

Debate

Google Glass: Revolutionary Innovation or Privacy Nightmare?

ISSUE: Will Google Glass make it easier for privacy violations and cheating to occur?

Google Glass, Google's new product introduction, was designed so that a person can have their eyes, hands, and ears free, maintain a natural body posture, and still remain technologically connected. Google Glass has many of the functions that other mobile devices possess, including text messaging, videos, picture taking, weather and traffic updates, Google Maps, and translation features. The translation feature can be particularly helpful. If you want to know how a certain word is said in another language, you can ask Google Glass and it will tell you the translation. In addition, if you are in a foreign country or speaking to someone using a different language, Google Glass can translate what the other person is saying in real time and tell you how to respond in the person's native language.

The video conferencing feature is another powerful component of Google Glass. With this feature, you can keep friends and family members apprised of what is going on in real time. For example, if you are seeing a beautiful sight or a once-in-a-lifetime event and want to share it with a loved one, a simple conference call to that person enables the two of you to watch it. While conference calling and face time features are not new, the way that Google Glass captures the moment mirrors a more real experience rather than a technological one. Google Glass is convenient and helps connect consumers to one another.

Those who have used Google Glass say that it is an intriguing invention and can be useful to those in highly specialized fields. However, there are challenges involved with using Google Glass among the general public. In the past, Google has faced many privacy issues with their products. Google Glass is no exception. In fact, some stakeholders believe Google Glass is going to cause some of the most serious privacy violations. For example, some parents worry that predatory individuals could take pictures of their children without their knowledge. Cheating is also a potential issue. A student might be able to check answers to a test by going to the restroom and whipping out his or her Google Glass. Several establishments such as schools, bars, and gyms have banned the device because of its potential for misuse. Another concern is that it could be a safety hazard while walking and driving.

There are two sides to every issue:

- 1. Although Google Glass could be misused, its benefits are far greater than the costs.*
 - 2. Google Glass can be easily misused and will cause a number of serious problems.*
-

Sources:

Google Glass website, <http://www.google.com/glass/start/> (accessed July 16, 2013).

"Google Glass Project," YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSnB06um5r4> (accessed July 16, 2013).

This material was developed by Michelle Urban under the direction of O.C. Ferrell and Linda Ferrell. It is provided for the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative at the University of New Mexico and is intended for classroom discussion rather than to illustrate effective or ineffective handling of administrative, ethical, or legal decisions by management. Users of this material are prohibited from claiming this material as their own, emailing it to others, or placing it on the Internet. Please call O.C. Ferrell at 505-277-3468 for more information. (2013)

James Rivington, "Google Glass: What You Need to Know," Tech Radar, July 3, 2013. <http://www.techradar.com/us/news/video/google-glass-what-you-need-to-know-1078114> (accessed July 16, 2013).

Alex Roth, "Hands On: Google Glass Review," Tech Radar, May 17, 2013, <http://www.techradar.com/us/reviews/gadgets/google-glass-1152283/review> (accessed July 16, 2013).

Patrick Goss, "7 Google Glass Apps We Can't Wait to Use," Tech Radar, May 11, 2013, <http://www.techradar.com/us/news/world-of-tech/7-google-glass-apps-we-can-t-wait-to-use-1149654> (accessed July 16, 2013).

Gary Marshall, "Who's Afraid of Google Glass?" Tech Radar, May 2, 2013, <http://www.techradar.com/us/news/portable-devices/who-s-afraid-of-google-glass--1148601> (accessed July 16, 2013).

"Sergey Brin: Why Google Glass?" TED, May 2013, http://www.ted.com/talks/sergey_brin_why_google_glass.html (accessed July 16, 2013).