

# Pokemon Go maker Niantic acquires 3D world-scanning software company 6D.ai

Another step forward towards AR headsets from a leading app maker.

While few actual AR headsets exist at the moment, the race to scan and map the world using AR technology is already heating up. Niantic, makers of Pokemon Go and collaborators with Qualcomm on a future AR headset design, have just acquired a company that enables collaborative AR world maps to be shared.



6D.ai is a company that specializes in building out 3D world meshes that multiple people can share and keep building on. While Apple's newest iPad uses new lidar tech hardware to better mesh and map the world through hardware, 6D.ai can do things like this without needing specialized hardware. The system creates an infrastructure that headsets or phones can share data, like a crowdsourced AR toolkit. 6D.ai has already been partnering with Qualcomm, too.

"Together, we're building a dynamic, 3D map of the world so we can enable new kinds of planet-scale AR experiences. This means we're even closer to an AR platform that will unlock the ability for any developer to make content for current and future AR hardware," John Hanke, Niantic's CEO and Co-Founder, said in a statement.

Microsoft has been exploring its own world-mapping AR through phone games like Minecraft Earth that future evolutions of HoloLens could use, while Google is building out AR through its search and Maps tools, while Facebook is aiming to map out the world, too. Magic Leap's vision of a digital mapping of reality follows a similar path.

6D.ai has been working on impressive demos of its AR tech that the company has shared online and Niantic looks like it's planning to use these tools to build out a deeper multiplayer AR world map that layers onto our existing one in a lot greater detail. These are exactly the types of things that need to be built before a true killer AR headset arrives.

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