Sony teased a ‘spatial’ VR headset with a smart control ring

Sony is previewing a new “spatial content creation” system designed to let users edit and shape 3D models while wearing a virtual reality headset. The company showed off the headset along with a unique pair of controllers today during a presentation at CES 2024.

The headset, which is powered by the Snapdragon XR2+ Gen 2 platform and outfitted with 4K OLED displays, isn’t primarily for gamers like PlayStation VR. Instead, Sony CEO Kenichiro Yoshida said that this new headset is made for professionals who work with 3D, allowing wearers to expand the “creation space by overlaying virtual objects into physical spaces,”

The demo showed users manipulating virtual objects while using two controllers: a ring and a pointer that fits into your hand. Meanwhile, the front part of the headset flips up to let users switch between virtual and physical spaces. Sony says its “proprietary rendering technology” allows for “real-time, high-definition and realistic rendering of textures of 3D objects and facial expressions of human characters.”

“With seamless access to virtual objects, creators can work in real space with an immersive development experience,” Yoshida said. Sony previously made a “Spatial Reality Display” that allowed users to see digital objects in 3D using face- and eye-tracking. That tech here is obviously a lot different, but it seems to be designed for the same type of pro content creator.

Sony says the new system will come out later this year, but there’s no word on pricing yet. It might have some competition with the Apple Vision Pro, though, which starts shipping next month.

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