



## VIRTUAL REALITY EXHIBITION EXPERIENCE IN THE ARNSBERG FOREST

“Through this 360-degree panoramic tour, the LIZ is leading by example in the Soest district when it comes to ensuring everyone can take part.”

Jörn Peters from the Regional Development department of the Soest district

Under the slogan “Feel, hear, see”, the LIZ (short for Landschaftsinformationszentrum) is inviting visitors to come and discover its exhibition with all their senses. This information center is located in the Arnsberg Forest Nature Park and, in addition to its six full-time members of staff, is also supported by a lively team of volunteers who have banded together to form a non-profit supporting association. The LIZ has been welcoming visitors ever since 1994. Today, it houses a permanent exhibition covering various aspects of the nature park and the surrounding water, forest, and landscape – all spread across three floors. In 2019, the center decided to virtually open its doors as part of the Smart4You inclusion project, the aim being to make the exhibition accessible to anyone interested. In your of the information center.

### AT A GLANCE

- 
“Digitalization for All” is making the Soest district more accessible
- 
The LIZ has established a virtual tour experience
- 
Fully implemented by Deutsche Telekom



LIFE IS FOR SHARING.

# REFERENZ IM DETAIL

## CHALLENGE

The LIZ is no stranger to accessibility. The team wants to open up its interactive exhibition to anyone interested. However, the layout of the historic venue, which is a listed mill over 100 years old, makes it impossible to implement many ideas that would help make the exhibition more accessible. This is because, firstly, there is limited space inside the building, and, secondly, the lack of facilities such as an elevator would impede certain guests from accessing the top two floors. Andreas Rathöfer from the Soest district recognized that digital solutions could help overcome these hurdles as part of the “Digitalization for All” project. The LIZ could follow in the footsteps of major international museums and create a virtual depiction of its exhibition – and not just through picture galleries and audio commentaries, but also in the form of a virtual reality tour. The aim here would be to give anyone interested the possibility to check out the museum at any time – without any unnecessary barriers or complications. The LIZ saw this as a compelling opportunity to pursue the prospect of offering a digital exhibition.

However, implementing a 360-degree panoramic tour requires specialized partners who are experts in virtual reality scenarios. The LIZ decided to work with Deutsche Telekom to showcase the building, exhibition, and existing accompanying content in a coherent all-in-one concept on the internet.

## SOLUTION

The experts at Deutsche Telekom recorded 360-degree images of the exhibition and its surroundings. The resulting data sets were subsequently processed via building information modeling and used to create a digital twin of the exhibition in the form of a virtual tour with multiple stations. This was then enhanced with audio commentaries, ultimately enabling visitors to wander through the museum on their own and even enjoy a virtual hot air balloon ride over the Arnsberg Forest.

Deutsche Telekom hosts the finished panoramic images in a cloud environment in its data center, while its partner VRdirect operates the engine for the VR tour on its own cloud server. In other words, the finished tour is provided using a hybrid cloud approach. The LIZ can access its virtual exhibition using its own login credentials and then offer the digital VR service directly on its website without having to set up any additional internal infrastructures.

“By implementing a virtual version of the LIZ, we have shown that our indoor navigation system can be used effortlessly, even for areas far removed from shopping malls and train stations. In just two months, we were able to take an initial idea for an innovative digital solution and turn it into a fully functioning finished product,” says Levent Dogan, Sales Manager at Deutsche Telekom Business Solutions.

## CUSTOMER BENEFITS

Bernhard Schladör, chairman of the LIZ, is thrilled with the virtual reality tour – and sees the particular advantages it can bring during the coronavirus crisis and the associated restrictions: “This way, our guests can still enjoy our interactive exhibition virtually despite temporary closures, which will in turn make them eager to visit in person at a later date. It’s truly a wonderful project.” Andreas Rathöfer, project manager for the Soest district, coordinated the collaboration between the LIZ, the district, and Deutsche Telekom. He adds: “We took an accessible approach when developing the digital solution for the project. Through this 360-degree panoramic tour, the LIZ is leading by example when it comes to ensuring everyone can take part.” By launching the virtual reality tour of the exhibition, the LIZ is providing a service that was previously only available to large museums such as the Deutsches Museum, the British Museum, or the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.

This digital solution now opens up the exhibition to a much broader spectrum of visitors via the internet and is raising the profile of the institution significantly, which can be seen in the increasing number of people visiting the center’s website. Are the exhibition organizers afraid this digital offering will draw attention away from the “real” museum? “Not at all,” says LIZ chairman Bernhard Schladör, “we can transfer the visual and aural aspects of our motto into the digital world very easily, but the tactile elements of the exhibition can only be experienced in person. The same goes for all the additional information and the ability to interact with the exhibits.” The LIZ team is now considering the next step, namely how to connect the virtual and physical worlds of the exhibition. Introducing VR headsets, for example, would enable wheelchair users to “visit” the upper floors of the center from within the actual building. In short, by offering a virtual exhibition, the LIZ is making visitors hungry for more and is paving the way for the information center of the future.

### FURTHER ADVANTAGES:

- Exhibition’s profile raised
- Additional virtual visitors
- Exhibition can be accessed 24/7
- All-in-one solution from a single source
- The solution is hosted on a cloud server, making it easily scalable and accessible



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