Houzz app now lets you test new floors in augmented reality

Whether they be new buyers, upcoming sellers or homeowners planning to stay put for a while, when it comes to considering re-doing their floors, it can often be tough for them to visualize just what the project will look like.

The online home furniture and furnishing marketplace Houzz thinks it has a solution: its two-year-old, free app View in My Room 3D for iOS (iPhone and iPad) and Android devices (Google, Samsung, etc.) just received a major update this week that allows users to test various flooring options from Houzz's database and view an instant cost estimate, depending on the size of their rooms.

"There is a stark difference between trying to imagine how a tile sample will look throughout a room and being able to view the room's entire floor covered in the new tile using AR," said Houzz head of visual technologies Sally Huang in a prepared statement.

Although the tool is geared toward consumers, Huang says real estate agents can use View in My Room 3D to do on-the-spot staging that helps buyers make a home purchasing decision or help sellers make a design choice that could potentially boost a home's value.

For example, Zillow says a blue bathroom can boost a buyer's offer by at least $5,000 and real estate marketplace HomeLight says 54 percent of buyers are willing to spend extra cash on a listing with wood (natural or imitation) flooring.

"The View in My Room 3D tool can be used within the Houzz app to assist agents in communicating potential design ideas to their clients," she commented in an emailed statement to Inman.

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The steps to using Houzz’s VR tile feature

To test the feature, users must download the Houzz mobile app and select a 3D tile product from Houzz’s marketplace. After selecting the item and clicking ‘view in my room,’ users will be directed to complete two scans.

The first scan automatically detects the location and orientation of the floor and the second scan asks users to place ‘anchor points’ at each corner, which helps the app generate a precise room measurement.

If a user likes the tile, they can receive a cost estimate by clicking the ‘measurement’ icon in the app’s bottom right corner. The cost estimate includes a 10 percent product waste buffer for instances where a tile could be damaged and discarded during installation.

Lastly, consumers can instantly add the tile to their shopping cart or save it to their Houzz ideabook

— a Pinterest-like board that can be shared with a family member, friend, designer or real estate agent.

“We continue to make AR-enabled shopping even more immersive and useful on Houzz,” added Huang. “Our View in My Room 3D tool now helps people discover, select and buy the best tile for their space, in the correct quantity, all within the Houzz app.”

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