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## COULD VR REPRESENTATIONS OF NEWS STORIES REPLACE TRADITIONAL FORMS OF NEWS MEDIA?

 PUBLISHING & MEDIA

**A new platform allows those consuming news to be inside the story through VR simulation.**

VR technology is increasingly being used for social good. We recently wrote about [this](#) development that puts those battling with drug dependency in high stimulus environments so they can learn coping mechanisms. We also covered [this](#) role playing game that uses VR technology to teach police and military officials about peacekeeping. Now, [Emblematic Group](#) uses VR simulation to put users in the middle of breaking news stories.

Launching soon, the platform is designed to help people understand what it feels like to face a natural or man-made disaster. The company's CEO, former journalist Nonny de la Peña has developed the idea as the next frontier of journalism, explaining "It wasn't until I started working with virtual reality that I started to see really intense reactions from people to news stories." For example, the platform's VR simulation of a real food line in which a man had a diabetic seizure because of lack of food is a more immediate way to communicate the problems facing society, and more effective than real-life immersive videos and images. Emblematic has already collaborated with media partners including The New York Times, Google, and Al Jazeera America. In 2016 the company was awarded a grant from the Knight Foundation to produce a series of VR documentaries in partnership with Frontline, and to collaborate on crafting and disseminating best practices for virtual reality journalism.

The company has already created a piece of 'immersive journalism' which tells the story of the day teenager Travyon Martin was shot and killed by a neighborhood watch volunteer. The piece was produced exclusively from real recordings of 911 calls, witness trial testimony and architectural drawings, with an emphasis on accuracy. Does this use of VR mark the beginning of a change in the way we consume news?

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Email: [info@emblematicgroup.com](mailto:info@emblematicgroup.com)

Website: [www.emblematicgroup.com/](http://www.emblematicgroup.com/)

Contact: [info@emblematicgroup.com](mailto:info@emblematicgroup.com)