

Montreal VR headset team turns to crowdfunding for Totem

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A challenger in the virtual reality headset marketplace has launched a crowdfunding campaign to get the project off the ground. The headset is called Totem. The company behind Totem is Montreal-based Vrvana. This is a headset with dual on-board cameras and hardware acceleration that delivers an immersive VR experience, said its CEO, Bertrand Nepveu. "It acts like your brain," he said. The Totem connects to any HDMI source (computer, console, Blu-ray, tablet, etc.) that plays Side-by-Side (SbS) 3D video or games. Rahul Sood, GM of Microsoft

Ventures and founder of VoodooPC, said that as someone involved in multiple gaming companies and who currently works with startups as part of his day job, he was impressed. "I love the product and I love the fact that it can hook up to any HDMI port and just work."

The team said the Totem works with current DK1 Rift-enabled games and they are currently working to enable DK2 Rift games. As part of the specs information, the platforms listed are Windows, Mac and Linux; Playstation 3 & 4; and Xbox One and 360.

Each lens can be adjusted individually for myopia and hyperopia (from -7 to +3 diopters). "No need to wear contact lenses or have your glasses uncomfortably squeezed against your eyelashes," said the team, which includes four cofounders.

While the starting point will be gamers, cofounder and COO Marc Olivier Lepage said the group has ambitions for Totem to expand to different segments. Other applications include professionals visiting architectural spaces or development sites that have not yet built in immersive walkthroughs; and in training environments, such as aviation navigational landing or practicing surgical techniques.

Cherrie Abraham, MD, a vascular surgeon at the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal, said one could imagine having a [virtual-reality](#) simulation of the patient, and being able to actually go through that operation, seeing your hands operating, and being able to anticipate problems that may arise when doing the operation.

Realistic binaural surround sound, 90-degree field of view and RGB stripe OLED are some of the additional features of their device. The creators noted that "because we're using an RGB stripe panel instead of a pentile panel, users see less screen door effect."

Those pledging about \$450 USD get the Totem developer headset with estimated delivery of April next year. The developer kit includes the Totem head-mounted display unit, connection box, cabling, cleaning cloth and carrying case. SDK online support will include documentation, code, engine plug-ins, demos and tutorials. In their FAQ section on the Kickstarter page, they said the developer kit is for developers who are developing VR experiences and content. The DK is also an opportunity to get involved early and influence the development of the product. They said the consumer version will be built based on user feedback they receive. They said, "Totem's early release to developers means user feedback at the right time to make our consumer version with the best possible features and specifications."



More information: www.kickstarter.com/projects/2...d-virtual-reality-he

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