


OVERLAY DYNAMICS

IMMERSIVE NARRATIVES LAYERED ONTO REALITY





Overlay Dynamics tells innovative, interactive stories that unfold as participants travel from place to place solving puzzles and uncovering clues.

WHAT IS AN OVERLAY?

A narrative platform for revealing story through place



SPATIAL STORYTELLING

Overlays combine the adventure of a scavenger hunt, the puzzle-solving of an escape room, and the narrative flow of an immersive theater performance to **expand the boundaries of spatial storytelling.**



REAL WORLD EXPLORATION

Each experience is tailored to a specific area – from a building, park, or neighborhood to an entire city. We use landmarks, public art, and historical markers as clues – **imbuing existing spaces with wonder** without large-scale builds or physical infrastructure.



ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Overlays reward curiosity, **turning audiences into active participants** rather than passive viewers by putting them at the center of narratives that progress at whatever pace is right for them.

SEARCHING FOR A WORLD

Thirty years ago, a novel titled *A World Unto Itself* was written in this very neighborhood. Twenty-seven days after publication, each and every copy vanished.



HAVE YOU SEEN THIS BOOK?

Any information leading to its recovery will be greatly rewarded.

SearchingForAWorld.com



AN OVERLAY IN ACTION (PHASE ONE)

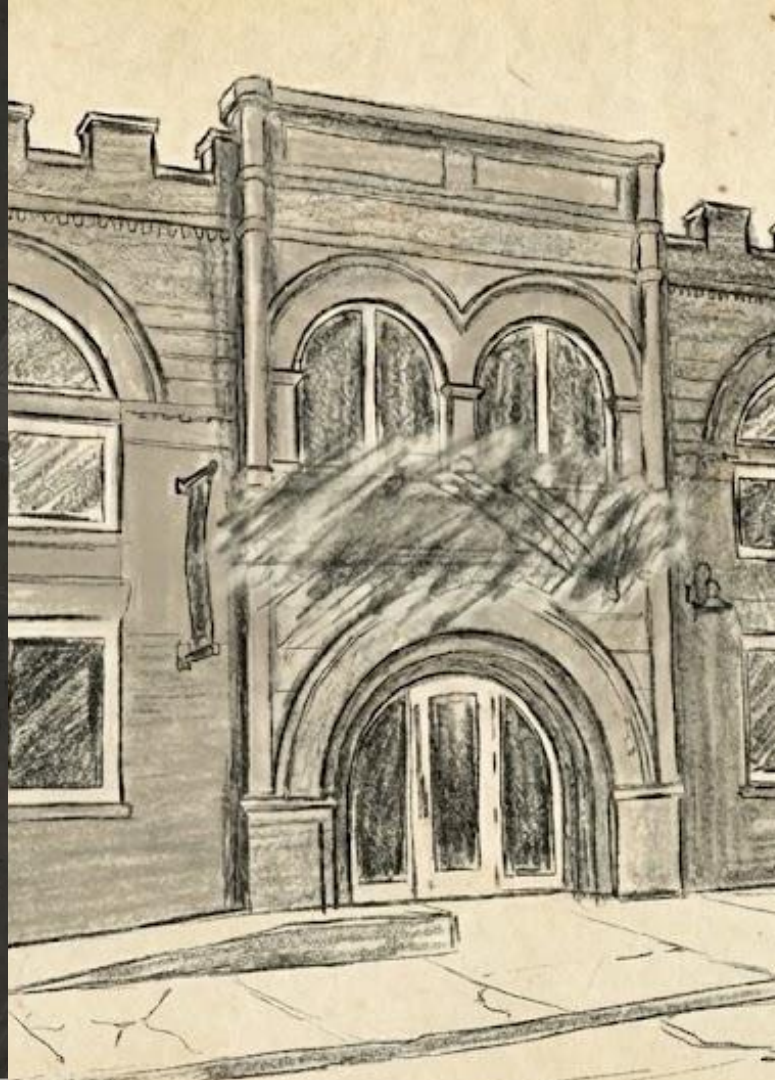
Imagine you're strolling down the street when you notice a strange poster fixed to a light pole outside the local library. It's a cryptic ad for an experimental novel titled *A World Unto Itself*, purportedly written and set right in this very neighborhood. A QR code on the bottom of the poster directs you to SearchingForAWorld.com, a website that informs you that the book has been out of print for three decades. It promises a reward for help tracking down a surviving copy or any information about the author.

AN OVERLAY IN ACTION

(PHASE TWO)

Exploring the website, you learn more about the lost book, which was written in a cafe nearby in the early 90s (though you can't find any mention of it online). You register to help find *A World Unto Itself*, and when you log in, you arrive at a page of leads to explore. The first image you see is a damaged page of the book that includes a sketch of an old stone building with darkened windows. Text under the image asks you to find the building and type in the words that appear above the door, which were messily erased from the drawing.

Looking around, you realize the building from the sketch is just next door. Above the entrance of the old warehouse, you see the words, "J.H. & SONS." You type that into the site and are rewarded with your next clues and more elements of the lost novel to explore.





AN OVERLAY IN ACTION

(PHASE THREE)

As you uncover more leads on the *Searching for a World* website and follow them to nearby cafés, restaurants, and gardens, the puzzles and the story grow in complexity. With the mystery deepening, you begin to feel like part of the adventure – an archivist or detective uncovering a fascinating forgotten work.

You explore at your own pace, with your progress saved as you go. By decrypting ciphers hidden in plaques, signs, and public art, you piece together local history along with a compelling narrative about the novel, its author, and the enigmatic woman searching for it.

When the story draws to a close, you're directed back to the library where you began and given a secret phrase to share with the librarian. Hearing it, they quietly hand you a leather-bound tome. You think you've found *A World Unto Itself*, but the book is hollow. Inside is a journal where you can leave a message for future players, a custom pin commemorating your journey, and a code to explore other Overlays.

VALUE: AUDIENCE

A shared experience designed for discovery



Community Integration

An Overlay serves as a cultural bridge – welcoming visitors, engaging locals, and connecting communities through a shared, story-driven experience.



Magic in Familiar Spaces

An Overlay adds a magical new layer to any location, drawing audiences' attention to things they'd overlooked and giving them a whole new way to interact with a space.



Educational Value

By integrating site-specific information into the narrative and clues, Overlays invite participants to learn about place through exploration and discovery.



Diverse Audience Reach

An Overlay's accessible format attracts audiences who might not normally engage with a site: kids, visitors, locals, students, gamers and immersive enthusiasts alike.

VALUE: ORGS & INSTITUTIONS

Impact and Partnership Potential



Local Partnerships

By incorporating local landmarks and establishments into the narrative, we drive foot traffic to nearby shops, restaurants, and institutions.



Viral Potential

The novelty of Overlays gets people talking and generates earned media; our project *Join Cult* received over 30,000 visitors in a single week with zero marketing spend.



Measurable Engagement

Our platform can provide detail about how many participants visit specific locations, giving funders and civic partners valuable insight into how visitors experience an area.

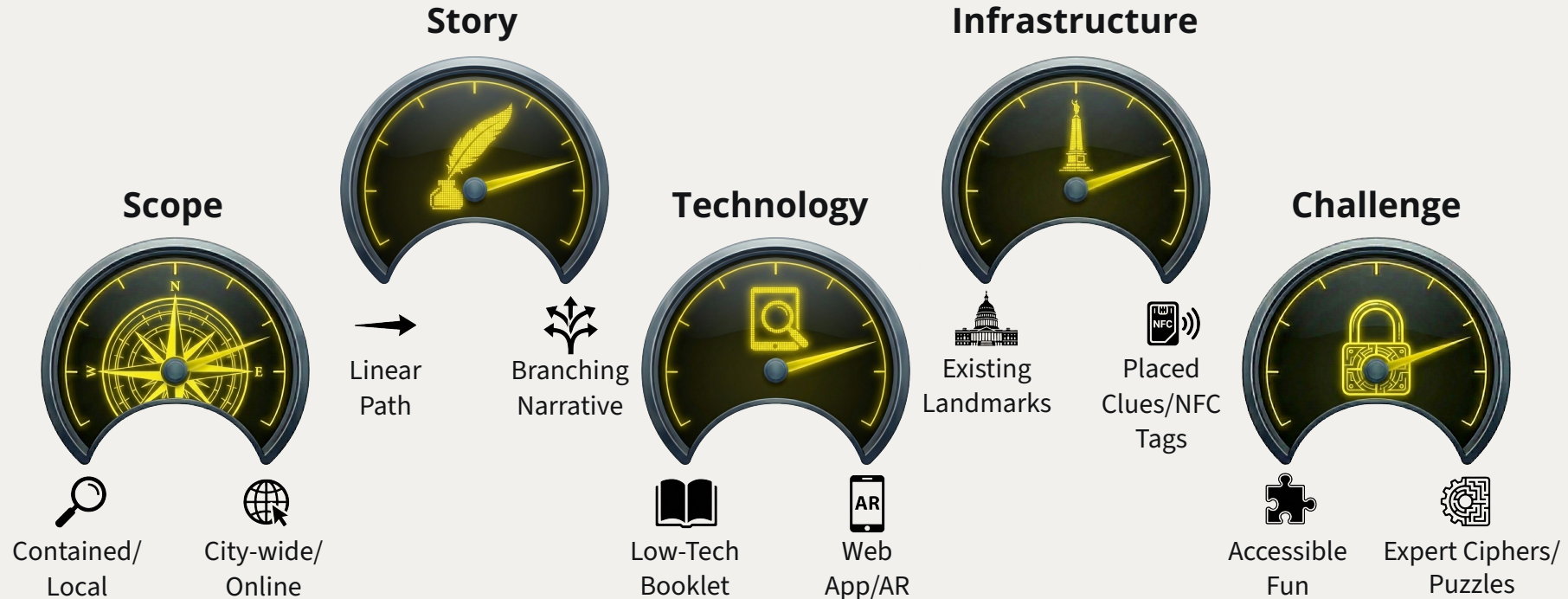


Lasting Playability

Unlike timed events, Overlays can remain active indefinitely without costly upkeep, serving as permanent attractions long after their initial run.

AN OVERLAY TAILORED FOR YOUR NEEDS

Searching for a World is just an example of what an Overlay could look like. Our experiences can be endlessly customized to fit your needs, even allowing for a focused initial activation that expands over time.



CRAFTING THE JOURNEY

Scalable Narrative: A story can consist of as few as four or five puzzles for a quick activation or grow indefinitely into a sprawling, multi-day saga.

Diverse Puzzles: We can use any type of clue you can imagine, from rhyming verse and cryptographic ciphers to puzzles incorporating image, video, and audio.

Dynamic Difficulty: We make puzzles as difficult or easy as you prefer by offering multiple difficulty levels or on-demand hints for participants.

Live Immersion: For an elevated experience, we can incorporate performers into the narrative or train staff and volunteers to give out clues.

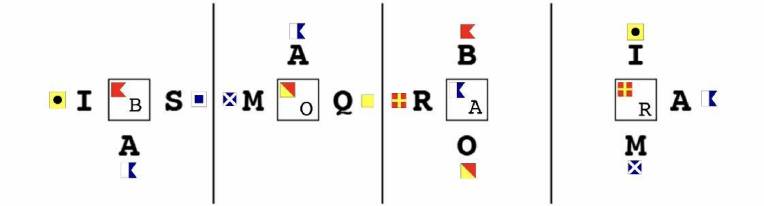




CASE STUDY: THE FOXGLOVE PAPERS

A Paper Map and Short Story Spy Thriller

Emma Foxglove is a former intelligence analyst who was betrayed by the CIA. Fed up with life on the run, she wrote a series of papers that tell her story. Hidden within them are codes that will lead pursuers to landmarks around downtown LA, and eventually to Emma’s current location. The Foxglove Papers is currently playable in downtown Los Angeles as an entirely offline experience.



After solving a clue in Gloria Molina Grand Park, you find yourself at the Redwood Bar & Grill, where you notice that the ceiling tiles are maritime signal flags. Using clues found in the page you’re on, you discover the flags spell out the word “BOAR.” Looking at the map, you’ll find a boar’s head icon over Disney Concert Hall, your next location a couple blocks away. Once there, you’ll have a new puzzle to solve on the next page.



CASE STUDY: JOIN CULT

A Web-Based Walking Tour Hidden in Cryptic Verse

Cult is a question that calls itself an answer. Its progenitors have recently released the Document, “the recursion that withdraws the soul from her bounded instability.” Does this cryptic mumbo jumbo make any sense? Not at all, but the puzzles hidden in the text at *JoinCult.com* will if you’re in downtown Culver City. Using hidden links and rhyming verse, Join Cult takes players on a tour of the local business district, revealing more about a fictional secret society along the way.

One clue reads “*The beast in cage of water revels, it’s Baum who was his tamer / On bench in brass with news of past we find this city’s namer.*” This leads players from a fountain featuring the lion from the Wizard of Oz to a nearby brass statue of Harry Culver reading a newspaper on a bench. Each subsequent stanza takes players to another permanent landmark in view of the location they’re currently at, until they’ve explored eight city blocks and unlocked the arcane secrets of a cult simply called “Cult.”





CASE STUDY: THE LFEA

A Web-App Narrative with NFC Tags and Persistent Progress Tracking

The Los Feliz Everywhen Association is a community council with a simple twist – each of its board members represents an eight-decade period between the years 1700 and 2200, and they communicate outside the confines of time to preserve the character of Los Angeles' Los Feliz neighborhood through the ages. All this (and much more) is explained on the organization's website.

The board is currently seeking candidates for the 1952-2035 seat, and you're invited to apply. But first, you have to prove your dedication to the five other council members. Using a web app built into *LosFelizEverywhen.org*, players log in and earn endorsement badges by completing location-specific puzzles that reveal more about each representative.

Each puzzle leads to an NFC sticker hidden near a storefront along Hillhurst Avenue. When you've scanned all five, you're invited to submit a candidate statement that's hosted on the platform's site. Down the road, you'll be invited to an in-person forum so you can make your case for representing your time period on the board.



LOW COST, HIGH IMPACT

A scalable investment for a permanent city attraction

Baseline Budget: A professional Overlay can be developed for a fraction of the cost of most temporary activations, with a core experience beginning in the low six figures.

Scalable Functionality: With additional funding, we can incorporate exciting features like live actors, custom-built physical clues, and expansive, city-wide branching narratives.

Impact & Insight: This activation provides a splashy, novel reason to visit a neighborhood or institution, as well as valuable data on how participants are engaging with the site, all while generating significant word-of-mouth marketing and earned media.

Sustainable Legacy: Because Overlays utilize existing landmarks and public art, at least one version of the game can remain playable indefinitely with minimal upkeep and overhead, serving as a permanent cultural asset years into the future.



THE CREATIVE ARCHITECTURE

Crafting the Narrative Foundation

Step 1 – Strategic Alignment: We begin by discussing and defining your specific goals and budget to ensure our Overlay serves your needs effectively.

Step 2 – Narrative Foundation: Unlike tech-led experiences that add narrative late in the development process, Overlays are story-first. We leverage our background in professional television writing to craft a story with an authentic voice, compelling plot, and powerful themes before building a single game mechanic.

Step 3 – Site Visit and Local Partnerships: Our team scouts your site to discover locations that can inspire audiences, while potentially collaborating with local artists, businesses, and experiential institutions to ground the story in your area's creative DNA.





ENGINEERING THE EXPERIENCE

Development, Testing, and Live Support

Step 4 – Benchmarks and Building: We develop the Overlay through a series of planned demos, delivering regular updates to ensure the experience is on-target.

Step 5 – Iterative Play-Testing: We conduct rigorous on-site testing, making constant tweaks to ensure all clues are accessible and the narrative flow is seamless.

Step 6 – Marketing, Launch and Debut: Once everything works exactly as you intend, the Overlay is ready to debut. We'll support outreach as well to ensure the experience finds its audience.

Step 7 – Maintenance and Support: Throughout the first few weeks, we'll be on-site to make sure the game runs smoothly. We can also provide Social Media support to drive participants to the experience and keep players engaged.

WHO WE ARE

Overlay Dynamics is owned and operated by Ben Deeb. Ben is a Los Angeles-based TV writer and game designer who's written four episodes of ABC's *Black-ish* and created a number of insane party games. When he's not writing or creating Overlays, Ben builds custom furniture and stained glass windows and creates satirical websites for fake businesses.

To bring our stories to life, Overlay Dynamics employs a team of wildly talented media professionals with backgrounds in marketing, game design, immersive theater, film, and television. We've worked with major brands, marketing agencies, and tourism boards.

We'd be thrilled to work with you next.



CONCLUSION

Overlay Dynamics imbues the everyday with a sense of wonder. We turn the ordinary world into a realm where anything is possible and send players on fantastic place-based adventures.

We don't just add to the world; we reveal the extraordinary layers already waiting within it. Our narratives invite audiences to step inside the story, explore with intention, and shape their experience through curiosity and discovery.

The Overlay we'd build together would be more than a marketing activation. It would be a living story woven into the fabric of a place, experienced firsthand by the people moving through it.

Let's build that experience together.



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