Press Release

The Challenges of Augmented and Virtual Reality: A Primer

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Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technologies have broken out of the gaming niche and are finding use in education, health care, marketing, and other fields, yet their growth is raising questions around safety and privacy. In a new primer, AAF's Technology & Innovation Policy Analyst Juan Londoño explains the evolution and challenges of AR/VR and then outlines the potential policy responses. In order to address privacy and safety concerns without stifling innovation, any solutions will need to include the development of informal social norms, decisions made by innovators and consumers, and carefully crafted policy action, Londoño contends.

Londoño concludes:

> Despite their tremendous growth and potential, these technologies face a wide range of challenges. Responding to these is mostly the responsibility of manufacturers, but policymakers should recognize the need to adapt regulations to allow for the growth and adoption of these technologies. Current regulations could prove to be inadequate, as the extent to which they are applicable for AR/VR is unclear. The use of soft-law tools such as sandboxing provides clear guidelines and legal certainty to manufacturers that could aid growth in the sector, while an overly restrictive regulatory approach might prevent these devices from performing their basic functions. As with other devices, such as cellphones and cameras, social norms and innovation have proven to be powerful tools to address these concerns.

Read the analysis