

The Lion King brought to life using AR

Ackermans has teamed up with local gaming and animation studio Sea Monster and the Disney franchise to give South African shoppers a new way to experience *The Lion King* through the movie merchandise and a custom-developed app, launching on 25 July.



From store window displays, through to prints on a number of different garments, Ackermans shoppers will get to see fully-animated 3D scenes of their favourite characters coming to life in the real world using the downloadable app's augmented reality (AR) capabilities.

Activities range from scanning *The Lion King* pictures on merchandise and displays, through to printing a special colouring-in sheet which kids can scan to trigger a unique scene.

According to Sea Monster, direct merchandise scanning is common in Europe and the U.S. but has not been seen in South Africa until now.

"In-store experiences become less routine and more novel, which is great for consumers and retailers alike," says Sea Monster experience designer, Rodain Joubert.

"The built-in opportunities for capturing, posing and sharing unique moments also fit right in with the lifestyle of an increasingly tech-savvy and socially-driven population. Plus, from a marketing standpoint, the message is pushed

out on social media by consumer authenticity - a valuable commodity in a world where we're used to dealing with targeted messaging at every turn."

Sea Monster, Ackermans and Disney opted to use 3D and AR to bring *The Lion King* to life because of its relative accessibility.

"We needed to consider that the average South African shopper isn't necessarily carrying a high-end smartphone," Joubert says. "For many, the Ackermans Live app will be their first introduction to the exciting world of augmented reality, and we carefully selected images we could animate and bring to life, with this in mind."

For users who are data sensitive, the Ackermans Live app is light (less than 80MB) and is an entirely self-contained ecosystem, once downloaded. "The only additional costs users will need to consider is when they decide to share pics," Joubert adds.