

BMW HoloActive Touch system with its free-floating display to be shown at CES

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Credit: BMW

(Tech Xplore)—HoloActive Touch from BMW will be one of the likely attention-grabbers at next month's CES show in Las Vegas—just by its

name you know it is something you want to check out.

So what is it? This takes the form of a virtual touchscreen next to the steering wheel. It's an interface between the driver and vehicle and BMW said it "acts like a virtual touchscreen; its free-floating display is operated using finger gestures and confirms the commands with what the driver perceives as tactile feedback."

That it is free-floating marks a distinguishing feature.

"For the first time, the functions can be controlled without any physical contact with [materials](#)," said Horatiu Boeriu in *BMW BLOG*.

Michael Austin in *Autoblog* used plain talk: "Forget buttons, forget touchscreens. In the future we'll just wave our hands inside the car and stuff will [happen](#)."

Sam Byford *The Verge* on Thursday also wrote about BMW's announcement. "BMW distinguishes HoloActive Touch from existing HUDs by using reflections to create the illusion of a [display](#) floating in space rather than on the windshield." JC Torres in *SlashGear*: "There are cameras that keep an eye on the driver's hands, fingers to be exact, and determines if a finger has made [contact](#) with one of the virtual control pads. If it does, a pulse is generated and the appropriate action is taken."

The BMW release said that "the image of a full-colour display is generated by clever use of reflections but now in free-floating form within the interior rather than through projection onto the windscreen. It displays flexibly configurable control pads and is visible to the driver next to the steering wheel at the height of the centre console. A camera detects the driver's hand movements within this ergonomically user-friendly area, and registers the position of their fingertips, in particular. As soon as a fingertip makes contact with one of these virtual control

surfaces, a pulse is emitted and the relevant function is [activated](#)."

Byford added that the "HoloActive Touch works with services that are part of BMW's Connected cloud architecture."

"Holo" may evoke an expectation of a deceased rock star sitting quietly as a passenger in your car, but no need to let your imagination run off the track. Andrew Krok in CNET: "HoloActive Touch doesn't actually replace the infotainment system with holograms—that's still a bit too sci-fi. Instead, consider it more of a mix of a head-up display and a touchscreen. Reflections display information in full color to the right of the [steering wheel](#). Underneath it is a control pad that responds to the user's [gestures](#)."

Also, this is a look at the future. The BMW Group said this is another glimpse into "the interior of the future."

The CES event in Las Vegas event generally attracts viewers curious for what's next in innovative technologies.

The BMW HoloActive Touch system will be making its debut there. The company announcement went on to say, "BMW HoloActive Touch is part of the BMW i Inside Future study, which gives visitors to the CES, taking place on 5 – 8 January 2017, an impression of the mobility experience set to be offered by seamlessly connected and autonomously-driving cars in the future."

More information: www.press.bmwgroup.com/global/...terior-of-the-future

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