

Technology

Users discover and experience this unique ghost town that is presently in a perpetual state of “arrested decay”, in a new and different way. They are immersed into Bodie via the three-dimensional imagery captured with an adapter-equipped digital camera and displayed via a stereoscopic visor that is worn by the users during their immersion into the environment. This allows the users to have a more realistic, spatial feel for Bodie. Not only do users get a better view of the architecture and surrounding area but they also get a better feel for its eerie atmosphere through the use of an appropriate soundtrack, which accompanies a corresponding audio track that describes each building, artifact or location along their journey.

Foley sounds are also added to the soundtrack and correspond to each particular area that a user is seeing as well as to the ground where the user is walking. For example, if a user walks into the store with a wooden floor, the echo of footsteps is heard. Likewise, if the user walks past a sawmill, the whirring sound of blades planing the lumber into boards is heard. The addition of lively conversation near a saloon, horses neighing and the "hustle and bustle" of everyday life enriches the user's experience. This not only give users a feel of how life actually was once in Bodie but it also creates an auditory spatial reference with which to associate, in case they decide to walk back through an area again. There is a continuous soundtrack in the background that reflects the current desolate mood of this town.

The use of video, rather than computer-generated recreation, creates a media rich, headache free 3-D experience that makes the user feel as though they are actually in Bodie!

The user's experience is enhanced with the use of Foley sounds, original musical tracks, historical data from the period and the inclusion of 3-D photographs of artifacts found inside of the buildings or in the surrounding area. The mining process is explored, as is the political structure. The shadows of the past enlighten users about the life and times in Bodie during its heyday in the late 19th century.

By weaving the technology into a narrative based upon Bodie's history and culture, this project tells users about an important time in Californian and American history as it maps one of the few true ghost towns in a three-dimensional environment.