Project Alloy makes use of hand interaction with virtual world

August 17 2016, by Nancy Owano

During the opening keynote of the Intel Developer Forum in San Francisco on Tuesday, August 16, 2016, Intel CEO Brian Krzanich unveiled Project Alloy, an all-in-one virtual reality solution leveraging Intel RealSense technology. Project Alloy will be offered as an open platform in 2017. Credit: Intel Corporation

(Tech Xplore)—What do you know about merged reality? As the phrase suggests, we can safely guess it is a technology that makes it possible for physical and digital objects to co-exist. As interesting, the person engaging in merged reality can interact in real-time.

On Tuesday Intel offered up its merged-reality introduction. The company feels it is "pushing the boundaries of compute innovation" in doing so. Intel is getting behind these immersive experiences in the name of Project Alloy.

The Intel video's notes described experiencing physical and virtual interactions and environments across VR/AR/Mixed Realities through a suite of sensing, digitizing and computing technologies.

Cue in the 2016 Intel Developer Forum. That is where Intel CEO Brian Krzanich introduced the merged-reality concept from Intel. On Tuesday he took the wraps off Project Alloy as an all-in-one solution.

Project Alloy will be offered as an open platform in 2017. Here is the plan. The Intel announcement said, "Intel is collaborating with Microsoft to optimize Windows-based content and experiences on Intel-based VR devices such as Alloy. Intel will open the Alloy hardware and provide open APIs for the ecosystem, allowing developers and partners to create their own branded products from the Alloy design, in 2017."

As Leo Kelion, technology desk editor, BBC, said, "It intends to offer the technology to other manufacturers next year, but will not sell the headsets itself."

Intel's Craig Raymond displays the Project Alloy virtual reality headset during the Day 1 keynote at the 2016 Intel Developer Forum in San Francisco on Tuesday, Aug. 16, 2016. Intel CEO Brian Krzanich's keynote presentation offered perspective on the unique role Intel will play as the boundaries of computing continue to expand. Credit: Intel Corporation

Talking points about Project Alloy are (1) The VR cord is cut. You are untethered. You move without a dangling cord for connection between your headset and computer. The head mounted device already has the computing power. Intel's announcement said that you can "cut the VR cord," allowing a free range of motion with 6 degrees-of-freedom across a large space. "This, combined with collision detection and avoidance, enables the user to utilize physical movement to explore a virtual space."

(2) You can use your hands to interact with story elements. Don't care for the waiter's attitude? You can use your hands to push him aside and into the indoor pool. (3) No need for elaborate setup. The headset has you covered, with Intel RealSense cameras attached to the headset.

(*Fast Company* said Alloy is "self-contained, with everything required to create the experience built into the goggles themselves.")

The video has a cinema vibe and a catlike purring woman asks, what if virtual reality felt less virtual and more real? And what if you had the power to change the story?

Kelion referred to an expert who commented on where Project Alloy may have potential.

"Having a real-time rendition of your hands or other objects in VR could have appeal to enterprise applications, such as a surgeon training with a body diagram or a mechanic having graphics overlaid onto an engine part," said Ed Barton from Ovum. "But when it comes to gaming, there hasn't been much clamor to be able to see your hands in real-time."

  More information: newsroom.intel.com/chip-shots/ … veils-project-alloy/

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