



Smart glasses

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## SMART GLASSES PROJECT HOLOGRAMS ONLY THE WEARER CAN SEE

 TELECOMMUNICATIONS

### **New smart glasses are controlled through a ring and project holograms into the wearer's eyes.**

Startup Thalmic Labs has recently changed its name to **North** and changed its approach, from smart armbands to smart glasses. The glasses, called Focals, use holographic display technology to overlay images onto the real world. One arm of the glasses contain a tiny projector. Images from the projector reflect off an element on the inside of the lens to focus the light back to the wearers' eye. The results are holographic images that only the wearer can see. The images include information like the weather, calendar appointments and incoming messages. According to Stephen Lake, North's CEO and co-founder, the glasses are "designed around the human experience". A ring called the Loop controls the glasses and is worn on the index finger so the attached joystick can be controlled with the thumb.

The Focal smart glasses join a host of other smart glasses projects, such as **caption glasses** that sync with theatre shows and **lightweight AR glasses** designed for the mass market.

Every pair of Focals is custom-fitted to the wearers' head. To achieve this, North is setting up retail stores in Brooklyn and Toronto. The glasses are also compatible with Alexa. Users can ask Alexa questions and see the answer pop up in front of them. North is also working on integrating Focals into apps such as Uber and Google Maps. The glasses can also be used as normal spectacles for prescription users.

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### **Takeaway:**

Unlike many other augmented reality glasses, the Focal design is not suitable for gaming. Instead they are intended to augment everyday life. It's uncertain whether glasses with minimal practicality will spark interest, but North is banking on people wanting a more minimal and less intrusive approach to technology. Will people be willing to spend 1000 USD on non-obtrusive technology?