

Laforge seeks funding for fashion-friendly Icis smart glasses

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(Phys.org) —The wearables smart specs marketplace is a trend yet to happen. On the one hand, proponents emphasize how cool it will be to stay connected via wearables without having to keep extracting and replacing a handheld device. On the other side is parody suggesting those wearing smart glasses will look odd, not sophisticated. There is also worry over what others' reactions might be if taking the leap to wear a smart eyewear device in public. Laforge Optical, a Boston-based group, wants to provide a confidence boost in the form of smart eyeglasses where the tech aspect is real but not obvious. Icis takes on the form of conventional eyewear, using a special set of optics blended into the lenses. The device is equipped with a battery that delivers up to six hours of battery life. The Laforge goal is to launch smart eyeglasses without

the clunky look, without the intrusion aura, without causing the self-thoughts. After all, making one kind of eyewear to fit everyone's face, says their promotional video, is like making one pair of shoes to fit everyone's feet. Instead, "We are creating a choice of styles, colors and shapes to complement your personality."

Using a specialized app called socialFlo, the user picks which apps communicate with the smartspecs. Once socialFlo is installed on the user's smartphone, the apps can be selected and they appear as widgets. The system works with iOS, Android, and Windows phone platforms. Icis features a camera, microphone, and speaker to complement the smartphone hardware

Though the company site describes the wearables as "prescription eyewear" anyone who does not need a prescription can also wear it. The team's FAQ asks, "Are these glasses available without a prescription?" The answer is "Yes! If you have perfect eyesight, your prescription is "0".

The Icis is a work in progress. The company has taken to the crowdfunding site Indiegogo to launch a campaign. "After two years doing circuit layouts, design drawings, and traveling across the country to meet with prospective partners, we have reached the limits of what we can do with our resources," said the team on Indiegogo. Their goal is to raise \$80,000.

For those who like the concept of a hands-free, wearable screen worn as an eyeglass pair, yet who lean toward a minimalist view that good design means as little as possible, this eyeglass product will be appealing. Laforge company founder Corey Mack has a degree in engineering from Rochester Institute of Technology; he said on his website that he has been a minimalist most of his life. "I have found myself always trying to reduce the complexity of a design or idea by combining multiple

functions or tasks. When it comes to design I feel the same way. I am not a fan of gaudy or over-complicated product designs." The company team, like Mack, studied at the Rochester Institute of Technology. They are offering a range of prices and deals that go with pledge options. Shipping dates, depending on the pledge type, are December and January 2015.

More information: [www.indiegogo.com/projects/laf ... iption-smart-glasses](http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/laf... iption-smart-glasses)

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