

# Déjà Vu And Microsoft



While movie fans who trekked to the theater at Thanksgiving time may have had their imaginations tweaked in a sci-fi movie called *Déjà Vu*, truth be told there's something available in the real world that looks a little like the tool actor Denzel Washington used to travel back in time.

In the movie, Washington makes use of a super-secret device that provides street-level real-time views of events that happened in the past. His goal in the movie is to travel to the past to prevent a present-day catastrophe.

Visitors to [www.maps.live.com](http://www.maps.live.com) can gain a bit of a similar perspective (minus the real-time feature) that the movie hero experienced. What does this mean — if anything — to manufacturers' representatives? Well, we're not saying they'll be able to change past events, but with some careful planning they may be better prepared for their future sales calls.

Here's what one rep who turned us on to the site said: "I know they're just beginning with the development of this site, but already I see how I might be able to put it to use. For instance, just as some other travel tools do, this one allows you to plot your course from point 'A' to point 'B.' But taking it a step further, this one also provides three-dimensional views of streets, landmarks and buildings. As a result, I can not only plan my driving course in advance, I can get a picture of what a city block or even the façade of a building looks like. As a result, if I've never been to

Philadelphia before, I'll have a picture ahead of time of what I'm going to see on the way to an appointment. I can't help but think this will make my travel time in the field more efficient."

According to information from Microsoft, who developed and runs this site, "Virtual Earth 3D, is a new online mapping interface that is part of the Live Search offering, providing consumers with a three-dimensional experience to search, browse and explore the real world online. When people visit Live Search (<http://live.com>), type a query into the search box and click the 'Maps' tab, they get their search results in a map context that offers the option to explore the area using two-dimensional views (aerial and bird's-eye) or three-dimensional models with Virtual Earth 3D.

"This new technology compiles photographic images of cities and terrain to generate textured,

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This is a regular series of articles on technology that appears monthly in *Agency Sales*. If there are any subjects that you feel should be explored, or if you have any comments about this subject, please contact the Tech Talk editor at: [alaplante@MANAonline.org](mailto:alaplante@MANAonline.org).

photorealistic 3-D models with engineering-level accuracy. 'By helping people visualize information in far more useful and intuitive ways, Virtual Earth 3D takes search to an entirely new level,' said Bill Gates, chairman of Microsoft. 'The immersive 3-D experience provides a more powerful and engaging interface that delivers better experiences not only for consumers, but also for developers and advertisers.'

"Three-dimensional models are available initially for 15 U.S. cities: San Francisco, San Jose, Seattle, Boston, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Detroit, Phoenix, Houston, Baltimore, Atlanta, Denver, Dallas and Fort Worth.

"Terrain imagery in 3-D is available globally, and Microsoft expects to offer 3-D imagery in an ever-expanding set of cities. Other features provided by Live Search include access to real-time traffic information in select major U.S. cities, and access to business listings 'yellow pages' and people listings 'white pages' that allow consumers to easily find local information and act on it.

"The release of Virtual Earth 3D is a significant step toward creating a truly new dimension in search — not only in the look and feel of the experience, but in the way consumers and advertisers can be involved,' said Steve Berkowitz, senior vice president

of the Online Services Group at Microsoft. 'Local search is one of the fastest-growing categories online today, and adding features like 3-D will only help move the category further ahead and help Windows Live attract more customers and advertisers.'

"Advertisements will be available within the Virtual Earth 3D experience. Similar to billboards on the side of roads, virtual billboards will be available throughout Live Search in the 3-D view. The ads available within the Virtual Earth 3D experience are created using a combination of technologies from Virtual Earth, Massive, Inc. technology, and the advertising platform from Microsoft Digital Advertising Solutions. In addition, developers can use the Virtual Earth 3D application programming interface to build these search capabilities into their own applications and web sites."

### Simple Disposable E-Mail

An item by Rafe Needleman that appeared in the weekly ERA Southern California newsletter late last year offered a tip on handling your e-mail a little better.

"Getting tired of giving out your real e-mail address every time you want to register to use a new web site? What you want are disposable e-mail addresses.

There's a new system out there for this purpose that's unbelievably simple to use. It's called 2Prong.

"Say you're on some new site that's asking for your e-mail address so it can confirm your registration. Don't give it your personal e-mail address. Instead, open another browser window and go to [2Prong.com](http://2Prong.com). On the site there will be a throw-away e-mail address, like this: [d3ucjmnck4@andeezy.com](mailto:d3ucjmnck4@andeezy.com). That address is automatically placed in your clipboard. Do not close the window.

"Now go back to the other browser window, the one with the new site in it, and paste in your disposable e-mail address when asked. Back on 2Prong, the page will display your incoming e-mail as soon as it arrives — there's no in-box per se and no need to refresh the window. Once you've finished the confirmation, close the 2Prong window. The e-mail address expires.

### It's Easier to Use Than to Explain

2Prong's creator, Mark Percival, says he created the system partly to experiment with AJAX programming and partly because he wanted the features he built, so it's not clear that the site will stick around forever. But you can sponsor it (\$20 for 48 hours) if you want to ensure its survival. □

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