

Street Sale as a Means of Market Research for Patented 3D-Art

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More than 10 years ago a new procedure for taking 3D-images had been invented [1]. On different conferences and workshops, where the patented procedure [DE19819992C2] had been presented more with a focus on technological applications, the audience showed a big interest for the 3D sample pictures [2]. In May 2003, after having sold first samples in the streets of Berlin, the author stopped all other marketing campaigns and developed his business as a street vendor. Street vending turned out to be a fascinating experience in its own, very different from work as an employee. The main vending location in Berlin (Oranienburger Str. 18) already made its way onto the cover page of a book on street sale, where it is interpreted as a micro-privatization of public space [3]. In the proposed paper the experience of about 350 days in the streets of Germany, Spain, Ireland and France is reported for the first time. For documentation many photos had been taken from the many different vending locations, supplemented by voice and video memos on mobile phone. A major point of the whole paper will be to analyze the interaction with the public at the point of sale, including customers and other people doing business in the street. Crucial for understanding what happens in front of his sales stand, the author judges two antagonistic forces: 1) A priori people try to avoid contact with the street vendor (repulsion). 2) Those who like the 3D-pictures presented will try to see them at a closer distance (attraction). These two forces together form a virtual street vendor/passers-by barrier which divides people in the street into those who try to pass the street vendor at a safe distance (majority) and those who come closer and who are really interested in the product presented (minority). In this sense the fact that people in general try to avoid contact with the street vendor helps to create optimum conditions for discussions with the customers, a fact in general not expected by people who never have worked in such a particular POS. In this paper, first criteria are given how to find a good vending location in urban space and how to optimize the product presentation. Second, an in depth analysis is given how people from different countries and cultures react in the street. This is reflected by a markedly different significance of the author's working languages for the whole sales process (German, English, French [low], Russian, Spanish [high]). Some findings still lack a definitive explanation as for example that well dressed Germans are in general better customers than casually dressed Germans, whereas the opposite applies to Spaniards. The empirical material on informal street vending will on some occasions be supplemented by and compared to the experiences gained since 2006 on a formally organized street art market in Berlin (Kunstmarkt am Zeughaus).

[1] R. Schubert, Using a flatbed scanner as a stereoscopic near-field camera, IEEE Computer Graphics and Applications; March/April 2000; pp. 38-45

[2] R. Schubert, An example of the interaction of technology and creativity, poster session, EVA 2008 Moscow (Electronic Imaging & the Visual Arts), 1.-4. December 2008

[3] Noa K. Ha, "Informeller Straßenhandel in Berlin: Urbane Raumproduktion zwischen Störung und Attraktion" (Informal street vending in Berlin: Urban space production between perturbation and attraction), Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Berlin (October 2009, 136 pages)