



A buyer's guide for Shared VR

What to consider when you're selecting
a Shared VR solution for your business
(and a few things to avoid).





What you need to know about buying a Shared VR solution

One of the big changes we've seen in our 10+ year history is a giant leap in the number of companies that offer Shared VR immersive environments.

It's great to see our sector hotting-up. The surge of interest demonstrates that, yes, Shared VR is a valuable business tool.

And the added competition is great for everyone involved (not least because it keeps us on our toes). So, we would urge all of our prospective clients to take a long, hard look at what's available. We would also advise you to ask some tough questions.

And, in this paper, we offer three possible areas for discussion and due diligence.

Credentials

How well does the supplier know 360° (and can they prove it)?

As we found out early on in the Igloo story, 360° is a difficult thing to get right. We are ashamed to say that, early on, we made some naïve assumptions and stumbled into some embarrassing mistakes.

360° is a difficult thing to get right. And it took quite some time to perfect our approach.

And it took quite some time to perfect our approach. So, it's important for you to be aware of the complexities. And to be careful you don't become a painful "learning experience" for an enthusiastic but untested imitator.

5 Questions you MUST ask

How long have you been working in 360°?

Igloo's answer

We're the ultimate 360° enthusiasts. We've been working in the medium for 10+ years. And we've been delivering amazing 360° events since way before VR was even a thing.

Other providers

Most other providers are relative newcomers. We know of no one who's been doing this for as long as we have, with the consistency that we have.

How well qualified are you to advise on 360° content?

Igloo's answer

Over the years we've seen every type of VR and 360° content imaginable (some good, some bad, some unwatchable). So we know what makes for great content. We also know who makes it most consistently.

Other providers

Almost every creative you ever meet will tell you they have great ideas for 360° content. But few of them have any real experience in the medium. And, when they put their ideas into practice, their naïvety can become painfully apparent.

What level of control do you have over each of the components in the solution (including the software)?

Igloo's answer

We design and deliver every element (the structures, the screens, the projection rigs, the software, the servers, the lot). We know everything, we control everything, we're accountable for everything.

Other providers

Some specialise in structures. Others specialise in projections. Many are just bog standard production companies who want to play at 360° (and tend not to appreciate the complexities that come with it).

Do you have somewhere I can experience your spaces, try different configurations, and test my content?

Igloo's answer

Igloo has a growing global network of Shared VR centres, where you experience our technology first hand - and we actively encourage clients to come on down to test their content.

Other providers

Most of the other providers we know of tend to have a single location where there's sometimes a system for you to take a look at - but it's likely to be a long way from where you're based.

How many 360° events and installations have you delivered and in what locations?

Igloo's answer

We've actually stopped counting... Last time we worked it out it was way more than 500. And they were delivered on every continent worldwide (except for Antarctica, but that's somewhere we'd definitely be keen to go!).

Other providers

No other provider appears to have anywhere near as much experience. We don't know of anyone who has worked with so many brands. And most of the competitors we come across rarely venture outside their home market.



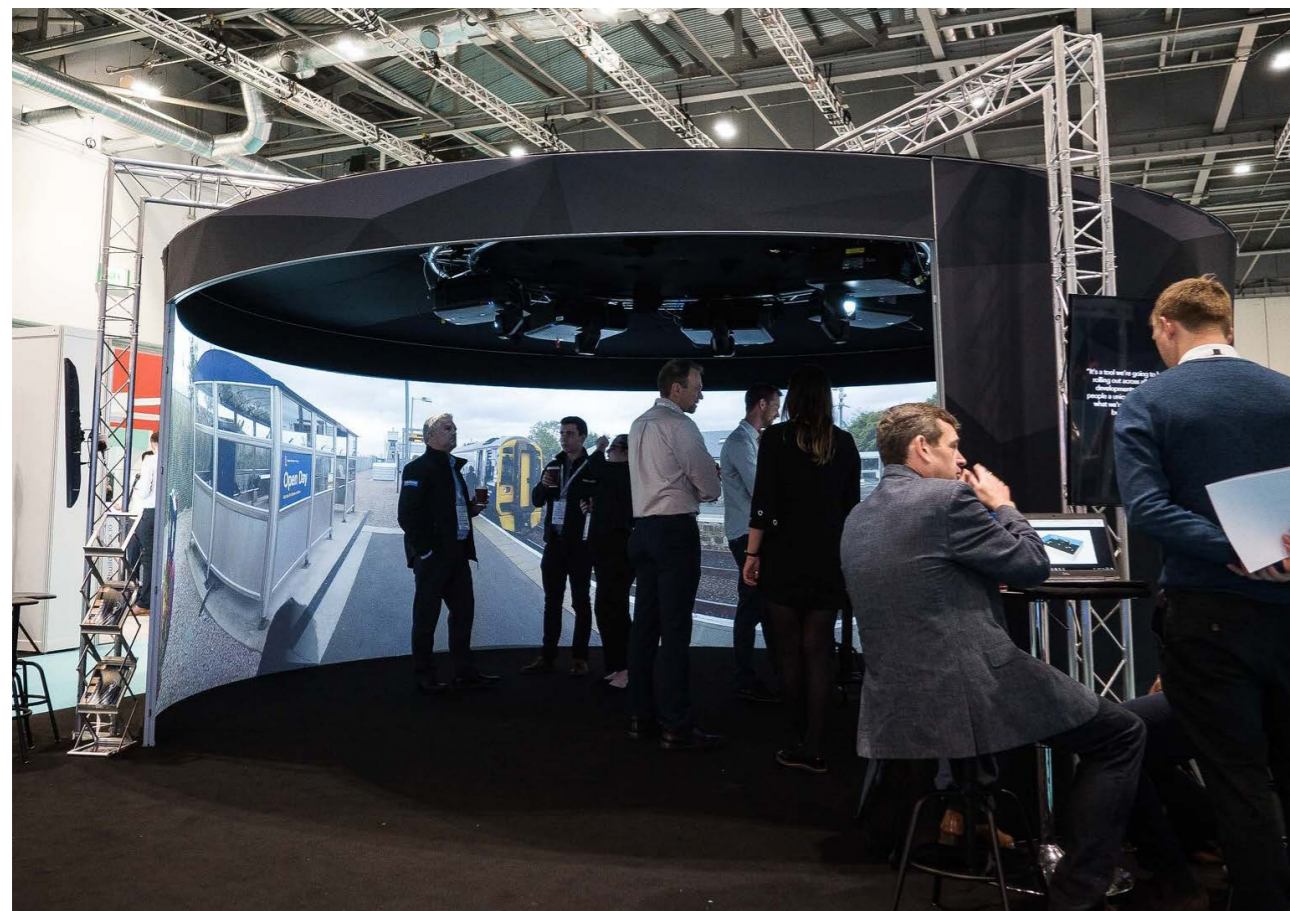
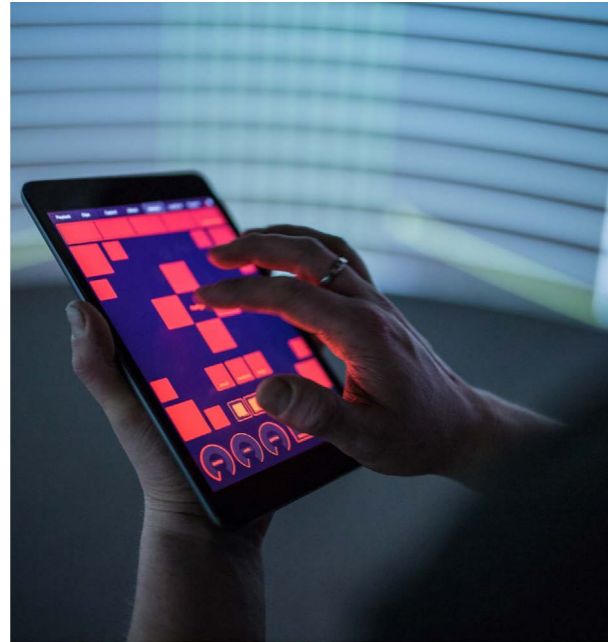
Capabilities

What can the supplier's technology do (and where are the gaps)?

An Igloo is about much more than the projection and the structure. It's also about the underlying technology. And the more you want your #SharedVR space to do, the more critical the question becomes.

The fact is, Igloo is a technology company at heart. We created our own layer-based visualisation system, which is flexible, scalable, and easy-to-operate. It's also a completely open, content-agnostic platform, which integrates, out-of-the box, with a wide range of industry standard design and visualisation tools, as well as game engine content. And, if ever we need to coax more functionality out of our systems, we have the technologists in-house to write the code.

So, it's worth being clear about what you want #SharedVR to achieve (or what you might ever want it to achieve). Then asking your supplier if their technology is up to the task.



Here's a checklist that might be useful:

IGLOO Warp & Blend

Our advanced geometry correction and edge-blending software, enabling any imagery to be projected across a seamless 360° horizon.

IGLOO Playback

Our 360° media player application, enabling you to play multimedia files (like videos, CGI and panoramas), enhance them with surround sound, and project them in 8K.

IGLOO Control

An intuitive, easy-to-learn user interface, enabling you to set-up, scale and schedule your 360° content, switch between different channels, and programme clip settings.

IGLOO Realtime

A set of software plug-ins and tools to integrate with a range of game engines (Unity and Unreal) and visualisation tools (like Solibri, Revit, Revizto and Navisworks).

IGLOO Remote

Control the Igloo system easily and remotely on any iOS or Android device, including consumer-grade phones and tablets, as well as pro-level equivalents.

IGLOO Web

Display any website in the Igloo, and also run web-based content creation tools, social media feeds, Google Slides presentations, 360° mapping systems (Esri, ArcGIS and Street View) project management tools, real-time data visualisation, Web GL applications, and so on.

IGLOO Capture

Display up to 12 separate channels of non-360° content from external sources (such as Powerpoint, PDFs, Skype calls, camera feeds etc.) via HDMI, NDI and RTMP - allowing you to make full use of your existing assets.

IGLOO Record

Record the full 360° output of the Igloo screen.

IGLOO Encode

Drag any 360° movie file onto the widget, and it will automatically encode the file with optimal Igloo-ready HAP settings.

IGLOO VR Spectator

Simultaneously play VR or 360° content both in headsets and Igloo Shared VR (enabling spectators and team members to see what's happening in the headset).

IGLOO Virtual

A VR application that allows users to run Igloo software in virtual reality headsets. This allows developers to test VR content and applications without even having access to the full Igloo set-up.

IGLOO 3D

Project any 3D-ready imagery stereoscopically and/or more fully integrate the Igloo system with 3D visualisation programs (requires active 3D glasses and projectors).

IGLOO 4D

Schedule triggers for multi-sensory DMX / MIDI hardware (such as fans, lights, aroma diffusers, heating and cooling devices, etc.) to enhance audiovisual experiences.

IGLOO Livestream

Stream 360° content in real-time, at full-resolution, across standard networks, without the need to pre-render and upload

IGLOO Edit

Use your 360° screen as a VR editing suite by displaying your composition preview in realtime from a range of editing programs (including Adobe After Effects and Premiere).

IGLOO Interact

Enable audiences and team members to interact with your 360° content by integrating gesture control systems, head tracking, and touch tables.

An Igloo is about much more than the projection and the structure. It's also about the underlying technology.

Credibility

How mature is the supplier's business (and will they be with you for the long-term)?

The Igloo story may have started on the festival circuit. Our company may have been founded by a group of technically-minded dance music enthusiasts, who wanted to create the ultimate party venue. But we soon attracted the attention of a pair of technology entrepreneurs, who provided seed investment and business direction. And, with our first tranche of venture capital funding, we had no option but to professionalise the business.

We now work with many of the world's biggest brands, who have high expectations of their suppliers. We are a profitable, cash-generative business with a strong leadership team and global growth ambitions. And we have a clear idea of what differentiates us as a business - and why it matters.

So, it's maybe worth quizzing your supplier on how robust their business is, what sets them apart, and how they see their future. To get you thinking, here are six things we believe set us well ahead of the pack:

We are a profitable, cash-generative business with a strong leadership team and global growth ambitions.

1. Frugal technology credentials

Igloo started as a low-cost alternative to incumbent providers. We are therefore disrupting the existing simulation and visualisation markets. And finding ingenious cost-efficiencies continues to be an important part of the Igloo ethos.

2. Breadth and depth of the client list

Igloo has delivered hundreds of projects and installations for many of the world's biggest brands. No other provider appears to have so much experience across so many industry sectors.

3. Content agnostic platform

Igloo technology is specifically created to be compatible with any type of VR or 360° content and to integrate with all of the leading image generators and game engines. Several other providers have a vested interest in delivering a particular type of content.

4. An all-in-one solution

Igloo develops its own technology and also designs and develops its own structures (whether they be domes, cylinders or custom-spaces). By contrast, some other providers tend to specialise in either structures or projection, but not both.

5. Global footprint

As well as delivering projects worldwide, Igloo has an expanding global presence. So, unusually, we are able to support clients across multiple geographies and time zones.

6. Sector specialisms

Igloo works actively in several industry sectors, each of which has its own needs, technologies and tools. For, example, in architecture, engineering and construction (AEC), our technology integrates with the leading design and visualisation tools. Similarly, in the energy sector, it integrates with the leading simulation and training models.

A global network of Shared VR centres

Another Igloo asset is a global network of Shared VR centres - in London, New Jersey, Los Angeles, Toronto and at our HQ in Shropshire.

A first step in any of our conversations with a potential client is to invite them for a demo at a Shared VR centre. This way, you can get a first-hand feel for Shared VR and test your existing content.

Or you can hire them by the day - to host events, run collaborative teamwork sessions, or show your colleagues the potential for Shared VR.

We always want to help you get your content just right. So, at our Shared VR centres, you can meet our experts who want to share their knowledge and enthusiasm, and think about how Igloo technology could benefit your business. We can also help guide your creative teams,

or you can call on our in-house content specialists, or we can put you in touch with the right content partner to deliver your vision.

Because we're Igloo, we also have strong relationships with several technology leaders - from the worlds of projection, audio, VR and AR.

Often, when they're developing a new product, they send us a prototype for a test drive. So, when you come to visit us, you may well get a sneak preview of some innovative new technology - long before it becomes commercially available.



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There's no substitute for immersing yourself in a Shared VR centre - so you should always look for a supplier who gives you the opportunity to test your content.

For more information

Igloo Vision is the Shared VR company.

From bases in the UK, USA, Canada and Australia, we work with clients worldwide.

To find out more, visit us at
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