Mobi-Scan

Bringing Your Mobile to Life

You've probably already seen a QR code - an example appears above with its square boxes. They're not actually new, and have been in use in manufacturing since 1994. However, it's only in the last two years that most of the public has seen them regularly, in magazines and on posters and on TV. QR codes are now also starting to appear at UK heritage sites, together with newer NFC tags and Augmented Reality.

6 Bignor Town and Bignor Roman Villa

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www.itsinconservation.co.uk

In the UK, 94% of people own a mobile phone and 58% have a more sophisticated smartphone or device, such as an iPhone, Android or Windows phone, iPad or tablet. Smartphones usually have a small built-in camera, enable you to browse the internet when you're out and about, and they allow you to download applications or 'Apps'.

What are QR codes and how do they work?

A QR code is a 2D barcode. When scanned, QR codes link to plain text, web pages, pictures, audio, videos, map locations, interactive games or anything you can access over the web.

Using QR codes at heritage sites or sports or entertainment events

What has been recognised more recently is that there's great potential in the use of QR codes to help people of all ages visiting heritage sites or events. An innovative research project on the use of QR codes has been completed as part of a Building Conservation MSc project at the Weald and Downland Museum. This research has established in detail exactly how QR codes can help provide interesting visitor information.

A QR code trial was run in the South Downs National Park, with the aim being to see how QR codes can enable visitors to gain better appreciation of surrounding buildings, heritage and nature, and to help people of all ages to understand our history and culture better- see the QR research results here.

Scanning QR codes on printed items or at an event

Download QR reader mobile app

Scan   Click Web Link   Go to Page

To scan most types of QR code you need just three things:

1. A phone or device with a camera you can point at the QR code
2. A small 'app' installed on your device to read the QR code
3. Access to the internet to go to the web page the code links to

If you haven't already got a QR code scanner app, then you can download one for free from any mobile application site such as Google Play or iTunes, which cater for almost all smartphones and device types.

Spot a Quick Response Code   Scan the code with a QR reader   Click the web link from the code

On your phone or device just select your QR code scanning app, which should start up and link with the built-in camera on your device. You'll usually see a square box in which you need to focus the QR code in front of you. As you get closer to the code, the QR reader should pick the code up.

Scanning a QR code takes you directly to a web page, or your device will ask you if you want to connect to the internet to go to the page. Scanning a legible QR code should usually take no more than 5 to 10 seconds. If you haven't time to read a web page from a QR code link you can save it and read it later at your leisure.

QR codes benefits for heritage sites and events

Compared to leaflets or large notice boards QR codes are cheap to create and easy to site, for example at entrances, on existing posts and way-markers, and can be easily stored and replaced if they get damaged.

Use your mobile - please scan the QR code to find out more

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The majority of large outdoor sites or events, such as a pop festival or the South Downs National Park, can't always offer a visitor point or access to a site expert throughout your visit. So, when you want more information about something you've discovered at a site or event, you can use your mobile to scan a nearby QR code quickly and easily, to obtain more details about a particular point of interest.

In fact, used cleverly, QR codes can act as a personal tour guide, providing background details at key points all around a visitor site, in a quick self-service way. These codes can be produced to almost any size, so they're easy to spot, from large codes that can be scanned from a distance at big events to small codes printed on a programme guide, leaflets, on signposts or way markers.

The mobile website pages can also be updated with each season, or changed for each entertainment event.

Other mobile scanning technologies

Near Field Communication (NFC) Tags are paper-thin and contain a pinhead sized chip that can be included in posters or built into signs, hang-tags, entry wristbands or even coasters! Placing an NFC enabled phone near an NFC Tag takes users straight to online content that can be updated with each season, or changed for each outdoor event.

Used cleverly, QR codes and NFC Tags act as a personal tour guide, giving details for event attendees at key points all around an event or site, in a quick self-service way.

If you'd like to know more go to **www.mobi-scan.co.uk** and visit the 'QR codes NFC and AR' website page.

See more about QR code uses at our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/Buildingconservation

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