

HoloLens development edition is coming in 2016

December 19 2015, by Nancy Owano



Microsoft is focusing on [developers](#), not the general public, for the latest in HoloLens events and announcements. The good news for the public is that, in doing so, the conversation is shedding light on what is behind HoloLens and what to expect once availability happens.

Do not expect to be mentally transported into another world; you remain

in a familiar place where virtual characters may join your space. You're looking at sessions of [mixed reality](#), not virtual reality.

Engadget features editor Joseph Volpe asserted that "any and all comparisons to emerging virtual reality tech and related gaming or entertainment applications should be excised from the [conversation](#) for now. It's not 'immersive' as one Microsoft rep stressed to me, clearly keen to avoid the confused commingling of AR and VR buzzwords. It's 'complementary.'"

The development edition will ship in the first quarter of 2016, for \$3000.

This is an augmented reality headset; some watchers call it an "untethered wearable." HoloLens works all on its own: all the hardware necessary to run any program is inside the headset, said *Popular Science*. Microsoft's definition of its HoloLens: The first holographic computer running Windows 10. You get to place holograms in your own physical [environment](#).

From mixed reality to virtual reality, though, the immediate perception of a headset development on the horizon is gaming. Nonetheless, the HoloLens creators point out that it has been engineered for productivity as well as design.



"HoloLens is very much a powerful tool for business, science and education—both Volvo and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory are actively experimenting with it," said *Engadget's* Volpe.

Developers can check out HoloLens at the Microsoft store on 5th Avenue in New York City where showcasing has begun.

For Bryan Lukfkin in *Gizmodo*, a key role the user's eyes will play was noteworthy. "With the HoloLens, the 'cursor' is your eyes. You look around a real room you're in and select holographic [images](#) that appear in your goggles by hovering the cursor in the middle of your field of vision over the object. To interact with the object, you 'air tap.' In front of the goggles by pointing your index finger in the air and making a fast swipe down motion. Voice commands are also at your disposal."

Edward Baig of *USA Today* shared the experience: At the store, Baig found himself shooting at robotic aliens firing at him as he fired back at them, floating around him. They seemed to hide inside the walls of the [room](#) and he went after them. He could see them through a built-in X-ray feature.

Those were games; Lufkin described a demo which indicated how businesses and other organizations may use HoloLens for presentations.



Goodbye yawnfests of having to watch 23 charts on a white screen.

"The idea here is that you can replace boring PowerPoints with holograms. (How appropriate for Microsoft!) In the demo, I stepped into

a fictional boardroom pitch for a luxury watch. I looked at real table in the room and saw a large hologram watch blown up to the size of a golden retriever...I could [move](#) the cursor with my eyes to different points of interest on the watch. When I looked at the band, a pop up told me what the links were made of. In another spot I was given info about the battery."

"What I can tell you is that the technology is 'mindblowing,' said Baig. He said that "when digital becomes part of the physical and vice versa, the most promising reality is that you're in for a [treat](#)."

Said Michael Nuñez in *Popular Science*: "It's true that the HoloLens already has all of necessary computing power to be used as a legitimate productivity tool. Now all it needs is a killer [app](#)."

He said the HoloLens is powered by a CPU, graphics process unit (GPU), and something that Microsoft is calling a "holographic processing unit" (HPU), which interprets and processes data from the device's sensor array.

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