CEF's Impact Media Report *by Maggie Stogner, Nicole Wackerly and Carlos Macher*

Synopsis & Goals: ***Internet of Elephants*** is composed of a range of digital apps, online experiences, and interactive products, designed to raise awareness and activate audiences about urgent wildlife conservation of species. These experiences include Unseen Empire, RunWild, Wildeverse, Satellite Stories, Safari Central, and Stories of the Wild. Each one engages audiences in the storytelling and makes participation a central part of the experience. Founder Gautam Shah goal is to create active experiences for animal lovers that further engage them in conservation efforts.

Case Study: Internet of Elephants

(2020) interactive experiences

Creative Design: Playing on the concept of Internet of Things, ***Internet of Elephants (IoE)*** brings an innovative approach to conservation interactive media. The team, led by founder Gautam Shah, focuses on factual, data-driven approaches to conceptualizing wildlife behaviors and the overall stories that prompt active involvement from the audience. Using GPS, acoustic data, camera tracking, and observation data, IoE immerses audiences in an intimate and factual wildlife experience.

Through an augmented reality experience, Run Wild activates audiences through a widespread, virtual competition that invites users to run against a virtual Snow Leopard. Runners track their performance with an Adidas fitness tracker, personalizing the collective experience. The Wildeverse app brings a life-size jungle to the user's smartphone with specialized characters such as Fio the Orangutan that personalize each experience. Users virtually explore Fio's world in Borneo and participate in an educational journey that builds empathy and activates audiences.

Collaborative Models: The ***Internet of Elephants*** team is an informal alliance of advisors and experts who contribute to the content analysis, design, and representation of diverse perspectives.

IoE has received key support from some two dozen organizations, institutions, and partners to formulate products that engage and activate audiences. These include Space for Giants (Kenya), Pro Carnívoros (Brazil), Borneo National Foundation (Indonesia/UK), Snow Leopard Trust (Kyrgyzstan, USA), and Tswalu Foundation (South Africa). These organizations contribute expertise that ensures the wildlife in IoE's product design is portrayed accurately.

Outreach Strategies: Internet of Elephants uses gaming platforms and storytelling to educate and engage audiences about wildlife conservation issues. According to IoE's founder and affective design researchers, the interactivity of gaming has the potential to immerse users more deeply in content and to lead to meaningful engagement. Interactive experiences can provide a successful approach to engaging new and younger audiences.

IoE interactive experiences engage users from many corners around the world, and each interactive experience attracts different demographics. As of October 2021, Safari Central has around 400,000 downloads, with about half of them coming from India. The Wildeverse app

has been downloaded by over 15,000 users and Unseen Empire by over 3,500 users, with a high percentage in the US and UK. In 2020, Run Wild reached 1.2 million users around the world with its emphasis on health and fitness, and is being used across 100+ countries, with the majority in Europe. It is expected to attract a similar size audience in 2021.

Measuring Success: The IoE team gathers a range of qualitative feedback from diverse audiences at checkpoints throughout their production process. This feedback allows them to enhance the IoE experience. Internet of Elephants participated in an academic study by Dr. Diogo Verissimo, examining how empathy for wildlife varied based on the audience engagement platform. It compared, for example, the outcomes of viewing a traditional, blue-chip BBC film versus spending one hour on Wildeverse. The results of this study are currently pending publication in an academic article in the journal People and Nature. So far, the Wildverse app has been downloaded by over 15,000 people around the world, with the highest percentage of users in the US and UK.

Contributing to the Impact Spiral: Internet of Elephants adds interactive experiences to wildlife conservation media tools. By engaging audiences through immersive activities, such as racing against a snow leopard or observing an orangutan like a scientist, IoE aims to educate and inspire people to take action to protect our ecosystems. Their strategy is aimed at empowering people to influence consumer markets, government regulation, and funding priorities - the three primary forces driving conservation outcomes.

Released: 2020
Website: https://www.internetofelephants.com
Length: Variable
Genre: Interactive Augmented-Reality Range of Experiences

The Team: Gautam Shah (founder, National Geographic Explorer), Prashant Trivedi (lead investor), Jake Manion (product development and creative direction), Rafael Mares (data scientist), Abhilash Krishan (growth market), Anne Miltenburg (brand strategy), and Chris Bell (Unity development)

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