

Museum of the Bible Adapts the Aetherlight Gaming Narrative Into Immersive Experience

Among the most highly anticipated offerings of the forthcoming Museum of the Bible, opening this November in Washington, D.C., is the use of Digital Guides designed to optimize the touring experience for guests of all ages and backgrounds. The tablet-based technology allows users to set their tour times, interests and rendezvous points as the system intelligently navigates visitors through the museum. For families and groups with children, the Digital Guide provides another opportunity: to engage and educate younger guests by “gamifying” the touring experience.

After an adult has personalized his or her itinerary for the day, the child’s tour is dynamically created based on the preferences set by the parent or chaperone and tailored to the age of each guest.

Catering to ages nine to 12, Museum of the Bible and New Zealand-based gaming studio Scarlet City have modified the studio’s proprietary “The Aetherlight” biblical allegory to create a completely unique gaming environment for Museum of the Bible.

“Partnering with Museum of the Bible has been an incredible experience. We believe understanding the Bible is essential, and our passion with The Aetherlight is to get kids immersed in it through a language children gravitate to—games,” shares Tim Cleary, Founding Worldbuilder at The Aetherlight. “To have the opportunity to work with a museum that inspires people of all ages to get excited about the history, narrative and

impact of the Bible is directly in line with our work. We are excited to see all of this become a reality when the museum opens this November in the U.S.”

“We’ve partnered with Scarlet City, for the innovative and amazing work they do in the area of gamification and educational storytelling for the digital generation,” says Jeff Schneider, vice president of interactive systems at Museum of the Bible. “Together, we’ve taken The Aetherlight, their biblically inspired narrative, and modified it to create a completely unique story for the museum. It’s at the forefront of museum technology, and we think it will deliver a truly unique experience for families and school-aged visitors.”

Museum of the Bible’s modified “The Aetherlight” narrative takes the story of the Bible and reimagines it as a steampunk, industrial allegory where a pervasive fog has overtaken the museum.

The story follows a time traveler who collects historical artifacts from different time periods. When he hears about Museum of the Bible, he opens a wormhole to visit the museum, but something goes wrong in the process: robots have also gotten through the wormhole, and they are spewing out a toxic fog that has caused the museum electronics to malfunction.

Players are paired with MBOT, a robot companion that assists in completing the various missions users encounter at each exhibit. Users can also collect other helper bots inspired by the museum galleries and can upgrade their capabilities along the way. Presented as an over-the-shoulder, 3-D environment, each player must gather clues found throughout the museum to complete missions and, ultimately, to drive out the fog and finish the game. {eoa}