Interactive tabletop holographic display soars on Kickstarter

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Holus is a tabletop holographic platform that could make many people aware of what consumer technology will be like in future years. They will get a taste of the digital world meeting the physical world, the digital world as an intrinsic part of the immediate environment, utilized to interact with people near and far. Holus would be a tabletop Jack in the

Box. That is—that would really be your friend, Jack, in the box.

Would anyone actually want to buy Holus? Just ask all the people who have flocked to the Kickstarter page for this device, having pledged $108,675 against a sought-after amount of $40,296—and with 29 days still left to go.

Converting 2D digital content into a 3D holographic experience would go over nicely with people of all ages, and not just for those who want to play games. Holus can easily be imagined in educational settings. Since people can move around and engage with the content, one can build on teaching subject matter. "Teachers can keep students engrossed in learning about DNA structure or the solar system by presenting information from multiple angles and encouraging physical interaction," they said.

Talking about their tabletop display in a video, they said they wanted to make something with as many viewing angles as possible. You can view content from different angles. The group made Holus shaped as a pyramid instead of four square sides to shrink the size of Holus so as not to take up much space and, they said, it creates a better holographic effect.

Tempered glass coating was designed to reflect a specific amount of light, they said, for optimal design quality. There is a slide-out drawer with inset plugs. There are USB side charging ports so that multiple users may stay charged using the device. Built in HD directional mini-speakers sync with devices. Setup appears easy: Unbox, plug in and download a choice of apps from the Google Play & Apple Stores.

Holus is from the company H+Technology in Vancouver. The team pooled their interest in human-computer interaction under the guidance of masters graduates of The Center for Digital Media. It was founded in 2012 by Dhruv Adhia, Vincent Yang and Yamin Li after completing their Master's at the Center, in Vancouver. They belong to that camp of innovators who focus on digital interactive systems that feel natural to use, with seemingly no barrier between human and digital information. As they put it, they would like to work with "non-isolating computing

environments" where users engage with information in a three-dimensional form.

They have two versions of Holus, a Home Edition with two smartphone charging docks, and a Holus Pro. Some key differences are that Holus Pro is larger and includes an HDMI input as well as USB input. They are to make an SDK available for developers. Unity and Unreal, two video game engines, will be supported by the SDK.

So how do you connect Holus with different devices? You can directly pair your smartphone with Holus through a WiFi or Bluetooth connection. "Along with Holus, we provide a Software Development Kit (SDK) and Middleware that allows any developer to connect third party hardware," they said. Their documentation includes how to use Holus in terms of transporting content and networking.

User interfaces such as gesture are possible. In connecting Holus to other input devices such as Leap Motion, one can interact directly with the content using gesture recognition.

The Pro version of Holus will ship in March 2016 and Home will ship in July 2016. For $685 USD, you get one Holus. An $846 USD pledge fetches one Holus Pro and one Leap Motion Sensor. "A sample Unity project will also be included alongside the SDK developer kits for both Holus and Leap Motion." Estimated delivery is March next year.

More information: www.kickstarter.com/projects/1 … -holographic-display