% smaller than the previous model 3DBOXX 4050 XT).

To learn more about Visrez: <http://www.visrez.com/>

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