



AUREA4RURAL: AUGMENTED REALITY FOR RURAL TOURISM

Fabio Lepore (UNIFI), Alessandro Orsini (UNIFI)

Aurea4rural is a EU project co-funded by the Erasmus programme to promote the use of augmented reality (AR) in rural tourism. It exploits a platform that brings together business associations and training institutions, with the aim of involving students and professionals in the dissemination of digital culture in this context. The aim is to enhance tourists' and visitors' experiences.

The project involves several participants. There are associations of enterprises representing the rural tourism sector and associations of entities operating in the digital learning sector. The consortium also includes a rural business school and two institutions specializing in augmented reality: an ICT developer and a higher education entity.

The project uses a rich web platform (reports and documents on digital tools and rural tourism), educational contents, and an e-learning section for online courses. There is also a mobile application with interactive AR-based content that can be updated and enriched by students and operators involved in the project.

The main added value of this system is the use of an integrated approach: promotion of digital technologies, and training for operators in rural tourism. Moreover, the project is oriented toward a specific group of people: the actors involved in rural tourism. This makes it a reference point for the provision of information for people who share the same interests. The information is very detailed and it allows users to learn the principles linking opportunities offered by digital technology (with particular attention to AR) to rural tourism.

Application scenario

Rural domain: promotion of rural tourism and education of operators

Digital technologies

Web platform, mobile app, augmented reality

Socio-economic impact

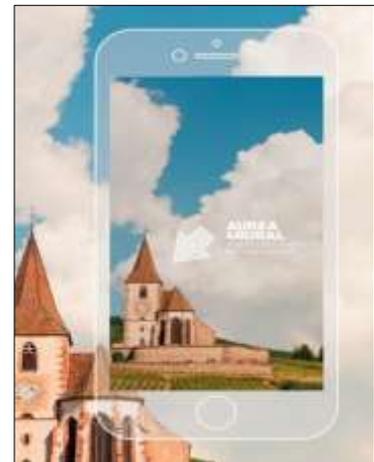
- Economic:
 - Individuals – responsibility, skills; learning;
 - Access – information, resources; Social capital- inclusion, participation, trust.
- Social:
 - Individuals – responsibility, skills; learning;
 - Access – information, resources; Social capital- inclusion, participation, trust.

More info: <http://www.aurea4rural.eu>



Purpose of the tool

This instrument aims at promoting the use of ICT in rural tourism. The main objective is to create innovative AR applications using a digital platform for rural tourism, and also to provide training content for people working in this sector (managers of public parks, hotels, restaurants, companies offering leisure activities). This project also aims at strengthening cooperation among enterprises, professional organizations, and institutions to promote vocational education and training for students and actors involved in this sector, with particular attention on digital skills.



Description of the tool

The tool is based on a rich web platform, where several reports and documents related to the use of technologies in rural tourism are hosted and open for consultation by everyone. There is also a virtual space that can be used by registered users to promote rural tourism and to inform tourists and visitors (operators and students can help to increase content by entering data and creating new points of interest); this information will be integrated into an AR application for smartphones. Users can see historical and cultural places, but also activities targeted for tourists. When users are close to points of interests (e.g. a fountain or a historical building), they can point the phone camera to them and read descriptions (e.g. when it was built, its history). Lots of educational resources are available to students and tour operators to learn how to use those digital tools. The learning procedure is based on real cases to understand how the tool can be used and what advantages AR can provide.

Another key instrument is an e-learning platform that allows students to follow courses with exercises and online videos, with the possibility to obtain certificates of attendance.

Areas of socio-economic impacts

Social	Individuals – responsibility, skills; learning; Access – information, resources; Social capital - inclusion, participation, trust.
Economic	Organizations – cooperation, Incomes, Marketing; Value chain – Trust; Markets – Stability.