

State-of-the-art 3D walkthrough allows wedding plans to proceed

A wedding venue had hi-tech help to survive lockdown allowing couples to “visit” the venue during the pandemic.

Newhall Estate in Carlops, Midlothian, is a popular choice for couples tying the knot, but it faced a catastrophic loss of business when it had to turn away visits as a result of lockdown.

State-of-the-art virtual [tours](#) built on Matterport technology have brought betrothed couples flocking back – after experts adapted technology normally used to sell houses.

The project is one of the first successes for newly-launched [360 Virtual Studios](#), which is rolling out a suite of new products and services for galleries, museums, events spaces and retailers – aimed at helping them recover from the pandemic.

Jak Kennedy, Director at Newhall Estate, branded the technology “a gamechanger” and insists it will not only help them survive the pandemic, but will be an ongoing benefit long after lockdown lifts.



Jak Kennedy

He added: “This technology has given couples the confidence to

book our venue without seeing it in person and has been a crucial element helping to keep us afloat during the pandemic. It allows us to make best use of time because staff and customers no longer have to make multiple visits to check the layouts and measurements as it is all available in exact detail at any time online.

“Our interactive floor plan has been a game changer for couples organising sleeping arrangements for the main house and has helped people plan for guests with specific requirements.

“We have had extremely positive feedback from couples who have booked their wedding with us stating the technology is brilliant and has given them a sense of confidence by having the ability to view all of the main rooms at their discretion.

“We were not getting bookings in without individuals visiting the venue before, but thanks to the virtual tour and interactive floor plan people have been happy enough to book without seeing the venue in person. It is an absolutely invaluable tool that we will continue to use.

“Indeed, it’s likely that we’ll rely on it even more – not less – when lockdown finally lifts and our wedding season get into its full glory again.”







[360 Virtual Studios](#) is the brainchild of award-winning entrepreneur Michelle Milnes who already runs a highly successful property marketing business.

She said: "I was approached by a range of different organisations during lockdown 2020, from the arts, tourism and hospitality sectors. That was a very powerful message that our cutting-edge technology can help businesses far beyond the

property market.

“It’s been a slow burn since 2014 building up awareness of what we can do. However, the pandemic has pulled the future forward and the public are now truly seeing the potential of the virtual tours in a way that might otherwise have taken five to 10 years to achieve.

“It is fantastic to hear how powerful this has been for Newhall Estate. We’ve proven beyond all doubt is that this technology does far more than showcasing properties for sale

“This is just the beginning. On the strength of what we have achieved here, we have now launched 360 Virtual Studios aimed specifically at galleries, exhibition spaces, venues and specialist retailers. The potential is incredible.”

The firm’s 3D virtual tours are built on state-of-the-art camera equipment and software, from Matterport. This allows them to create detailed virtualisations of any setting, where a virtual visitor can take a hyper-realistic, self-guided 3D tour.

The visitor can take the [tour](#) wherever they choose at their own pace, while examining a high resolution, true-to-life rendition of the layout, furniture, fixtures and even the views from windows. Unlike a video or photographs 3D tours can be viewed from all angles.

The Newhall Estate virtual tour allows customers to get an accurate representation of main rooms in the venue with the additional benefit of being able to take specific measurements, which is useful for planning the layout of an event. The Scottish baronial venue can accommodate 29 people, while three self-contained cottages offer rooms for 11 more.

In addition, interactive floorplans allow viewers to put the tours in context and orientate themselves around the venue. The tours themselves have the technology to show dimensions

and detail.

Parent company [Property Studios](#) has 32 staff, turnover close to £1m and national contracts with 30 estate agents and 12 major homebuilders. Typical virtual property tours rack up 1000 visits within a few days.