

Rinnai® America Increases Lead Generation by 50% With VIVE



Showing how to install a tankless water heater is easy (and fun) with virtual reality.

About Rinnai

Rinnai is one of the leading names in gas appliance manufacturing. Originally founded in Nagoya, Japan in 1920, their energy-efficient tankless water heaters, kitchen appliances, and heat and air conditioning systems are used by millions of customers around the world. As a leader in their industry, Rinnai is the largest gas appliance manufacturer in Japan and the number-one selling brand of tankless gas water heaters in North America. Their customers are at the center of their culture and belief system and they are committed to helping them meet the demands of an ever-advancing world with their breakthrough technology.

The Installation Challenge

Modern tankless water heaters are rapidly increasing in popularity. With ever-improving energy efficiency, long-term cost savings, and increasingly compact designs, it's no surprise that market researchers predict the global tankless water heater market to grow at a CAGR of 7.03% between 2018-2022.*

There's also one more additional benefit that often flies under the radar: they're easier to install than you think. Saying that is one thing; proving it is something else entirely. As you can imagine, replacing a traditional water heater with a tankless water heater can be

intimidating to many professional installers. So, how does a company dispel that myth? How can Rinnai America provide installers with the confidence to take the step to tankless water heaters?

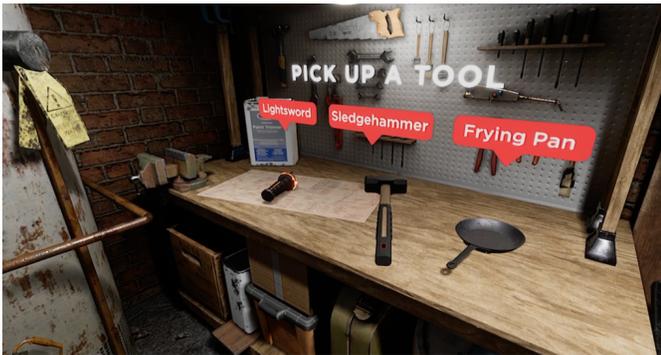
Leveraging Virtual Reality

People learn best by doing. That's why Rinnai America wanted to simulate the installation of tankless water installation and turn it into an exercise to build confidence in their potential customers. The best way to accomplish that: enterprise-grade virtual reality content and hardware.

For content, Rinnai America partnered with Groove Jones, a creative technology company known for their award-winning work in AR and VR, and invited them to their headquarters to walk them through the installation process and provide them with actual product parts for 3D modeling in virtual reality.

For hardware, Rinnai America and Groove Jones went with VIVE's high-resolution displays, spatial sound capabilities, and down-to-the-millimeter room-scale tracking so participants could interact with the experience in a true-to-life fashion.

Yank The Tank



Yank The Tank was the result of this multi-organizational effort. In this three-minute virtual demonstration, users are invited to pick a demolition tool of their choice (sledgehammer, frying pan, lightsword) and lay waste to an old water tank. When the destruction is complete, users are then tasked with removing the totaled tank and beginning the step-by-step process of installing Rinnai's SENSEI™ tankless system.

*Compound annual growth rate (CAGR) provided by Research and Markets. (<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/global-tankless-water-heater-market-2018-2022-rise-in-popularity-of-smart-connected-tankless-water-heaters-300653527.html>)

During the installation, users are faced with practical challenges (e.g. determining which gas line to run, the size of venting needed for the job). The VR application walks them through the decision-making process, providing hints and suggestions as they work their way through the process.

Reactions From The 2018 International Builders' Show

Yank The Tank debuted at the 2018 International Builder's Show (IBS) to rave reviews. Professionals and DIYers alike worked up a sweat demolishing old tanks and installing the new SENSEI™ in VIVE virtual reality with a crowd to cheer them on.

"It's fun, interesting and totally cutting-edge, just like our new products," said Mark Buss, Vice President of Marketing, Rinnai America. "...the immersive VR technology allows the user to get a firsthand look at the ease of installation and overall feel of the new product."

"Feedback was phenomenal from both customers and employees," said David Federico, Senior Brand Manager, Rinnai America. "The VR platform added a new layer to our tradeshow presentation, improving lead generation by 50% over previous years."

From Trade Show to Road Show

With the success of *Yank the Tank* at IBS 2018, Rinnai America took their virtual show on the road with the #TryRinnai Tour. Consisting of eight vehicles outfitted with fully portable VIVE VR systems, the #TryRinnai tour brought the virtual SENSEI™ tankless installation to almost 800 stops in the United States and Canada and effectively expanded their presence like no showcase before it.

About Groove Jones

Groove Jones is a creative technology company that produces next-generation experiences for world-class brands. They are best known for their award-winning work in AR (Augmented Reality), VR (Virtual Reality), ML (Machine Learning), and AI (Artificial Intelligence) application development. Their focus is on creating new and dynamic solutions for clients' challenges across multiple platforms. To learn more, please visit: www.groovejones.com.

