

An aerial photograph of the Florida International University (FIU) campus. In the foreground, a large glass sign reads "WELCOME TO FIU" in bold, dark letters. Behind the sign is a modern building with a glass facade. In the background, a taller building with "FIU" on top is visible against a clear blue sky. The campus is surrounded by greenery and palm trees.

Location-Based Entertainment (LBE) and Immersive Storytelling with AI

Stories no longer live only on screens. They live in places, moments, and shared experiences.



FIU

**School of
Communication**
D.R.E.A.M.S. Program



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Communication

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DIGITAL RESEARCH ENTERTAINMENT ARTS MEDIA SCIENCES

The future of entertainment is immersive.

It is experiential. It is still being written.

What Is Location-Based Entertainment (LBE)?

- **Story + Space**
- **Audience + Participation**
- **Technology + Experience**
- **Physical + Digital**

Location-Based Entertainment brings storytelling into physical and digital environments.

The experience cannot be separated from where it happens. The location is no longer a backdrop — it becomes part of the narrative itself.



THE WORLD HAS ALREADY CHANGED

AI

In 2023 humanity stepped into the Fifth Era:
Intelligence and Spatial Computing Age

**Stories no longer live
on screens.**

They live in places, moments,
and shared experiences.





The New Entertainment Reality



Entertainment is NO longer passive.

For decades, entertainment was designed around observation — you watched, listened, or attended.

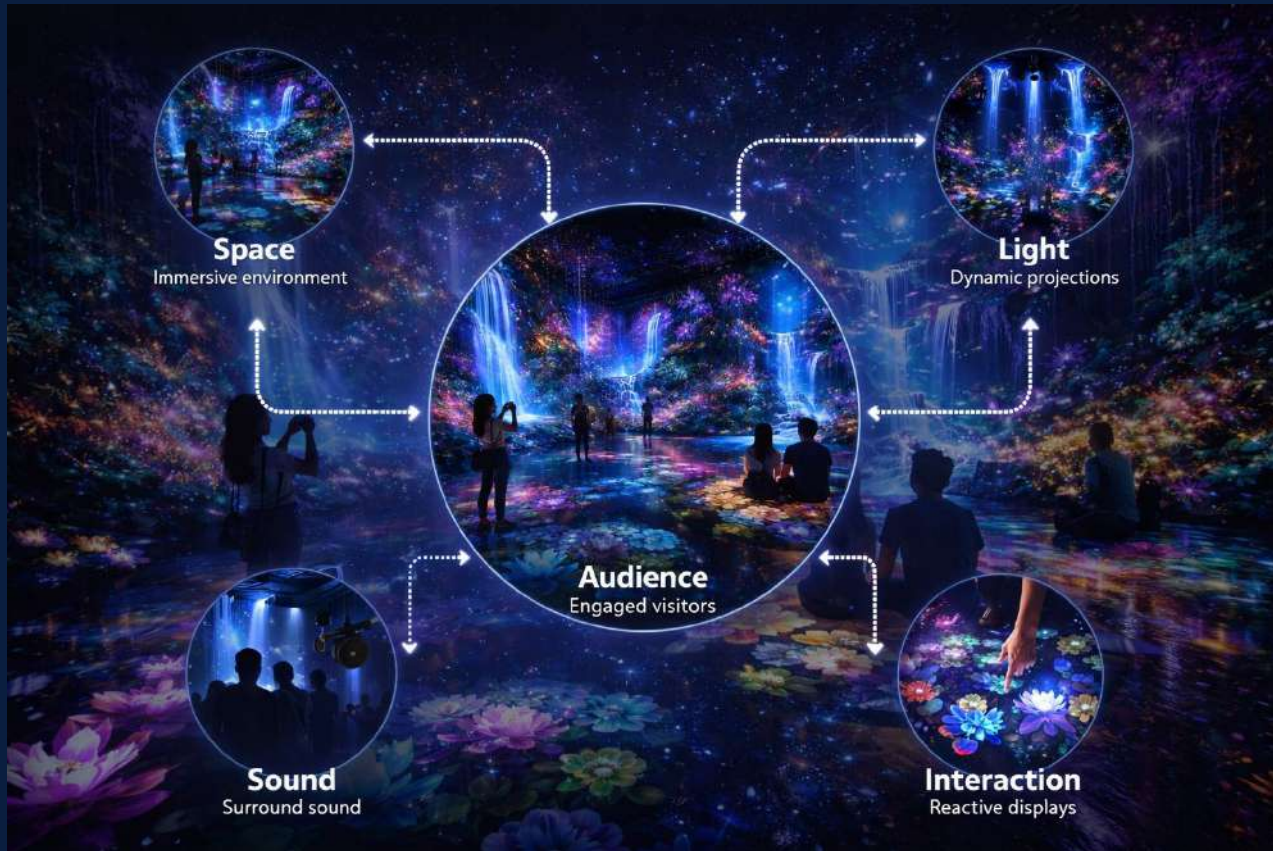
Today, audiences expect to participate, interact, and feel present inside the story.

This shift is not a trend. It represents a fundamental change in how entertainment is designed and experienced.





The Dome



Every space tells a story.

In LBE, storytelling is not only written or filmed — it is designed.

- Architecture sets tone.
- Sound guides emotion.
- Movement creates meaning.

Technology works quietly in the background, enabling experiences without demanding attention.

Why Story Still Matters

Story creates meaning. Technology scales.

Technology can make experiences bigger, faster, and more spectacular. Storytelling makes them memorable, emotional, and culturally relevant.

People rarely remember features. They remember how an experience made them feel — and whether it meant something.



Media Evolution



Broadcast → **Digital** → **Interactive** → **Immersive**

Immersion is the next natural step.

Entertainment evolves in response to how people live.

Each stage did not replace the previous.

It expanded what storytelling could be and where it could exist.

Location-Based Entertainment emerges naturally from this progression.

Where AI Enters the Picture

AI didn't invent storytelling. It gave humans a spectacular new creative palette to bring people, places and things to life.

Storytelling has always been human. What AI changes is the distance between imagination and execution.

- Ideas move faster.
- Iteration happens earlier.
- Visualization becomes immediate.

AI accelerates creation — it does not define intention. The tech fades into the background and lets the content be the star.





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In LBE, storytelling is not only written or filmed — it is designed.

- Architecture sets tone.
- Sound guides emotion.
- Movement creates meaning.
- Haptics puts the audience in the scene.

Technology works quietly in the background, enabling experiences without demanding attention.

The Sphere is the gold standard for experiential experiences with state of the art displays, ambisonic audio and haptics like scent dispersion, temperature variation, controlled air blasts and infrasonic vibration.

The iconic Wizard of Oz at Sphere has sold more than 2 million total tickets and exceeded \$260 million in ticket sales.

Wizard of Oz at The Sphere: Case Study



AI was integral to reimagining the actual 1939 film

- Super Resolution: 35mm film to 260 million pixels
- Outpainting: Recreate characters and insert into larger scenes
- Character Performance: Generate and match performances
- Infrastructure: AI and Cloud Compute



AI was used on over 90% of the Wizard of Oz to prep the film for the Sphere's 160,000 sq ft screen. Source: Google

Wizard of Oz at The Sphere: Case Study



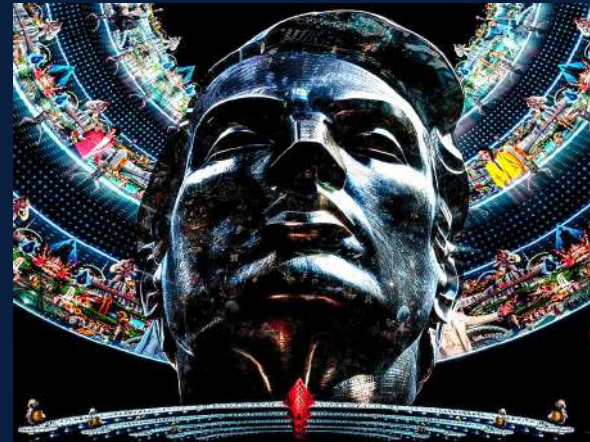
The Sphere: Experiential Location Based Entertainment Venue that draws the audience into the content.



The Wizard of Oz experience at the Sphere has become a landmark for 4D spatial computing, using complex advanced haptic systems that synchronize 16K video frames with physical environmental sensors.

Wizard of Oz at The Sphere

Largest high-res screen in the world: 260 million pixels; 160,000 sq ft.



Wizard of Oz at The Sphere

Environmental and Atmospheric Effects



AI synched wind effects from 120 computer controlled air nozzles and falling debris to align with the film.

Wizard of Oz at The Sphere

In-seat Haptics and Infrasond



Haptics enhance storytelling moments. Oz is the first use of infrasond haptics to embed tones into seats.

The Wizard's booming voice is intensified with low frequency infrasond vibrations and seat tremors, an eerie tone rumbles during the enchanted forest scene.



Wizard of Oz at The Sphere

Indoor Autonomous Drones



Micro-drones are programmed to fly in formation in front of the LED screen, blurring the line between the digital background and physical reality.



Wizard of Oz at The Sphere

Scent and Temperature



A compressed-air system releases dry, scent-infused particles rather than wet mists and the air temperature can be pulsed to simulate radiant heat.



Why This Moment Is Different



- **Faster creation**
- **Lower barriers**
- **More creators**

What once required large teams, specialized hardware, and significant capital, can now begin with an idea and the right tools.

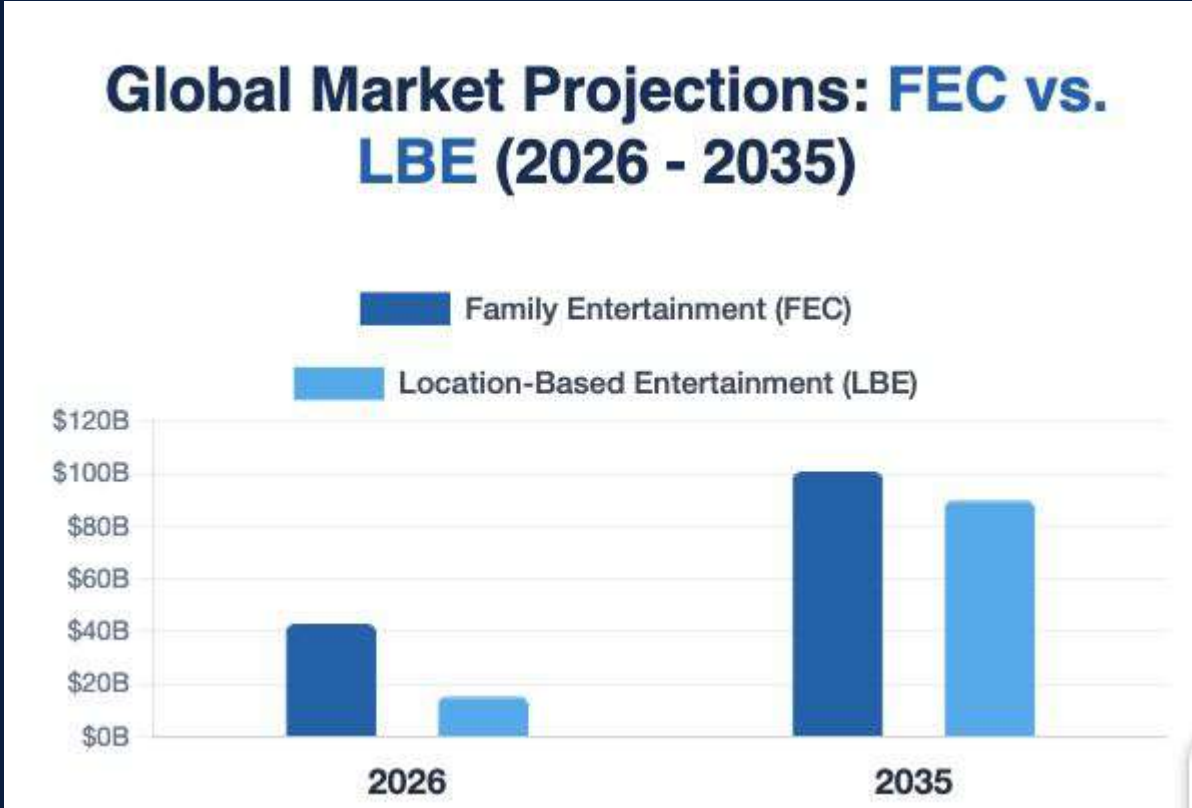
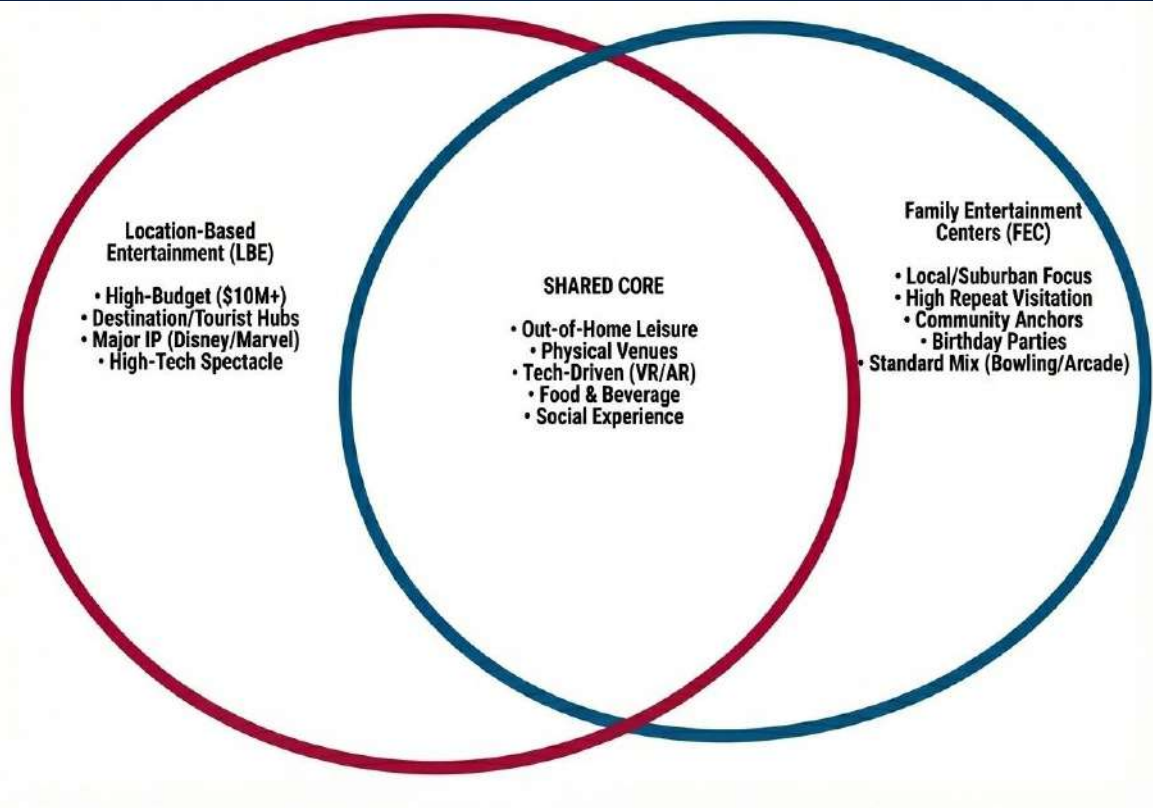
This moment is not just about technology, it's about who gets to participate in shaping the future of entertainment.

AI By the Numbers

As of January 2026, the valuations of major AI companies have reached historic levels even by levels of the tech industry.

NVIDIA	\$3.7 Trillion
Microsoft	\$3.4 Trillion
Alphabet/ Google	\$2.3 Trillion
Open AI	\$650 Billion
Anthropic	\$325 Billion
xAI	\$\$215 Billion

Location Based Entertainment and Family Entertainment Centers By the Numbers



Sphere By the Numbers

The Sphere has redefined the Mega-venue

- **2025 revenue: \$1.05 Billion**
- **Global expansion: Abu Dhabi, Metro DC, 20 additional locations planned**
- **Wizard of Oz at Sphere**
 - **2 million tickets**
 - **\$260 million in ticket sales since August 2025 premier**



The Big Shift

**From “Can we build this?”
to “What should we build?”
“Why should we build?”**

When creation becomes easier, intention becomes more important.

Purpose, values, and responsibility now shape the most meaningful experiences.



Now let's look at what's actually being used.

Who are the AI players shaping entertainment today, and how are they being used to create immersive experiences?

THE AI ENTERTAINMENT LANDSCAPE

**AI is already powering modern
entertainment.**

Across film, sports, music, and immersive experiences,
AI tools are already embedded in how stories are
imagined, produced, and delivered.

AI by Creative Capability

- Video & World Creation
- Voice & Sound
- Characters & Avatars
- Digital Twins & Simulation
- Visual Design & Prototyping

**Different creative problems
require different AI tools.**

There is no single “AI tool for entertainment.”
Creators assemble ecosystems of tools based
on intent, medium, and audience experience.



AI for Video & World Creation



Google
Veo 3

 runway

 Pika

Cinematic video, scenes, and story worlds

These tools are used to generate high-fidelity video, environments, and narrative scenes early in the creative process.

Commonly used for concept trailers, immersive previews, previsualization, and rapid world-building before physical production begins.

AI for Voice, Sound & Performance

Synthetic voice, performance, and audiorealism

AI voice and audio tools allow creators to design vocal performance at scale—without sacrificing emotion, tone, or authenticity.

Used for narration, character voices, multilingual experiences, accessibility, and immersive sound environments in LBE and live entertainment.

The logo for ElevenLabs, featuring the text "ElevenLabs" in a bold, white, sans-serif font on a black background.The logo for reSPEECHER, featuring the text "reSPEECHER" in a white, stylized font with a red underline, set against a black background with a subtle grid pattern.The logo for PLAY.HT, featuring a stylized black and white cube icon with the letters "P" and "H" on its faces, followed by the text "PLAY.HT" in a bold, black, sans-serif font on a light blue background.

Generate AI Voiceovers

The logo for Enhance Speech, featuring the text "Enhance Speech" in a bold, black, sans-serif font on a purple background with a geometric pattern. A purple microphone is positioned to the right of the text.

AI Characters, Avatars & Presence



 **synthesia**

inworld


METAHUMAN

Scalable characters and interactive presence

These platforms enable the creation of AI-driven characters that can speak, respond, and guide audiences in real time.

Used for digital hosts, brand ambassadors, fan engagement, interactive guides, and narrative characters inside immersive spaces.

Digital Twins & Simulation

Simulating worlds before they exist

Digital twin technologies allow creators to simulate physical environments in advance—testing design, flow, and interaction before construction or live deployment.

Used to model stadiums, venues, crowd movement, immersive installations, and live-event operations.



UNREAL
TECHNOLOGY



AI for Visual Design & Prototyping



Midjourney



Stable Diffusion

Adobe Firefly



Figma

Rapid visual exploration and experience design

These tools accelerate visual ideation—helping creators explore style, mood, spatial concepts, and narrative aesthetics.

Used for mood boards, environment concepts, installations, experiential design, and early-stage storytelling visuals.

AI is not one tool. It's an ecosystem.

Modern creators combine multiple AI tools across the creative pipeline—selecting what fits the story, the space, and the audience experience.



Now let's zoom into a few tools shaping immersive storytelling right now.

We'll look more closely at how specific platforms are being used to prototype, visualize, and deliver Location-Based Entertainment experiences..

Google Veo – Cinematic AI Video & World Creation

What it does:

Generates high-quality, cinematic video and environments with realistic motion, lighting, and scale.

How it's used:

- Concept trailers for immersive experiences
- Previsualization for theme parks and LBE
- Early-stage world-building before physical construction

Why it matters for LBE:

Vevo allows creators to see the experience before it's built—putting story and atmosphere first.



OpenAI / Sora — Narrative Video & Story Logic

What it does:

Generates coherent video sequences that understand movement, pacing, and narrative continuity.

How it's used:

- Story-driven environment prototyping
- Visualizing narrative arcs
- Exploring how stories unfold across space and time

Why it matters for LBE:

Immersive experiences require narrative logic across physical space—Sora supports that continuity



NanoBanana — Experimental & Spatial Storytelling

What it does:

Supports exploratory, abstract, and spatial storytelling beyond traditional linear formats.

How it's used:

- Conceptual world exploration
- Immersive installation ideation
- Testing new narrative forms

Why it matters for LBE:

Not all immersive experiences follow familiar formats—NanoBanana enables experimentation.



HeyGen — Scalable Presence & Story Delivery

What it does:

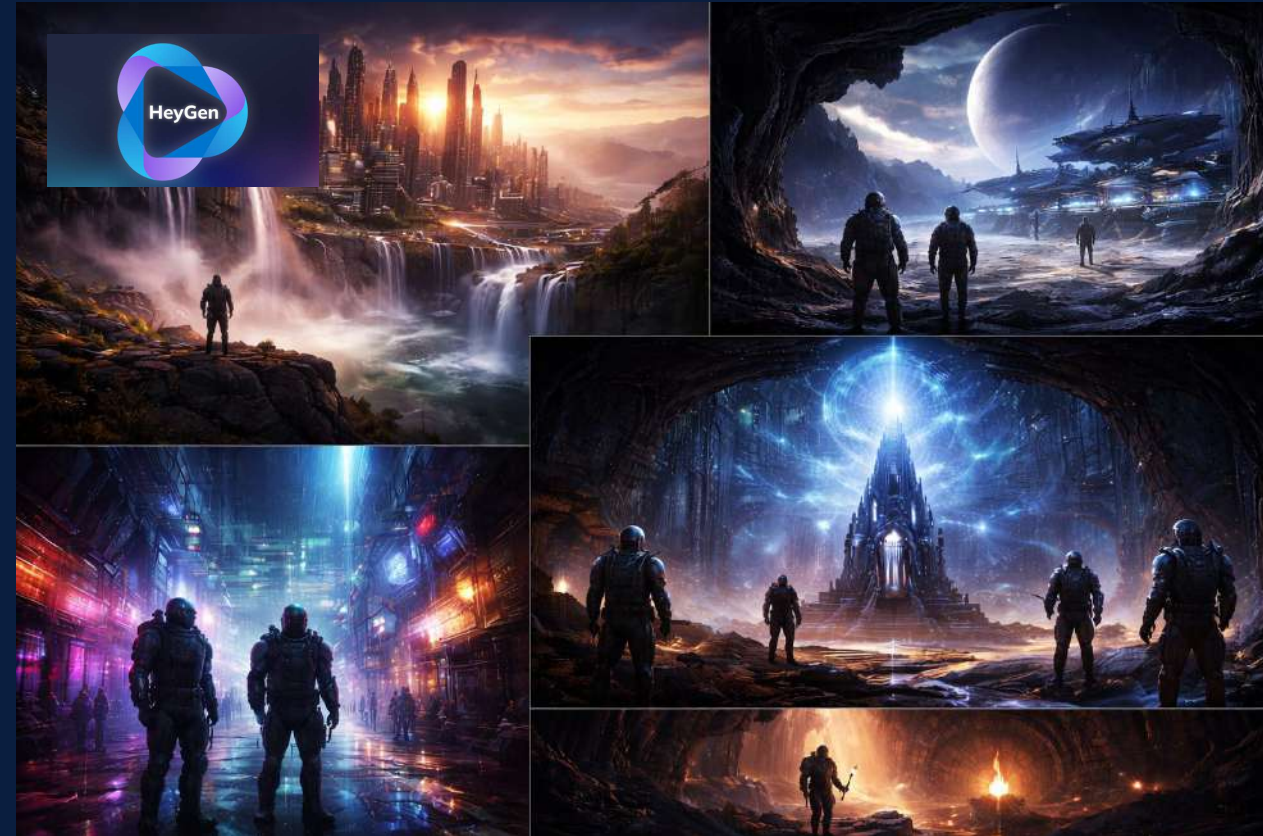
Creates AI-driven avatars capable of speaking, guiding, and engaging audiences.

How it's used:

- Digital hosts in immersive spaces
- Fan engagement and storytelling
- Multilingual and accessible experiences

Why it matters for LBE:

HeyGen enables storytelling at scale—without losing consistency or presence.



What These Tools Have in Common

They don't replace creativity.
They accelerate it.

Each platform shortens the distance between idea and experience—allowing creators to iterate, visualize, and refine faster than ever.



So where does all of this actually live?

When AI storytelling moves into physical space, it becomes Location-Based Entertainment.



LBE AS THE APPLICATION LAYER

AI Leaves the Screen



This is where AI storytelling becomes real.

When AI-driven stories move into physical space, they become shared, embodied, and memorable.

AI stops being content. It becomes experience.

LBE + Sports

Sports Become Storyworlds

Sports have always been emotional — LBE makes them immersive.

AI-powered storytelling now shapes:

- Atmosphere before the game
- Fan journeys throughout the venue
- Narrative continuity across screens, spaces, and moments

The stadium is no longer just where the game happens. It's where the story unfolds.

And AI can take sports out of the stadium. The COSM is an LBE experience that mimics the stadium experience completely down to stadium seating and a bar.



LBE + Music



Performance Becomes Environment

Music experiences are no longer confined to sound.

AI helps creators design:

- Visual narratives that respond to rhythm
- Environments that amplify emotion
- Performances that surround the audience

The result is not just a concert. It's a memory anchored to a place and moment.



LBE + Immersive Spaces

Walking Inside the Story

Immersive spaces are designed journeys.

AI-assisted storytelling supports:

- Guided movement through environments
- Emotional pacing across rooms and moments
- Responsive interactions that adapt to audiences

The audience is no longer watching the story. They are navigating it.



LBE + Brand Worlds

Brands Become Experiences

Brands increasingly communicate through experiences, not advertisements.

AI enables:

- Faster ideation of brand worlds
- Testing narrative concepts in physical space
- Personalized, interactive engagement

The strongest brand experiences don't feel like marketing.
They feel rewarding. .



LBE Is a Business



Experience Is the Product

Location-Based Entertainment creates value by turning moments into destinations. Common models include:

- Ticketed immersive experiences
- IP-driven environments
- Sponsored and branded worlds
- Repeat visitation and community

LBE is not a novelty. It's a scalable business built on memory and emotion.

Why LBE Is Growing Now

Experience is the new premium.

As digital content becomes abundant, physical experiences become more valuable.

LBE is growing because:

- Audiences crave connection
- Technology enables immersion
- Presence rewards experience

AI accelerates this shift — making immersive experiences faster to design and easier to evolve.



So how do you learn to build this?

If immersive, AI-powered experiences are shaping the future of entertainment, education must prepare students to design, manage, and lead them responsibly.

THE FIU LBE ECOSYSTEM

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Learning the Future of Entertainment, On Purpose

Location-Based Entertainment is not a single skill.

It is a discipline at the intersection of storytelling, technology, leadership, and communications.

FIU's LBE curriculum is designed as an ecosystem, each class building a different capability, all connected by a shared focus on immersive experience and real-world relevance.

This is not about learning tools. It's about learning how to think, design, and lead in experiential industries.



One Ecosystem, Multiple Perspectives

We offer a number of LBE classes with hyperfocus

- **Industry & Insights** → What world are we entering?
- **Leadership & Entrepreneurship** → Who shapes this world?
- **Immersive Management** → How does it function day-to-day?
- **Global Sport** → How does it scale local and globally?
- **Music Innovation** → How emotion and performance shape immersion?

Together, they form a complete picture of LBE as a discipline.



CALL TO CURIOSITY

The Future Belongs to the Curious



The most valuable skill today is not mastery of a single tool. It is curiosity:

- The willingness to explore
- To experiment
- To connect ideas across disciplines

LBE rewards explorers—people who ask better questions, not just faster ones.

Everyone Builds Their Own AI Stack

There Is No Single Path. Everyone has access to powerful tools. What makes the difference is:

- How you combine them
- What you use them for
- The values that guide your choices

Your AI stack is personal. Your responsibility is not.



Just Because You Can Doesn't Mean You Should



Immersive experiences influence emotion, memory, and behavior.

With that power comes responsibility:

- To design with intention
- To respect audiences
- To build experiences that add value

Technology amplifies intent.

It does not replace it.

Step Into the Story

The future of entertainment is immersive.

It is experiential. It is still being written.

At FIU, we don't just teach the future,
we help shape it.

Want to collaborate with D.R.E.A.M.S.

Email: tcloyd@fiu.edu

THANK YOU

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