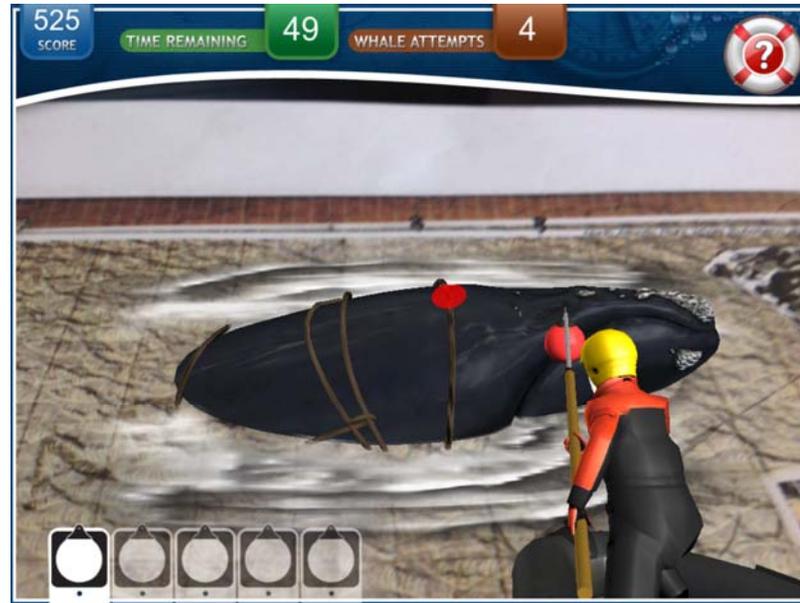


NORTH CAROLINA AQUARIUM AT FORT FISHER: “CALVIN & DELILAH” RIGHT WHALE QUEST AUGMENTED REALITY EXPERIENCE

The North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher was awarded a grant to help increase awareness of the Right Whale and how marine life issues, such as: global climate change, shipping, run-off waste and entrapment endanger the existence of the Right Whale. As there are only 450 Right Whales left in the world, the journey to alert and inform patrons is critical. To engage and intrigue their patrons in a new and innovative way, the Aquarium chose to tell this story through an Augmented Reality (AR) edu-tainment gaming experience.

Balance Studios was commissioned to design and develop a five-level AR game experience that immerses the visitor into the game-play by putting them in the position of an actual NOAA researcher where they are guided through completing important tasks that depict the challenges of the Right Whale, with the end goal of saving Calvin and Calvin's calf. From photo taking, to matching whale callosity patterns, to navigating ships and freeing an entangled whale, the visitor experiences what researchers and a Right Whale experience during the course of their lifetime.



Outside of creating this robust multi-dimensional gaming levels in AR space that includes scoring, animated cinematics, and a final test of the patron's knowledge, a very unique component of this AR experience is that the game begins with taking a picture of the patron and mapping their face on various areas throughout the gameplay: Researcher ID badge, onto the face of 3D researcher AVATARS, and in the closing scene where a 'photo' is taken of them with Calvin and her calf and emailed directly to the visitor.

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Services Included: Concept to Completion

- 3D Characters & Animation
- 3D Environments & Props
- Image Target Designs
- Game Development
- GUI Design
- Attract Video Design and Development
- App & Game Programming
- Sound Design
- Database and Custom Content Management System Development
- Help Screens & Video Design and Development
- App Icon/Loading Screen Design
- Exhibit & Cabinetry Design
- iPad Case & Arm Design
- Website Design and Development

In addition to the Augmented Reality experience, Balance designed and developed the unique AR kiosk cabinetry to match the exhibit look and feel. This included a custom iPad enclosure attached to fulcrum arm, WI-FI connectivity allowing for automated image target switch-outs to advance to the next game level, email capabilities, and patron data capture.

The exhibit opened with great success on Saturday March 2, 2013 during the aquarium's annual Whale of a Weekend Event.



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