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CASO 1 – Google Glass

How did the Google Glass morph from being one of Time magazine's best inventions of the year in 2012 to an embarrassing flop in 2015?

Google Glass resembled a pair of eyeglasses with a small screen visible to the wearer. Its notable features included a touchpad that allowed the wearer to "see" current and past events, such as phone calls, photos, and updates, and a camera to take pictures and record video. The sound, video, and graphics accessed through the screen created an augmented reality that overlaid the physical, real-world environment at the same time.

Google started selling a prototype (not the finished product) to 8,000 qualified "Glass Explorers" in April 2013, for $1,500. The intent was to collect feedback on the device and then quickly update and fix problems before a planned launch of the product in May 2014 for the same price. Unfortunately, by releasing Google Glass widely, and charging $1,500, the public believed the device to be a finished product, not a prototype. It quickly became apparent that the prototype suffered from a short battery life, poor sound quality, and distorted images.

The technical problems could be fixed. But Google Glass had more severe problems - all of which related to incomplete concept testing. For example, Google never really understood how consumers would perceive the device. Was it simply a "cool" geeky gadget or wearable, chic eyeglass technology for a broader audience? How would wearers use the technology? As it happened, users immediately embraced the photo and video capabilities, and Google Glass wearers were thrown out of clubs and banned from theaters because of privacy and intellectual property concerns. More troubling, Google Glass wearers were derisively called "Glassholes."

The result? Google Glass was withdrawn from the market in January 2015. A new version of Google Glass, called Glass Enterprise Edition, is being tested for a full-scale introduction in 2018 for use by tech workers.

Google Glass Is Back—Now with Artificial Intelligence

On Tuesday, Israeli software company Plataine demonstrated a new app for the face-mounted gadget. Aimed at manufacturing workers, it understands spoken language and offers verbal responses. Think of an Amazon Alexa for the factory floor.

Plataine's app points to a future where Glass is enhanced with artificial intelligence, making it more functional and easy to use. With clients including GE, Boeing, and Airbus, Plataine is working to add image-recognition capabilities to its app as well.

The company showed off its Glass tech at a conference in San Francisco devoted to Google's cloud computing business; the app from Plataine was built using AI services provided by Google's cloud division, and with support from the search giant. Google is betting that charging other companies to tap AI technology developed for its own use can help the cloud business draw customers away from rivals Amazon and Microsoft.

Jennifer Bennett, technical director to Google Cloud's CTO office, said that adding Google's cloud services to Glass could help make it a revolutionary tool for workers in situations where a laptop or smartphone would be awkward. "Many of you probably remember Google Glass from the consumer days—it's baaack," she said, earning warm laughter, before introducing Plataine's project. "Glass has become a really interesting technology for the enterprise."

The session came roughly one year after Google abandoned its attempt to sell consumers on Glass and its eye-level camera and display, which proved controversial due to privacy concerns. Instead, Google relaunched the gadget as a tool for businesses called Google Glass Enterprise Edition. Pilot projects have involved Boeing workers using Glass on helicopter production lines, and doctors wearing it in the examining room.

Anat Karni, product lead at Plataine, slid on a black version of Glass Tuesday to demonstrate the app. She showed how the app could tell a worker clocking in for the day about production issues that require urgent attention, and show useful information for resolving problems on the device's display.

A worker can also talk to Plataine's app to get help. Karni demonstrated how a worker walking into a storeroom could say "Help me select materials." The app would respond, verbally and on the display, with what materials would be needed and where they could be found. A worker's actions could be instantly visible to factory bosses, synced into the software Plataine already provides customers, such as Airbus, to track production operations.

Source: https://www.wired.com/story/google-glass-is-backnow-with-artificial-intelligence/

Question:

a) Identify the reasons for the failure of Google Glass launch.

b) What are the major changes Google made with the recent relaunch of Google Glass to overcome the initial launch problems?