



Google Glass - Does the future see us wearing wearable technology?

The first Google Glass prototype in 2011 weighed 8 pounds, now they weigh as much as a pair of sun glasses. **Alex Keeble** is a Barclays Digital Eagle, part of a team of 5,200 who actively work to help people, customers and colleagues, to learn how digital technology can help them in their daily lives.

Google Glass? That's right, Google, the search engine giant that handles over 100 billion searches a month has created a ubiquitous computer or in other words, is an advanced concept where computing is made to appear everywhere all the time. Imagine waking up in the morning and seeing the time projected right in front of your face, or the weather forecast for the day telling you to take an umbrella with you. Imagine you've moved to a new place and need directions to a supermarket or a family's new home; Google Glass will project the directions directly in front of you. It's an interesting concept with great potential to succeed and fail. Are we ready for wearable technology in our day-to-day lives or is it simply a gimmick?

How does it work?

At first glance it looks like a pair of futuristic glasses until you get behind them. Google have crammed in a lot of technology into such a small device. However, this doesn't come without a hefty price tag of £915, which for most of us is a lot of money for a 'toy'. Even so, what you'll receive is high-resolution front facing camera for capturing moments as they happen, a prism that displays your screen, 16GB's of storage to capture you images, music, videos and contacts, a microphone that uses voice activation to control your device for example, you could say "Give me directions to London Bridge" or "what year was Barclays founded?" and your Google Glass will connect to the internet and provide the results through your display or speakers. The device also includes a touchpad system that allows you to effortlessly swipe through a time line like interface. Glass is powered by an onboard

battery that fits around your face within the frame. It is an incredible design and a great achievement to see what is possible in today's world.

What are the opportunities?

It's great creating an expensive piece of showcase technology but unless it has practical uses then we as customers have no desire to purchase. Intriguingly, this is where it gets very exciting for 2014 and beyond. Virgin Atlantic has launched a Google Glass pilot scheme to its upper class staff to help improve customer service. Staff will provide up to date flight information, weather forecasts and translate any foreign information. Other applications include the DriveSafe app that detects when you are falling asleep while driving and triggers an alert to wake you to a Lynxfit app that provides a fitness companion. Google Glass envisions a future where technology and human interaction combine to achieve and enhance the best of both worlds.

Barclays has innovated in financial services throughout our 325 year history, and we are committed to supporting that innovation for generations to come. More recently we have introduced digital banking innovations such as Pingit and our mobile banking app. What's also important is that alongside this we have recognised the importance of still having the human element and through our Digital Eagles programme we have trained our colleagues to make the digital world understandable and explain the advantages of digital banking and commerce to our customers.

Further information:

Alex Keeble, Frontline Help, Frontline Help Manager
Mobile 07775547416
Email alex.keeble@barclays.com