

Empowering Achievement through Experiential Digital Storytelling: A YVR Airport Case Study

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to take my students on field visits to Vancouver International Airport (YVR). During my most recent visit, I realized that the story I know about YVR Airport isn't widely known, and it deserves to be shared with a broader audience. This insight inspired me to prepare this abstract.

In an era of rapid globalization and evolving cultural expectations, traditional approaches to learning and engagement often fail to fully empower individuals to achieve meaningful outcomes. Experiential learning, which emphasizes learning through direct experience, offers a powerful avenue to foster active engagement, critical thinking, and practical application. This paper presents a case study of an innovative experiential learning initiative at Vancouver International Airport (YVR), where digital storytelling is used to enhance visitor understanding and engagement with the airport's interior design.

The project uses QR codes to create an area-based, interactive storytelling system that guides travelers through distinct zones of YVR, beginning with the iconic Totem Poles and extending to features such as forest-inspired pillars, water-ripple-patterned carpets, and culturally significant lighting installations. Each scanned code delivers curated multimedia content—including audio narration, text, animations, and optional AR visualizations—that communicates the cultural, architectural, and environmental stories behind the design elements.

From an educational perspective, this initiative exemplifies experiential learning by encouraging learners and travelers to actively explore, observe, and interpret their surroundings. Students participating in the project applied principles of information management, user experience design, and cultural research to create an engaging, user-centered digital platform. The approach demonstrates how experiential learning can bridge theoretical knowledge with real-world application, fostering skills such as project management, collaboration, and digital content creation.

The findings show that experiential digital storytelling not only enhances engagement and cultural awareness but also empowers learners to achieve measurable gains in understanding, creativity, and practical application. This case study underscores the potential of technology-enabled experiential practice as a pedagogical strategy adaptable to diverse learning environments, offering valuable insights for educators, designers, and organizational leaders navigating the challenges of a changing world.

Keywords: Experiential Learning, Digital Storytelling, Interactive Design, Cultural Engagement, Airport Experience, Technology-Enhanced Learning