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MEViX

CASE STUDY

Le Petit Chef brings visual mapping to the restaurant table

Panasonic projectors help create new dining experiences with ‘Le Petit Chef'.

However, Belgian based company Skullmapping, run by Antoon Verbeeck and Filip Sterckx, have demonstrated that small scale visual mappings for a smaller group of people can be equally impressive.

'Le Petit Chef' tells the story of a small animated chef who is projected onto diners' plates and proceeds to 'cook' their food, on their plates in front of them.

A new way of thinking about visual mappings

Initially the mapping was centred round a main meal. The video of this proved such a success on YouTube (where the video had 4.3 million views in the first 10 months) and other social media, that Skullmapping added an entrée, a fish dish and came up with the second story, the bouillabaisse. Now the mapping consists of a full meal including an entrée, main course and dessert.

"We chose Panasonic because they had the specifications and resolution that we needed"

"The concept of 'Le Petit Chef' originated from a request from a client who wanted a table mapping for an event," Antoon Verbeek explains.

"Naturally, table mappings had been done before, but these were mostly graphic mappings. We found it interesting to do something with a little figure on the table that cooks your food. "

The making of a mini-mapping

For the projection of their mini-mapping, the Skullmapping team chose to use Panasonic PT-VZ570 LCD-projectors. These projectors offer a blend of high image quality, low total cost of ownership, flexible installation and collaborative functionality.

The projectors offer a contrast ratio of 10.000:1 with a brightness of 4,800 lumen. This meant that the team at Skullmapping could use a resolution of 1920 x 1200, which is vital in their productions.

In traditional projection mapping displays there is a distance between the spectator and the projection. However for this project it was important to have this high resolution because it is focused on miniature elements, with spectators extremely close to the screen. Without high resolution, images become pixilated, making the animation less readable.

“We chose Panasonic projectors because they are a highly regarded brand in AV and because they had the specifications and resolution that we needed,” Filip Sterckx, explains.

The skullmapping team create the animation by acting out the motion capture in a studio. It takes approximately four to five weeks to develop one video, from the development of the concept to when the video goes live online.

“People think that the 3D effect that you see in the movie is a hologram or a 3D projection. It’s actually a normal projection, but it is a specific optical illusion that we use. By using a long distorted image from the right point of view, you get a 3D effect or illusion.” continued Sterckx.

Rethinking the restaurant scene

Once ‘Le Petit Chef’ went viral on the internet, Skullmapping was contacted by various high end hotels and restaurants from across the world, ranging from Russia to Dubai, to see if it would be possible to licence the use of the animation or make custom made projections.

"..this concept could really bring visual mapping into the hospitality sector."

“Originally we created ‘Le Petit Chef’ for an event or two, to show people what was possible with mini-mappings,” Varbeek revealed. “When we saw the amount of restaurants and hotels that started calling us after the first video we realised that this concept could really bring visual mapping into the hospitality sector.”

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