

VRdirect

VRdirect User Guide

June 2021 | support@vrdirect.com

Chapter overview



A. Preparation

- Concept
- Storyboard
- 360° Production List
- 360° Camera Guide
- Tips for 360° Production

B. Production

- Specifications & Formats
- Alternative Options for 360° Material
- Editing 360° Content
- 2D Media & Assets

C. Virtual Reality Creation

- Overview of the VRdirect Studio
- Creation Area
 - Scenes
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 - Interactions & Time Events
 - Preview
- Publishing Area
 - Upload VR Project
 - Publish VR Project
- Distribution of the VR Project
 - Web Player
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 - VR Headset

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Preparation: Concept Creation



Develop a good concept for the VR project!

What is the VR project about?

- What is the presented use case? (Training, onboarding, marketing etc.)
- What should be achieved with the VR project? (More efficient processes, secure working conditions, ... etc.)

Determine the content of the VR Project

- What type of production is needed? (Professional? DIY?)
- Which media types should be used? (Video, images, 3D objects, ...?)
- How should the user be guided through the project? (Linear or open guidance?)
- What design style should it have? (Professional, suitable for children, corporate Cl, ... ?)

Definition of target group

- What is the target group? (Age range, VR-experienced, etc.)
- Which devices are mainly used for cconsumption? (Web, mobile, VR glass)
- How large is the audience? (Internal / external use? Marketing campaign?)

Selection of distribution channels

- VRdirect App (For mobile devices and VR devices)
- > Web Player (For the web browser on all devices, website integration?)

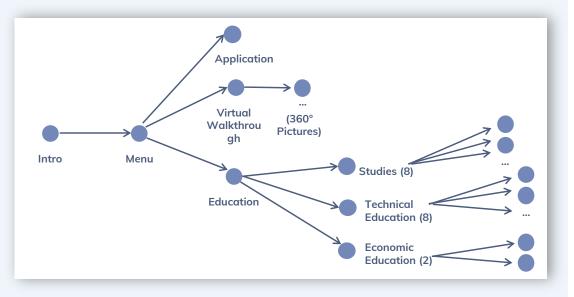


Figure 1: Example of project structure

Preparation: Concept & Storyboard Creation



Develop a good concept for the VR project!

- Structure of VR project (see figure 1)
 - Approximately how many scenes / chapters are needed?
 - How are these scenes connected to each other?
 - > Is (external) help needed to realize the project?
- Create a compelling story
 - What story should the VR project tell?
 - How can your ideas be transferred to Virtual Reality?
- Create a storyboard (see figure 2)
 - Which scenes must be included?
 - > The further the storyline is defined, the better.
- Develop a detailed timetable for the production (see figure 3)
 - When should production begin?
 - How long should the production take? (Consider pre- and post-production)
 - Is there enough time for feedback loops?



Figure 2: Example of storyboard

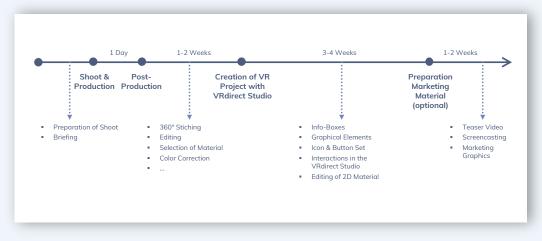


Figure 3: Example of timetable

Preparation: 360° Production List



Create a detailed production list for the project!

Purpose of a production list

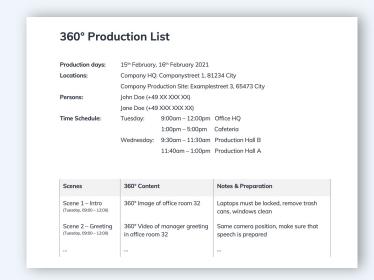
- The production list results from the concept & storyboard planning and helps the coordination of the upcoming 360° production (camera shoot).
- The parameters must be clarified in advance as detailed as possible - especially if several people are involved in the production.
- It is recommended to visit the locations on-site in advance

Components

- General information about course of action
- Overview of all scenes
- Required 360° content in the scene (images or videos)
- Required staff / persons (actors, production team, ...)
- > Required tools and equipment

Note: The tips apply to both - a professional production and a "do-it-yourself" production.

For virtual tours it is recommended to mark the stations / camera positions on a floor plan (see Fig. 5).



Download template here:



Figure 4: Template of a 360° production list



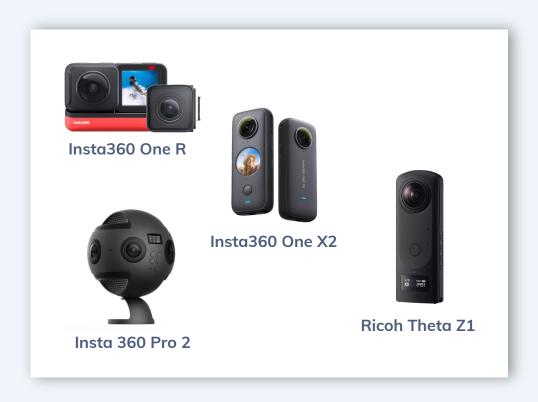
Figure 5: Position markers in floorplan

Preparation: 360° Camera Guide



What to look for in a 360° camera

- Special features in 360° cameras
 - > High 360° image and video resolution
 - Stabilization for moving images
 - Support for dark and night shots
 - Stitching options (automatic stitching or manual stitching?)
 - More lenses = higher quality of the image → but also more complicated handling
- Cameras for beginners
 - Insta360 One R (ca. 260 EUR)
 - Ricoh Theta V (ca. 350 EUR)
 - Insta360 One X2 (ca. 400 EUR)
- Advanced / professional cameras
 - Ricoh Theta Z1 (ca. 970 EUR)
 - GoPro Omni Rig (ca. 2500 EUR)
 - Insta 360 Pro 2 (c. 5000 EUR)



Preparation: Tips for taking 360° images and videos



General tips

- Use as much lighting as possible.
- Use a stable tripod to ensure the camera is centred and steady
- > Set the camera at a person's average eye level (approx. 1,60 meters)
- Do not position the camera too far or too close to the subject / object of attention
- Clear the space around the camera and make sure that people in the background are not visible in the scene (or staged on purpose)

360° Images

- Ensure that you also take "neutral" 360° photos (e.g. for a menu or intro scene)
- Rather take too many photos than too few

360° Videos

- When taking a 360° video it is recommended to also take a 360° image in the same camera position (in case the video appears laggy or has poor quality)
- Please consider that most 360° cameras take better quality images than videos
- Only record video sequences that are worth showing, as some viewers may lose interest over time
- Make sure the 360° video is sharp, to the point and rather short
- > Rather record too many videos than too few



Download info sheet here:

<u>Link</u>

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Production: Specifications and Formats



Use these specifications and formats when importing content into the VRdirect Studio!









360° images

- Projection type: Equiangular monoscopic or stereoscopic
- Quality: 8K (recommended) = 8000 x 4000px JPG or PNG

360° videos

- Projection type: Equiangular monoscopic or stereoscopic (side-by-side)
- Quality: 4K (recommended) = 4096 x 2048px MP4 H264 encoded, 30 fps, 12 mbps bitrate

2D images

- Format: JPG or PNG
- Stereo images: Stereoscopic side-by-side images, JPG or PNG
- Quality: HD (recommended) = 1920 x 1080px

2D videos

- Format: MP4 (transparency is not supported)
- Audio format: MP3 stereo mix
- Quality: HD (recommended) = 1920 x 1080px

Audio

- Format: MP3 stereo mix Recommended: 128 Kbps
- > 1.2.6 and 8 audio channels for AAC codec
- Spatial audio in TBE format (44.1 KHz)





Download specification sheet



Production: Alternative Options for 360° Material



Existing 360° content from Stockfootage libraries

- 360° images and 360° videos
 - Bigstock (<u>Link</u>)
 - Adobe Stock (<u>Link</u>)
 - Shutterstock (<u>Link</u>)
 - Pond5 (<u>Link</u>) royalty-free, also offers music
- 3D models
 - Turbosquid (<u>Link</u>)
 - Sketchfab (<u>Link</u>)
 - cgtrader (Link)

Note: When making use of a 3D model, the 360° content must be rendered in monoscopic format from the 3D model. This can be done in a 3D software (e.g. Blender, Cinema4D or Maya).



Production: Editing 360° Content



Edit 360° content for a professional touch!

Optional

Stitching within the 360° camera

- The so-called "stitching" combines the individual shots from the camera lenses to create a 360° image or video
- Most 360° cameras perform stitching automatically after an image or video has been captured
- ▶ Look for this feature when choosing a 360° camera
- Manual stitching can get very time-consuming and therefore only recommended for professionals

Tools for professional editing

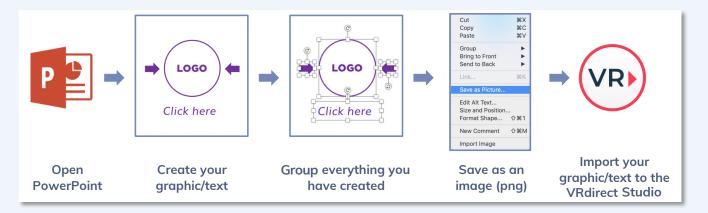
- Use of professional design software for adjustments to brightness, contrast, color correction, video cutting ... etc.
- Adobe Photoshop (<u>Link</u>)
- Adobe Premiere (<u>Link</u>)
- ➤ GIMP (<u>Link</u>)





Enriching the VR project with media and graphics

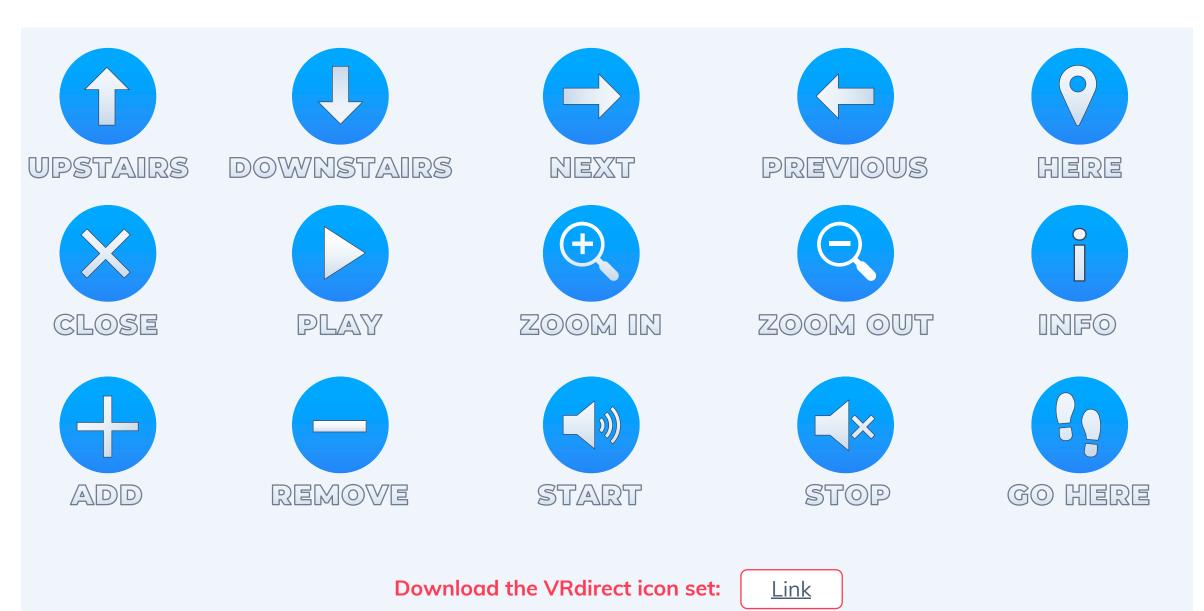
- Creation of graphics, buttons, icons, text boxes ...
 - The creation of such 2D assets can be done via common software (e.g. PowerPoint) or other graphical design programs
 - In PowerPoint, you can export the 2D assets as a PNG image and then add them to the VR project



Other possibilities

- Find buttons, images, icons and more on the internet (Flaticon, Pixabay, ...)
- Use the VRdirect icon library (see next slide)





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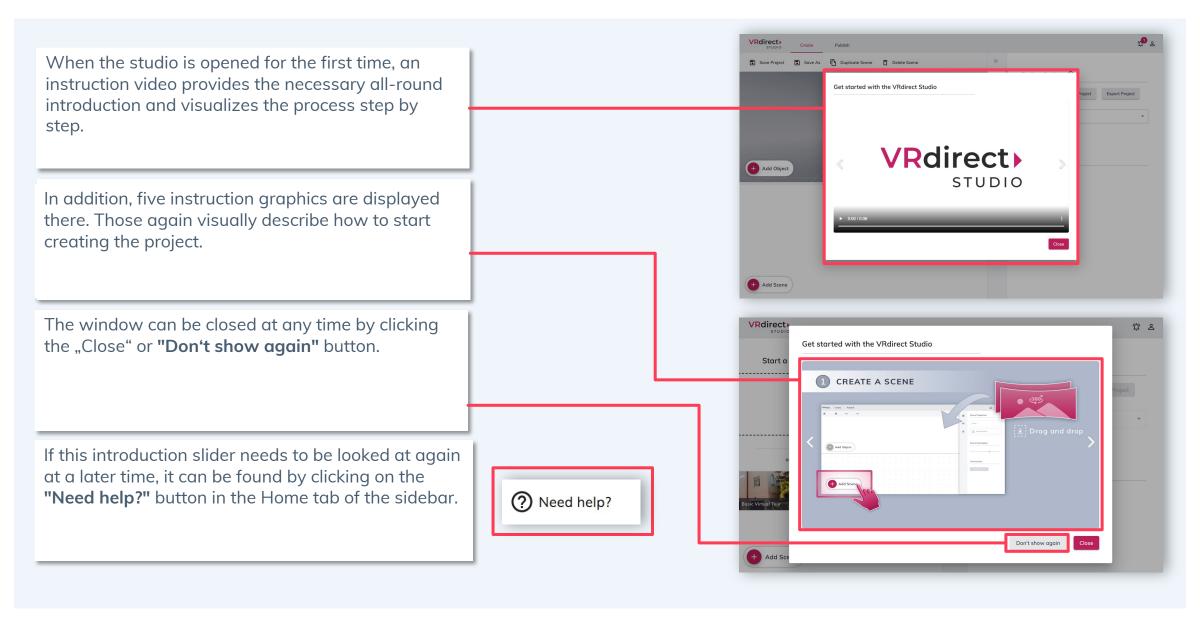
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Overview of the VRdirect Studio: Introduction





Overview of the VRdirect Studio: The Studio Environment



Toolbar:

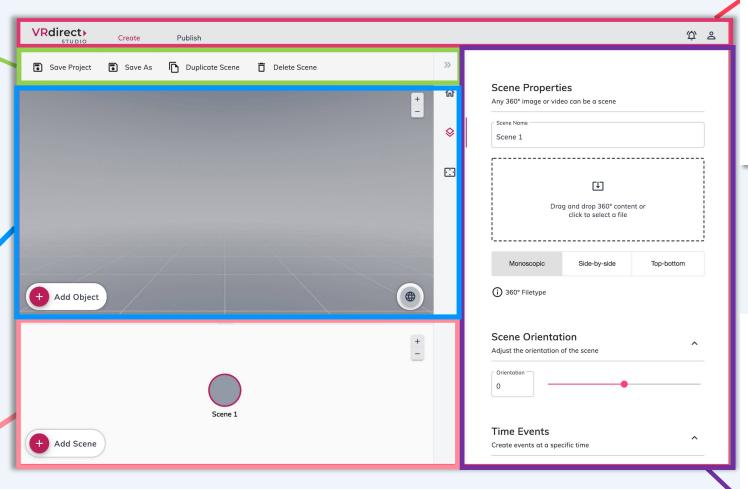
The toolbar is only displayed on the creation side of the Studio. Here you can save the project and delete or duplicate scenes and objects.

Scene View:

This window shows the inside of a scene. Here you can add objects and look around the scene (360° environment) by dragging your mouse left or right.

Storyboard View:

All scenes are displayed and arranged here. New scenes and connections can be added.



Tab bar:

Here you can switch between the tabs 'Create' and 'Publish'. Notifications and profile options are also located here.

Sidebar:

The sidebar shows the properties of the selected object or scene. As well as the general project options and the socalled background scene.

Creation Area: Adding a Scene

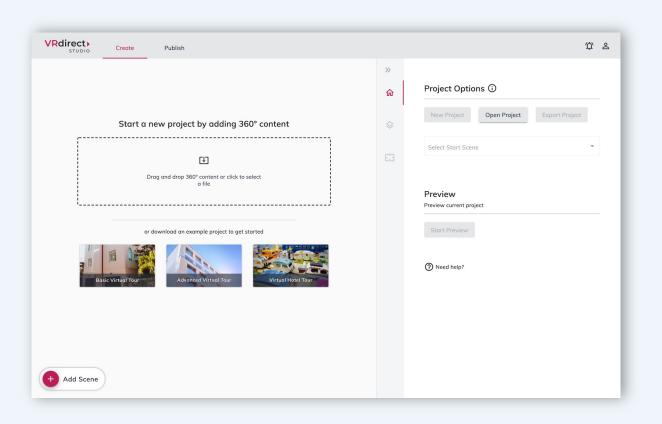


- When you open VRdirect Studio for the first time, you will see this screen after the instruction window.
- **Start a VR project** by adding 360° content either by dragging and dropping it or by clicking into the large field in the middle of the screen.
- A 360° scene will be automatically created from the 360° content.
- Alternatively, you can click on the plus button "Add scene" (bottom left corner).



What is a scene?

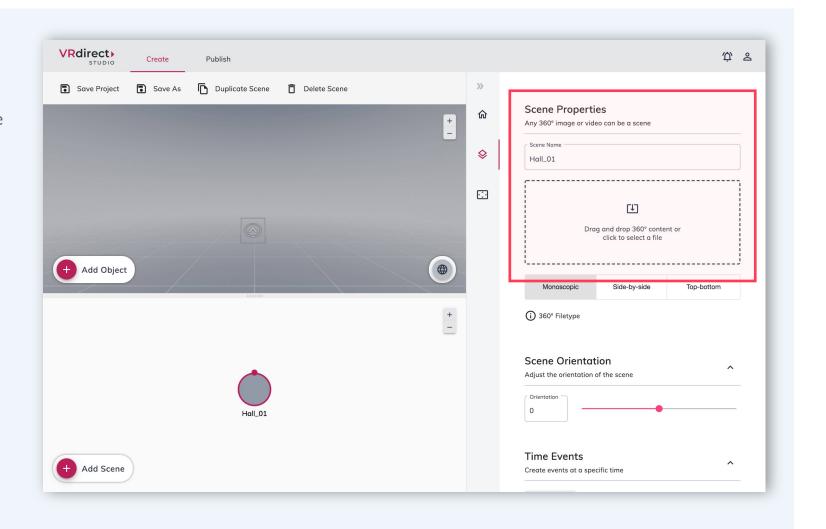
A scene represents a 360° environment in which the user is standing in. Scenes are filled with 360° images or videos.



Creation Area: Selecting the 360° Content for a Scene



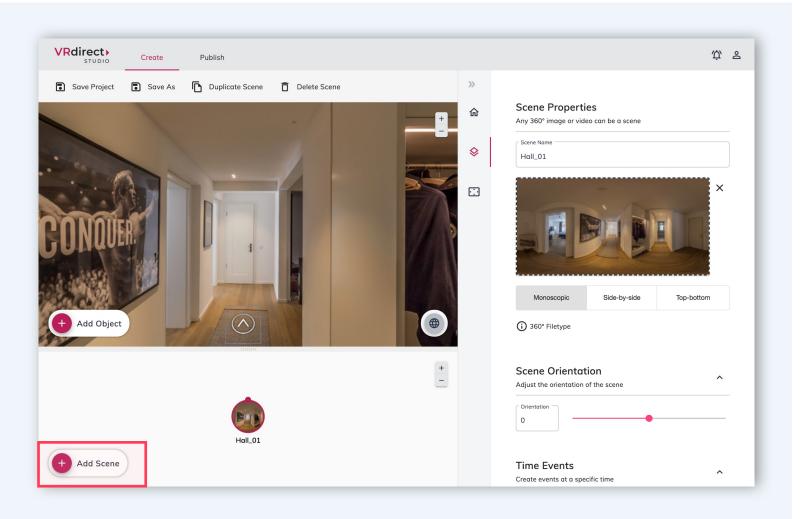
- As soon as a scene has been created (here in the example: via the "Add Scene" button), it can be edited in the scene properties in the right-hand sidebar.
- To keep the project orgainzed, it is advisable to name the scenes in the "Scene name" field.
- 360° content (images or videos) can be directly dragged and dropped into the VRdirect Studio or chosen afterwards in the scene properties by clicking on the large import field.



Creation Area: Add Additional Scenes



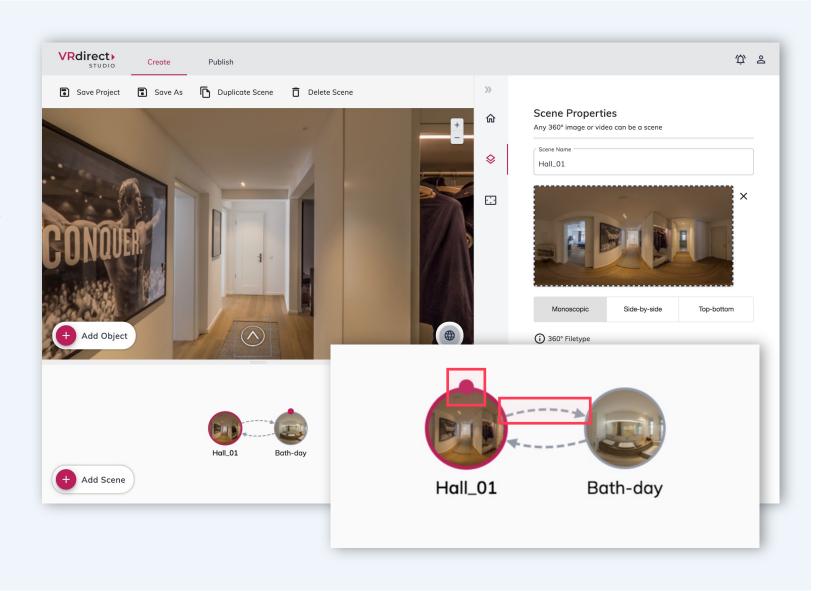
- To expand the VR project, you can add more scenes.
- This can be done repeatedly by clicking on the plus button "Add scene".



Creation Area: Connecting Scenes



- To move from room to room, as in this example, insert a connection between the scenes.
- Two scenes are connected by clicking on the small upper circle in the first scene and attaching the resulting arrow to the second scene (by dragging it out and releasing).
- A connection between two scenes is after creation only existing and not yet doing anything. It must be actively triggered by an interaction in order to bring the user from room to room. This interaction must additionally be created in the respective scene (see later chapter "Interaction").



Creation Area: Adding an Object



- To trigger the interaction of a scene connection (e.g. jumping from room to room), you need an object that the user can click on - meaning a trigger for the interaction.
- Back in the first scene, a click on the "Add object" button adds a new object to the scene. This element can be placed freely in the room by dragging it with the mouse.
- In the object properties (sidebar on the right) you can set and adjust various parameters of the object.



What are objects?

Objects are elements within a 360° scene that can trigger an interaction (e.g. the connection to another scene, the fading in of a text/image, the playing of music/video etc.).

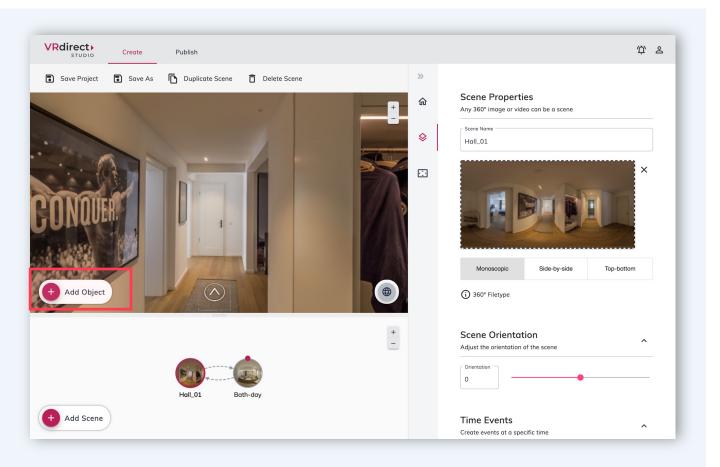


Musi



Video



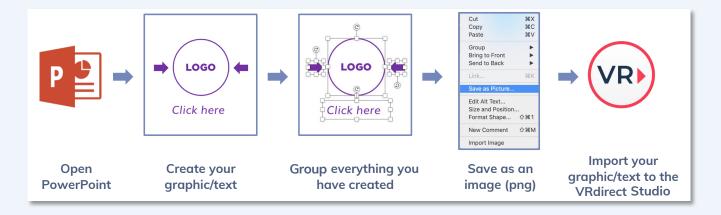


Creation Area: Graphics for Objects



Options for creating graphics (for objects)

- The graphics for objects serve as 2D assets (icons, buttons, graphics, etc.).
- The creation of such 2D assets can be done using common software (e.g. PowerPoint) or other graphical design programs (e.g. Photoshop).
- In PowerPoint, you can export the 2D assets as PNG and then add them to the VR project.



Alternative options:

- Use existing 2D content
- Find buttons, images, icons and more on the internet
- Download and use the standard VRdirect icon library:

Download

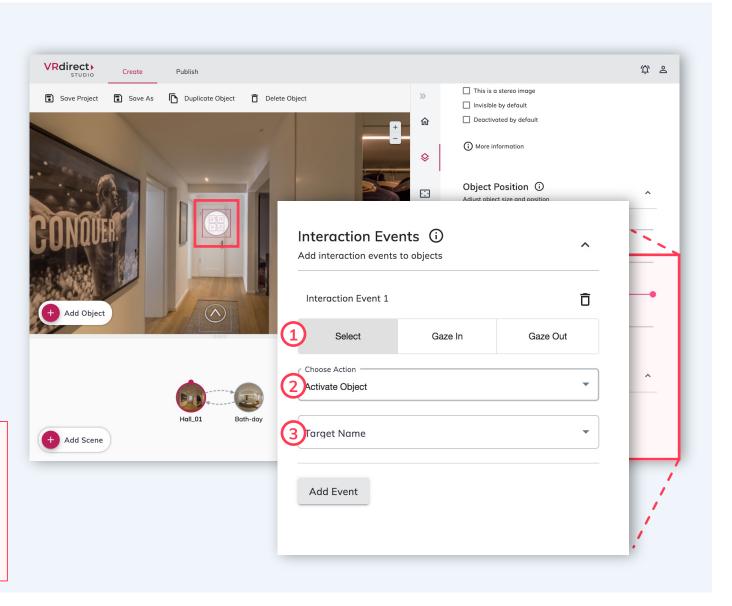
Creation Area: Adding an Interaction



- To insert an interaction (e.g. connecting two scenes) the object must be selected and then an interaction can be defined in the righthand sidebar (scroll down to bottom).
- For an interaction, 3 parameters must be set:
- 1 The trigger (the way the interaction is triggered by the user on the object)
- 2 The **action** (the type of interaction that should happen e.g. activate object)
- The target object (what does the interaction refer to - e.g. the target scene for a connection)



- Select = User clicks on the object
- Gaze In = User moves / hovers with mouse or view over the object
- Gaze Out = User moves / hovers away with mouse or view from the object



Creation Area: Adding a Time Event

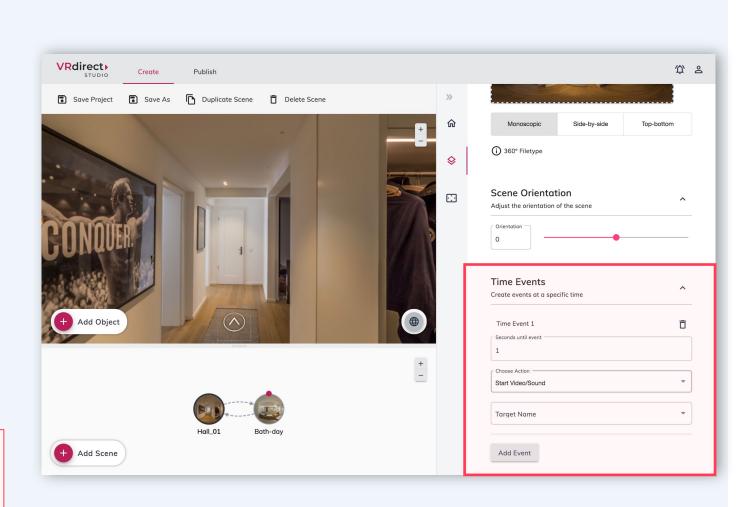


- So-called "time events" can be set in each scene to trigger a time-based interaction.
- To do this, simply select the respective scene and scroll all the way down in the scene properties (in the sidebar).
- Add a time event and set the timer in the first field to start the interaction - meaning the seconds until the event happens.
- Example: 3 seconds after the user has entered the scene, ... should happen.
- Then, as with interactions, an action must be selected and a target object to which the action refers to.



Which interactions are suitable for time events?

Time events are particularly suitable for guiding the user through a VR project like in an animated video (e.g. text fades into the scene as a speaker talks).

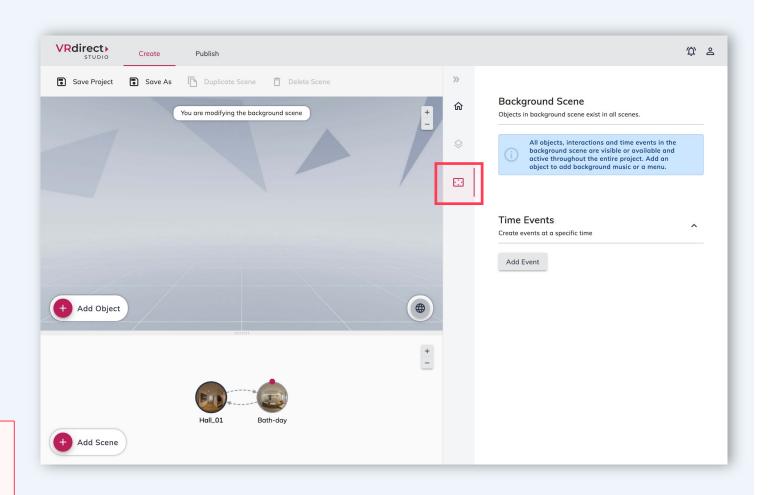


Creation Area: The Background Scene



- The background scene is a scene that is not visible on the storyboard. It runs in the background of the project but can be edited like a normal scene.
- It is located behind the third icon in the sidebar.
- All objects, interactions and time events in the background scene are visible and available throughout the entire project (e.g. a music object in the background scene runs throughout the entire project and does not reload in every scene).

What is the background scene suitable for?
The background scene is helpful for integrating background music (which runs during the project) and menu graphics (which e.g. lie at the bottom of the users feet).

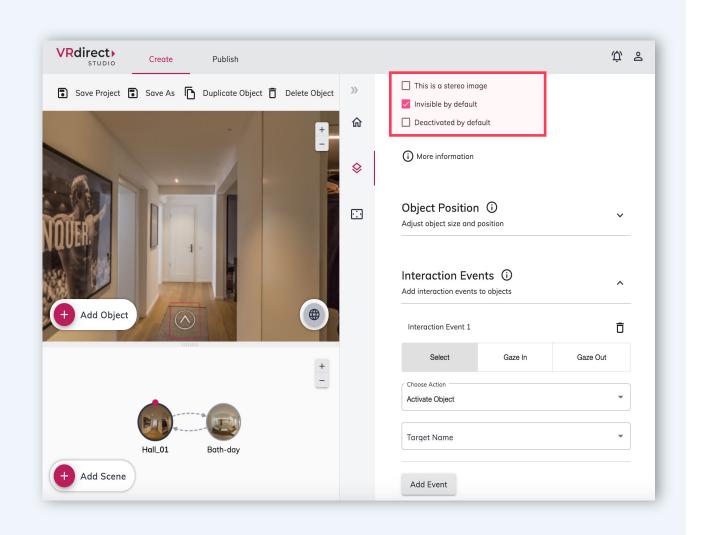


Creation Area: Adding an Invisible Object



- To add an invisible object, first add a new object to the scene.
- Then click the checkbox "Object is invisible by default" in the object properties. This hides the object when entering the scene (it is not visible).
- To show the object again, a corresponding interaction is necessary - either via a second interaction on another object or via a time event.
- For this, the action **"Show object"** is necessary.

What are invisible objects suitable for?
An invisible object can be, for example, a video that is only displayed and played as soon as the user clicks on a "Play" button. In this case, the video object must first be invisible and will then appear once the user actively clicks on "Play".



Creation Area: Adding External Links



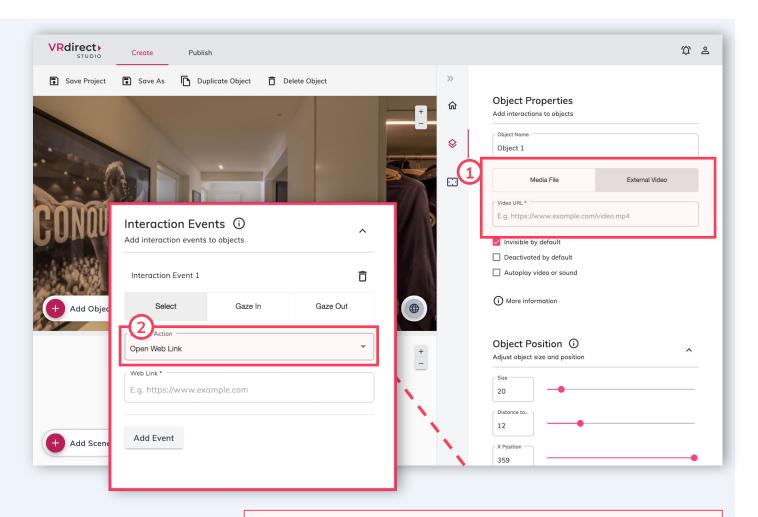
1 When adding an object to a scene you have the possibility to either **upload a media file** or to **add an external video link** (for 2D videos).

The external video link then **pulls the video** from the internet source **via stream** and thus makes it possible to save the file size of the video file.

A **precise link format** must be integrated (more information on VRdirect support page or blog).

2 The interaction "Open Web Link" allows you to open an external web link in a new web browser.

Such external links can, for example, **trigger the opening of websites**, chat windows or PDF downloads.



1

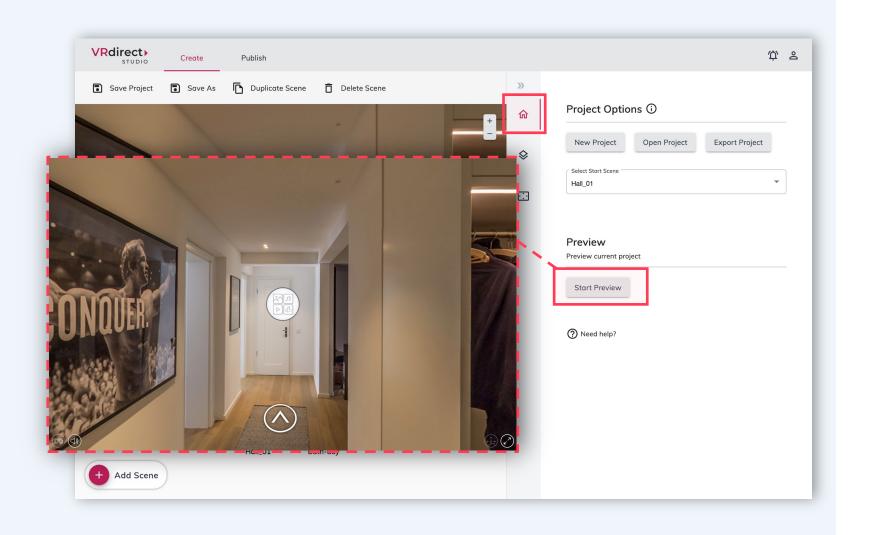
Please note:

For both features - "External Video Link" and "Open Web Link" - the end user must have a stable internet connection when viewing the VR project.

Creation Area: Preview of VR Project



- A preview of the built VR project is possible at any time in order to test / check the project and all interactions while creating.
- To do this, click on the first icon in the right sidebar and select the button "Start preview".
- This opens a new window in which the VR project is displayed from a user's point of view.
 Here, you can see what your users will see once the project is published.



Publishing Area: Add VR Project Entry

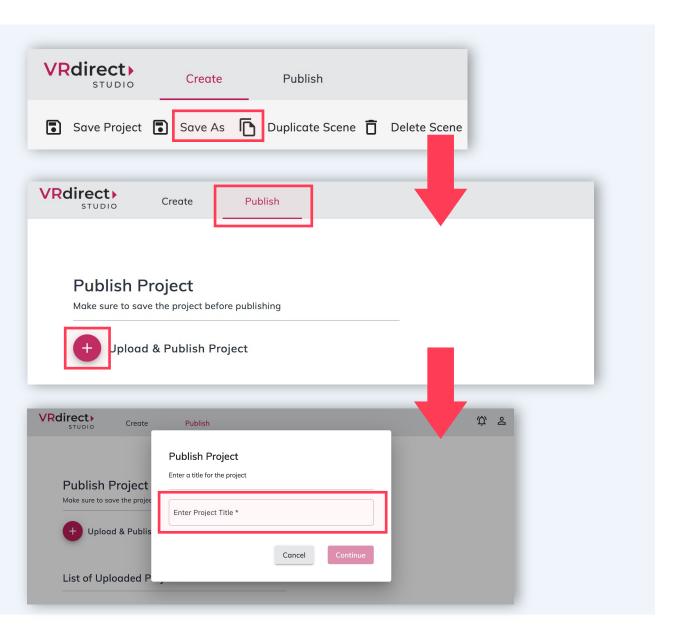


- Please save the VR project in the creation area first (via the toolbar).
 - The project will locally be saved as a .vrprj file.
- Then switch to the second tab of the tab bar "Publish"
- Click on the big button "Upload & Publish Project"
 to create a new VR project entry that will later on be
 published. Please enter a project title to do so.



Please note:

In the publishing area, already existing projects can be edited or updated. They appear in a list after they have been created.

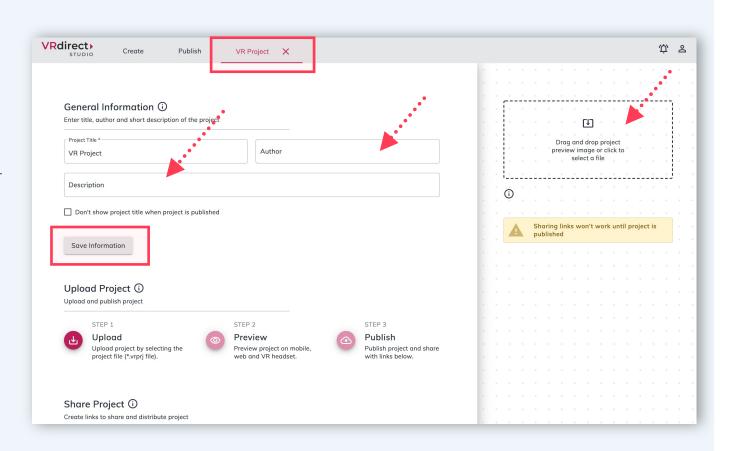


Publishing Area: VR Project Entry



- After entering a project title, a new tab appears in the tab bar with the new project entry.
- Here you can add and edit additional information for the project (meta data), such as a project author and a description. Additionally, you can add a preview image for the project.
- All meta data in the upper area must be actively saved via the button "Save Information".
- What does the yellow box on the right-hand side mean?

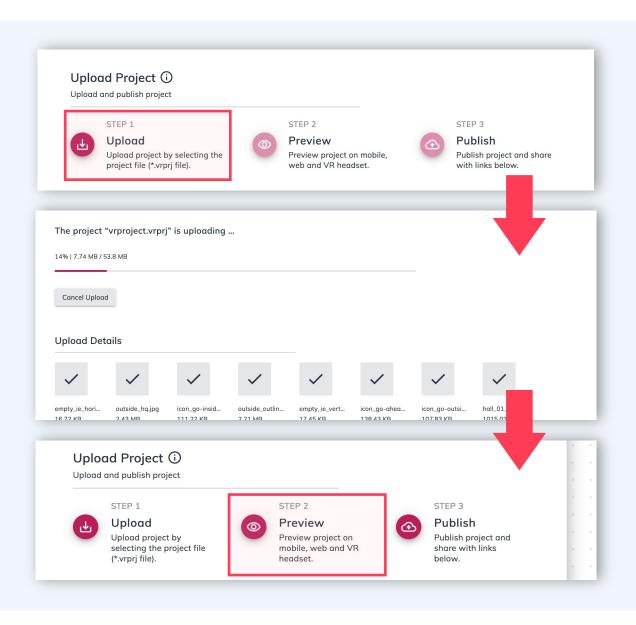
The boxes on the right side are so-called "Status informations" and indicate whether a project is being processed, is ready for publication or has already been published.



Publishing Area: Uploading the VR Project



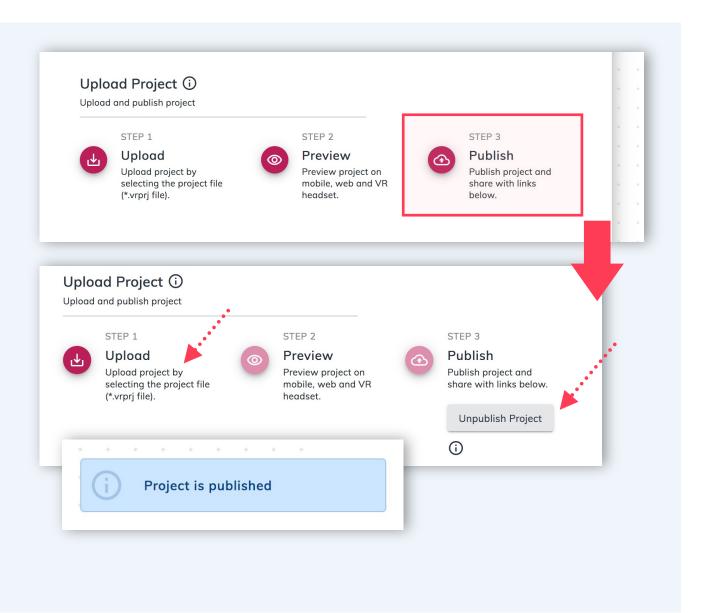
- After the information and preview image have been added, the VR project can be uploaded in the next step.
- To do this, select the locally saved project (.vrprj file) via the "Upload" button. All media files and assets are uploaded into the VRdirect cloud in this step.
- After uploading, the data is being processed and made available for all devices.
- After the processing time, the project can be viewed again via the "Preview" button (also on the app or in the VR headset).
- Please note that the preview links are not suitable for distribution or sharing.



Publishing Area: Publishing the VR Project



- In the third step, the VR project can be published via the "Publish" button.
- After a successful publication, the status of the project is changed, and one has the possibility to "take back" the project at any time (i.e., to cancel the publication).
- The "Upload" button is active again in the published state so that a new project version can be uploaded. In this case, the 3-step cycle starts again.
- The published project is now ready to be shared via the distribution links below.

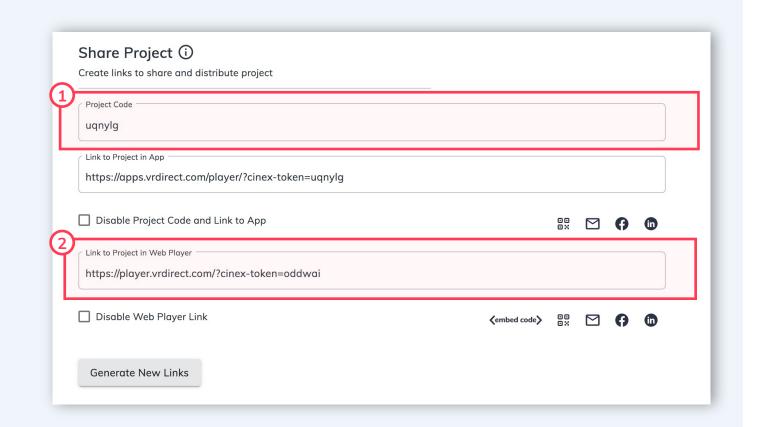


Publishing Area: Sharing the VR Project



- The distribution links make it possible to share the published project with your audience.
- 1 The project code can be entered into the VRdirect App*. It leads the user directly to the VR project, which can then be downloaded and even consumed offline.
- The URL (Web Player Link) can simply be opened in a web browser and leads the user directly to the VR project. An internet connection must be available here.

 Please note that the web player works on all devices that have a web browser available (also mobile devices and VR headsets).







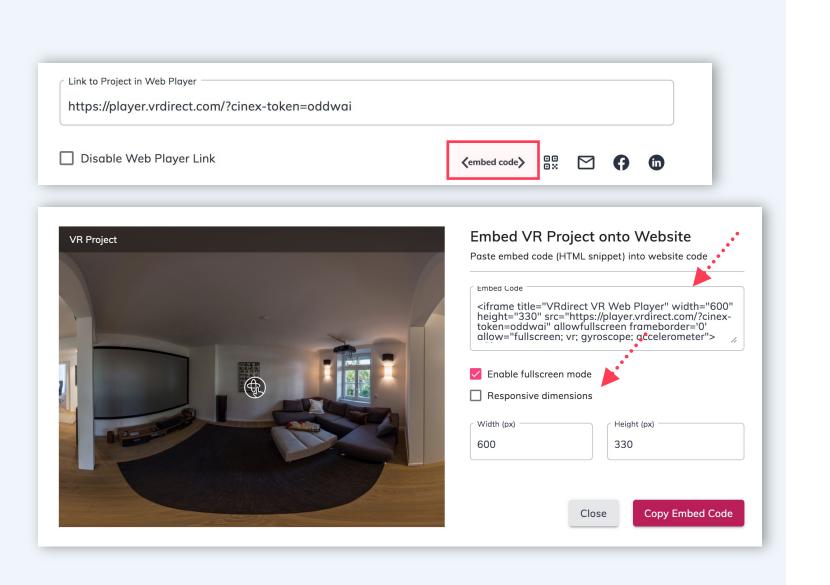


* The VRdirect app can be downloaded from the <u>App Store</u> or the <u>Google Play Store</u>

Publishing Area: Integrating the VR Project into Website

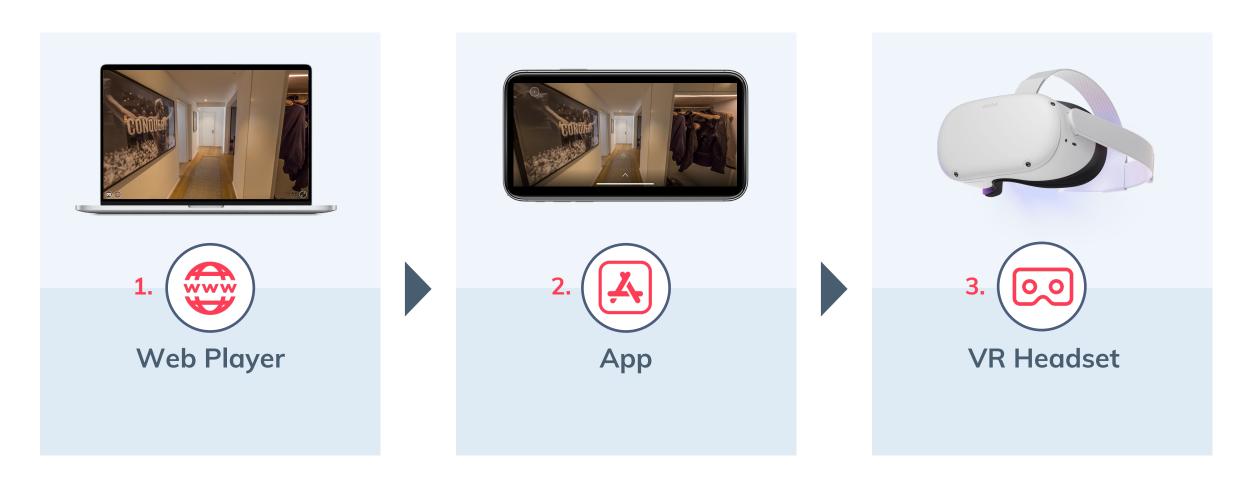


- The VR project can be integrated into any website, just like a YouTube video, by embedding the project via the "Embed Code".
- To do this, click on the "Embed Code" icon below the Web Player link.
- A new window opens with the embed code generator. It generates the so-called HTML snippet (iframe), which must be inserted into the source code (HTML) of the desired website.
- Here you can also adjust additional parameters such as the size of the window or the full-screen mode.



Distribution of the VR Project: 3 Channels for Distribution





The published VR project can be consumed by the end user in various ways and via various channels

Distribution of the VR Project: Web Player





Start the VR project by pressing the play button in the middle.



Pause the VR project any time (bottom centre).



Activate the full screen mode in the lower right corner to see the VR project in full screen.





- Navigation within the VR project:
 - In the 360° environment, you can look around to the left and right by dragging the mouse (mouse drag).
 - In the 360° environment you can zoom in or out with the mouse.
- The small white arrow (at the bottom) can be used to display the controls (pause, full screen, VR, ...)



Switch to the Virtual Reality mode on a smartphone by clicking on the VR icon in the bottom left corner.



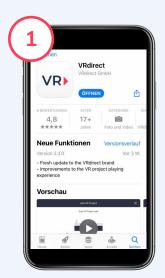


Please note:

The Web Player also works on the smartphone, the tablet or in the VR glasses - everywhere where a web browser can be opened.

Distribution of the VR Project: App





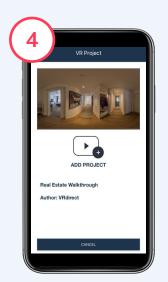
The app is available in the **Apple and Android Store** and can be downloaded for **free** on iOS and Android devices.



After installation, open the **VRdirect App.**



Click on "Add
Project" (plus
button).
Then enter the VR
Project Code or scan
the QR Code.



As soon as the project is found, confirm the addition again via "Add VR Project".



The project then appears in the app menu and can be downloaded via the download button.

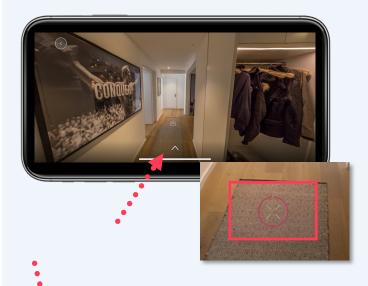




Once the VR project has been downloaded, it can be viewed. For this purpose, it is recommended to turn the smartphone into landscape mode.

Distribution of the VR Project: App





- After the project has opened, you can look around in all directions by navigating left and right in the 360° scene with your finger.
- You can select an object using the cross in the centre. It functions as a "mouse cursor" and selects an object after the circle is complete.



- Clicking on the lower arrow brings up further controls.
- The "Back Button" (arrow) at the top left of the screen leads back to the app menu with the overview of your added VR projects.







• A click on the "Swipe" icon switches to the "Gyroscope Mode".

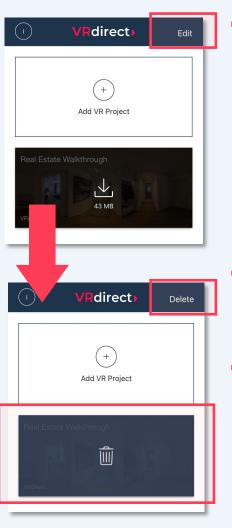
There you can look around in the 360° environment to the left and right by moving and tilting the mobile device.



 Click on the "VR glasses" icon to switch into the "Cardboard Mode".

Distribution of the VR Project: App Menu

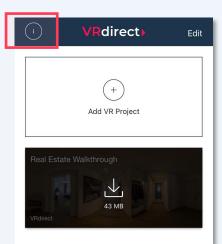




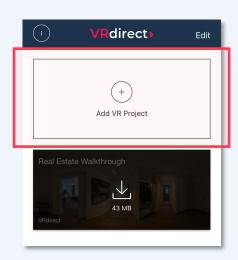
 At the top right is the Edit button, with which you can delete added projects.

Select the project that should be removed by clicking on it in the list.

Then click on the
"Delete" button and
confirm the deletion.



 Behind the information icon in the upper left corner you will find legal information and the legal notice.



The menu can be extended at any time by adding new VR projects.

Distribution of the VR Project: VR Headsets



Cardboard mode for any mobile headset



- Download the VRdirect App via iOS or Android and then switch on the VR mode (Cardboard Mode)
 - → VR button at the bottom left of the app

2

Oculus Quest / Oculus Quest 2



- Access to project via the Oculus Browser
- After entering the Web Player link, the project can be viewed via the VR headset in the Web Player



Oculus Go (Headset is no longer

(Headset is no longer supported by Oculus)



- Download the VRdirect App via the Oculus Go Store.
- Note: Device is no longer supported by Oculus - therefore app updates are no longer possible.



Selecting objects via eye control (selection cross in the centre of view). Within a VR project the use of a controller is not necessary.





Next steps?

Get to know the advantages of Virtual Reality and contact us!

contact@vrdirect.com