

LiveMap Critique

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Link: <https://sites.google.com/site/cs491vitaliyaleonova/home/homework/student-s-choice/livemap>



Overview:

Livemap is a head mounted display that uses augmented reality to help bikers navigate the roads of Russia. The idea behind it, is that bikers, just like drivers, need to focus on the road and can't look away especially when navigating in densely populated areas.

With cars most you can either attach a GPS/smart phone to you vehicles dash and see it clearly (or worse case scenario you can hold up a map in front of you while you drive). Motorcycles have the problem of being in the open environment, where there isn't much room to mount such a device, and physical maps require the biker to stop to use them, same goes for their phones.

The system is to be released at a price point of around 2000\$, and the overall system has been in development for around 3-4 years.

Critique:

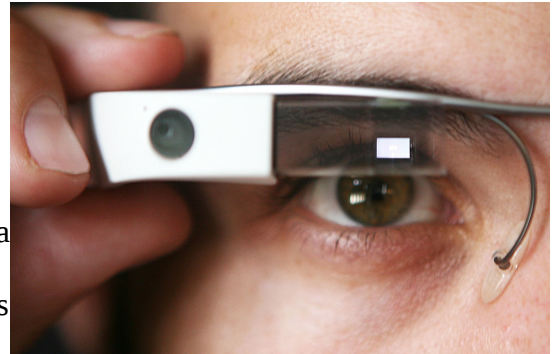
I have experience in both, driving in cars and on motorcycles, which help me can relate to the issues, that are caused by not having directions, can cause to a driver. My experience extends to having driven in both the states and parts of Poland/German, but never in Russia (so I won't comment on that part).

I know how roads can get confusing in Europe in general. I recount many times where I (or friends/family) pull on to the side of the road to ask pedestrians for directions. Now this is due not only to the fact that our GPS wouldn't work, or that we don't have proper Internet connection most of the time, but the fact that some roads in Europe are just not labeled properly, they end abruptly, or just don't show up on Google Maps (or other websites). So when a system is proposed of giving proper directions, I hope that this system isn't just for people who drive specifically in eastern cities, since this would first make the market very small and specific, and may not become that popular. If this system is extended to support more of Europe (the states, Asia, etc.), this would better benefit the system, and may not be hard to implement after the system goes out to market. Other GPS systems already exist, none in this form, but none the less the problem with traversing cities and rural areas isn't caused only by not being able to use a map, but other factors as well.

Another issue, the system hitting the market at the cost that is proposed. When you're in Europe on a motorcycle, the reason you are riding one is usually cause it's cheaper to own, and doesn't cost much to buy one(and in some cases since you it's easier to get a driving license for a motorcycle than getting a drivers license for a car). In the states it is popular for middle aged men to buy expensive

Harley motorcycles and go across country and what not, but that isn't really common in Europe (to my knowledge) . Most of the time it's younger adults on scooters (late teens as well).Occasionally you might see middle-aged drivers who were able to buy a nicer bike. Now I understand, just as most industries, there are people who don't fall under these categories and wouldn't mind spending more money to get these types of directions (where they can traverse without the need of using a phone or a map). If I had the money to buy such a system I probably would too. At the same time I don't think many people would buy a system that costs almost as much as what they are riding, so unless the price comes down significantly as the technology is better, I'm not sure how initial wide spread release of the system will be. Also since the system doesn't offer to many benefits outside of being a motorcycle helmet, there aren't many other uses for it outside of users who are riding motorcycles.

So far I have only talked about the down sides of this kind of a system, but the only reason is due to high price and the system may not being as revolutionary as it might claim. I love the idea of getting an augmented reality display on my head when driving, motorcycle, car, bike, or even walking. A wider range of customers may be achieved when having a system that has more uses. Most customers would rather buy a system that encompasses all these at once, such a system like Google glass (it may not be popular at the moment but there is a chance when technology gets better one day it'll seamlessly integrate with glasses, and hope that security concerns about being recorded are addressed properly). There are so many things you can do at the point when you are no longer bound to having the whole system in a helmet.



It is claimed that the LiveMap helmet is better compared to Google glass by being higher quality, and more adaptable to driving conditions, includes a camera for recording (which I feel is a must have for any driver in Europe, dash cams and helmet cams alike). Having headphones is a nice touch, and the ability to communicate with other drivers (who own the system as well) is also very beneficial. If I could afford such a system I probably would, since it would make driving motorcycles such a more pleasant experience. I feel the company basically took all the items bikers have on their helmets and made into a single comprehensive system. Which makes it very compelling, and the system overall doesn't loose any points in the look department as it is outright gorgeous (opinions for others may vary).

Closing statement:

If everything the system promises is true, and does everything well, this helmet may be the best one around. There are systems that can be used for more than a single function are more beneficial, and unless you fit the specific audience that this system aims for you might not get much out of the system. Also the price tag of the system may throw off many potential customers, seeing that there could be issues with cost, and also how well this system can navigate outside of the specific urban cities it's designed for. If the system would be cheaper, more modular, and not limited to a specific market, I feel that it would be an amazing and attractive product, but in the current state I'm not sure how many people would be inclined to purchase it.