

Virtual Peatland Pavilion content – Attracting viewer attention

Richard Lindsay, UEL

As can be seen from the mock-up of the Virtual Peatland Pavilion (<https://storage.net-fs.com/hosting/6147066/2/>) a variety of items can be used as hotspots which can link to your external <https://> weblinks (the link must be <https://> rather than the less secure <http://>)

The simplest form of item on display in the pavilion is a TV screen. This shows an image relevant to the weblink and the visitor clicks on the image to go to the weblink. Such a TV screen is easy for the 3D modeller (e.g. me) to construct, but if a room is too full only of TV screens it can feel rather like walking into a TV showroom instead of entering a place full of interesting and intriguing sources of information.

Consequently, contributors may wish to consider other items to attract visitor attention. One possibility is a 3D model of something relevant, such as a plant, or bird, or a modelled landscape. Various websites exist to host 3D models which can be downloaded and used. Some of the models are free, others must be paid for. These sites almost always have a search facility to help narrow down the sorts of models displayed for download.

There is often a heavy emphasis on the sort of 'Dungeons & Dragons' type model on these websites, but there are also some surprisingly good and relevant models, some uploaded by scientific labs.

The animated dragonfly used in my 'Peatlands and Carbon' animation (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4fdLWnhDqU>) was downloaded from one of the best-known 3D model websites called SketchFab (<https://sketchfab.com/>). You do not need to login to search for a model in SketchFab, just put a search term in the search box at the top of the page. You must login to download a model, but instead you can copy the web address and send this to me so that I can then organise download. Some model displays incorporate multiple 3D models in one package, so if there is a particular component (e.g. a Canada goose from a model collection of several birds) then you would need to specify to me which model you wish to use from the downloaded collection.

Other possible sites are:

- TurboSquid
- Free3D
- CGTrader

There are many more (just search for 3D model download) but most are focused on VR gaming or architectural modelling.

It's important to understand that although animated models (there are many examples available) can be displayed as static objects within the pavilion, their animated action cannot be displayed directly within the Virtual Pavilion. To animate such models I would need to animate them within an external 3D software package, record the animation action, then save this as a 2D video file which would then be displayable within the pavilion as a continuously-playing screen (the animated action thus attracting attention), the animated video then acts as the hotspot linking to your external <https://> content.

I hope this provides for thought and inspiration.

Richard.