

Thortspace - The Story

Sometimes you have to throw caution to the wind and be a bit audacious. Sometimes you just have to throw your hat over the wall, then go and chase it.

When it was first decided, some eight years ago, to create a software tool to help the world solve its problems (there's the audacious bit) there were no touch screens, no smart-phones and no Augmented Reality or Virtual Reality - so creating something that would only work in an immersive 3D environment was, in hindsight, a hefty hat to throw over a very high wall.

The idea, principles and design originated from the thinking of Andrew Bindon, a Philosophy of Science graduate from Cambridge University, England, who was on the one hand a computer consultant and code-writer and on the other, a performance poet. My experience was from building several businesses from scratch (beginning in the 1970s) and working as an independent business consultant. He and I had known each other through being co-trustees of a London UK Charity. We both knew instinctively that Thortspace would work, that it was definitely needed in the world and we immediately became fully committed to making it happen.

All problems tend to be complex, be they personal emotional ones or international political ones and Thortspace is designed to handle these across the spectrum. It's designed to help manage complexity and give users the ability to see the whole of a complex issue - yet within a couple of clicks delve deep into the minutiae; both a macro and micro view, even with the restrictions imposed by the size of the screen on a mobile phone. The generation of relevant new insights was a particularly effective part of the ideation process inherent in the software design.

Our vision from the outset has been that Thortspace will be effective world-wide for solving problems; from personal ones to international conflicts.

The original design idea combined philosophy with psychology and newly available (at the time) computer graphics. Since then, graphics cards have enabled increasingly advanced functionality but the extremely rapid advent and use of touch-screens, tablets and smart-phones alongside desktops - together with much wider usage of laptops created a requirement to maintain a fast-paced pre-revenue development program. For international use it also had to be used for collaborative thinking as well as for individuals.

Thortspace now enables real-time collaborative thinking in 3D across multiple platforms; Desktops (Windows, Mac and Linux), iPads and iPhones, Android tablets and Android phones.

Its use as a problem solving tool has been tested by a dedicated beta group over several years - including an international conflict resolution and peace brokerage organisation who has used it to help them predict political events in the Middle East. It has also been used to help people resolve personal emotional problems - but now that it has been released to the public, as it becomes more widely known, we are finding new uses for what appears to have become a platform for not only generating

ideas but for promoting them and engaging others into their possibilities.

It is now possible, for example, to publish work done in Thortspace directly to the World Wide Web in the form of 3D interactive spheres. (A presentation mode has been added to the previously created Think, Do and Explore modes.)

We are about to test its efficaciousness as a medical research tool and have much interest from the University sector as an aid for student study.

For the future we have ideas related to linking the thinking of opted-in users to create an increasingly broad Thortspace community knowledge bank that would auto-associate thinking in real time with the myriad of accumulated thoughts of Thortspace users around the world; we call this the "Global Mind Vision".

When the time is right we would also like to explore possibilities within the Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality worlds (the 3D design lends itself to this), indeed Thortspace could act as a bridge for current users of flat-screen technology to help them transition to new generation Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality wearable computers.

Of course linking Thortspace to Artificial Intelligence assets will eventually no doubt add greatly to the power of the Global Mind Vision in version two - but for now Thortspace is beginning to make waves and we look forward to creating momentum and spreading usage as widely as possible so that problems and conflict can be resolved.

The world has many problems and we'd really like Thortspace users to be able to help resolve at least some of them.

Phil Shepherd - Nov 2017

Quick introduction to Thortspace <https://thort.space/86137019>

Contact feedback@thortspace.com