

## OBIAA 2023 AWARDS SUBMISSION

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<b>BIA/Organization:</b> Downtown Oakville BIA	<b>Time period:</b> Holiday 2021/2022
<b>Entry title:</b> DTO Augmented Reality Holiday Hunt	
<b>Project description:</b> <i>(two sentences; 50 words or less)</i>	
<p>Downtown Oakville’s NEW Augmented Reality Holiday experience is an innovative addition to the BIA’s overall Hometown Holiday campaign, complementing traditional components like a tree lighting and parade, while appealing to new digitally-minded audiences and a variety of the BIA’s target audience segments.</p>	



### NEED OR OPPORTUNITY

Downtown Oakville is a dynamic shopping and cultural district. It is recognized for its outstanding retail mix, professional services, and exceptional dining, and is rich in history and heritage. Home to over 400 business members, the Downtown BIA is responsible for the marketing and beautification of this historic business district. We are proud to be an inclusive, equal opportunity organisation both internally and in the activities we support, working to make the community a better place for all.

In the mist of another year of Covid-19 in 2021, the Downtown Oakville BIA worked to develop new and innovative ways to drive traffic to the core during the Holiday Season. The Augmented Reality Holiday experience was an innovative addition to the BIA’s overall *Hometown Holiday campaign*, complementing traditional components like a tree lighting and parade, while appealing to new digitally-minded audiences and a variety of the BIA’s target audience segments.

#### *Why Augmented Reality?*

It was new, it was different, and it appealed to several key target demographics. Downtown Oakville was one, if not the only community in Halton offering this type of Augmented experience free to the public. One of our BIAs Strategic goals is to drive innovation and this program delivered on bringing a NEW, engaging and interactive experience to our visitors and community.

The creative idea centers around the idea that Santa is supporting local this year! Explore the streets of Downtown Oakville on an Augmented Reality scavenger hunt to find Santa and his friends. Collect all 5 characters hiding at secret locations throughout Downtown for your chance to win \$1000 to spend Downtown. This unforgettable holiday experience is guaranteed fun for the whole family.

Each campaign character was created to showcase a selected retailer. (See creative Concepts in deck link below) Locations were chosen to drive foot traffic from one end of the street to the other, creating increased consumers to all the businesses along the way.

### AUDIENCE

Downtown Oakville’s Envirionics data shows that the Modern Suburbia target population – a key demographic for the area - rely on their ‘mobile phone for everything from banking to music’ and the Multicultural segment are known to accumulate multiple phones making a mobile activation ideal. Additionally, 4/5 of Downtown Oakville’s key visitor segments have a presence of children so it was also a family friendly activity.

### GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The Downtown Oakville BIA set a visionary goal to introduce new and modern experiences to attract and engage new visitors with the launch of the NEW Augmented Reality Holiday experience.

The 3 key objectives of the program included:

- 1) Increase traffic to downtown Oakville
- 2) Increase Marketing impressions
- 3) Increase the BIA email database by a min of 1000 new subscribers

### IMPLEMENTATION

The BIA team worked with a creative partner called Air Cards to help bring their new creative idea to life. The teams worked collaboratively at every step to bring the program to life. Our Board of Directors were very excited to support a new and innovative program.

#### How Downtown Oakville’s Augmented Holiday worked:

- Visitors scanned a QR code to begin a virtual scavenger hunt.
- They were directed to 5 locations across Downtown Oakville to find and catch Augmented Reality holiday characters. (Ensured that all areas (as located outdoors – were fully Accessible to the public)
- Once all characters had been collected the user’s phone directed them to enter their information to win a holiday shopping spree (i.e. \$1000) on the Downtown Oakville website. They were also given the opportunity to share their experience to their social accounts.
- AR and gamification are proven to enhance brand recognition and customer loyalty and drives foot traffic to the area.
- Links to the 'how the Experience works'
- [https://www.instagram.com/reel/ClzzqijraHO/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/reel/ClzzqijraHO/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

Overall gamification is important to the future of retail, and gave Downtown Oakville members/merchants an opportunity to test its merits and consider for future programs i.e., Virtual Try-on, 3D product visualization, social media filters etc. Not only was the experience innovative, but it also provided

### RESULTS

#### a. Increase in number of visitors

2022 Downtown Oakville traffic vs. 2021 (Envionics Mobile Data) demonstrated a significant increase of over 50% in traffic year-over-year.

	2021 Traffic	2022 Traffic	Total Increase	% Increase
November	434,307	663,606	229,299	52.80%
December	481,543	712,376	230,833	47.94%
<b>Total</b>	<b>915,850</b>	<b>1,375,982</b>	<b>460,132</b>	<b>50.24%</b>

In total, there were 19,615 interactions with the Augmented Reality Holiday experience. Of these, 88% came from out of town tracked through mobile analytics. Of these visitors, a majority came from Toronto and Mississauga. Downtown Oakville’s Augmented Reality Holiday experience benefitted hundreds of businesses in both direct sales as well as in exposure. While it’s difficult to quantify sales for so many businesses, the BIA has received positive

feedback from visitors that the experience drove them downtown, and from member businesses that explored ways to capitalize on the significant increase in foot traffic.

**b. Increase in marketing impressions**

Participants in the Augmented Reality Holiday were encouraged to share their experiences by posting to social and inviting friends.

Overall, year over year marketing impressions for the broader Hometown Holiday campaign, including web statistics and social media engagement, increased year-over year. Specific to the Augmented Reality Holiday experience, the launch reel received 4,878 views which is well above the 2.49% view average.

**c. Increase our BIA email database with min of 1000 new subscribers**

As this experience drove traffic to the website, the BIA was able to cookie visitors for future marketing efforts. They were also able to collect postal code data and over 1600 new email opt-in for its monthly newsletter.

## SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Launch Promotional Video - Shows interaction/Experience

[https://www.instagram.com/reel/CW9S1dgFurJ/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/reel/CW9S1dgFurJ/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

Experience Narrative - The presentation below demonstrates the strategic and creative process involved in the Character Development and Creative story

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Yn7a7SeaD964c9cRW1pN7PA-gN768SRhH0xKVHxj1u4/edit#slide=id.g161612e388e\\_0\\_28](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Yn7a7SeaD964c9cRW1pN7PA-gN768SRhH0xKVHxj1u4/edit#slide=id.g161612e388e_0_28)



**Special recognition (including media coverage) highlighting the innovative spirit of the experience**

Some samples of media coverage specifically of Downtown Oakville's Augmented Reality experience (vs. broader Hometown Holiday coverage):

<https://looklocal.ca/blog/2021/11/22/dt-oakvilles-augmented-reality-holiday-hunt/>

<https://luxuryoakville.com/things-to-do-in-oakville-for-the-holidays/>

The Downtown Oakville BIA partnered with Visit Oakville to promote its innovative experience.

<https://visitoakville.com/events/the-augmented-reality-holiday-hunt-2/>

As a result of this partnership, Visit Oakville was able to create content including promotion on the Driftscape app.

<https://mobile.twitter.com/DriftscapeApp/status/1476222439159910406>

**CONCLUSION**

In closing, Downtown Oakville's innovative addition of an Augmented Reality Holiday experience attracted visitors to Oakville, increased exposure of hundreds of businesses, and drove foot traffic in Oakville's primary visitor area. It also built a foundation for future innovation via data collection, and by providing businesses with an experience they can leverage.