

Blind Passengers Can Imagine View outside Cars with Ford’s New Device

Posted June 17, 2018

Category : Technology/Innovations

Unlocking Word Meanings

Read the following words/expressions found in today’s article.

- 1. **impaired** / ɪmˈpeərd / (adj) – not functioning well
Example: The vehicle has a voice-over feature to aid visually **impaired** passengers.
- 2. **convey** / kənˈveɪ / (v) – to communicate something
Example: The app can **convey** one’s message to other users.
- 3. **landscape** / ˈlændˌskeɪp / (n) – a scenery
Example: I took a photo of the beautiful **landscape** from my window.
- 4. **monochrome** / ˈmɒn əˌkroʊm / (adj) – showing only different shades of gray or black and white
Example: I can’t see what’s in the **monochrome** picture.
- 5. **visualize** / ˈvɪʒ u əˌlaɪz / (v) – to create a mental image of something
Example: The description helped me **visualize** what the product looks like.

Article

Read the text below.

Ford Italy has created a new device that allows visually **impaired** passengers to “feel” the view outside the car window.

The innovation called “Feel the View” is Ford’s collaboration project with Aedo [ahy-doh]—an Italian startup that creates devices specifically for the blind. According to a Ford Italy representative, the company saw this innovation as a great way to let visually impaired passengers experience the wonders of riding a vehicle. He also pointed out that the innovation aims to turn everyday journeys into unforgettable ones.

The device integrates a camera attached to a car window and an image recognition system with a voice-over feature. This system verbally **conveys** information on the **landscape** outside the vehicle, such as a mountain or an ocean.

In addition, blind passengers can press a button on the device to take a picture of the external view. With the help of special LEDs, the picture is then converted into a **monochrome** image that is displayed on the car window. Various shades of gray vibrate at different frequencies whenever the passengers touch the window. This feature allows them to **visualize** the image.

On a similar note, Toyota also developed a device that aids blind people. Project BLAID is a device worn on the user’s shoulder. It contains cameras that can detect doors, escalators, and stairs. Users can also rely on the device’s speakers for any information about the surrounding environment. They can also interact with the device using its voice recognition features and buttons.

Viewpoint Discussion

Enjoy a discussion with your tutor.

Discussion A

- Between the innovations of Ford and Toyota, which one do you think is more helpful for the blind? Discuss.

- Do you think other car companies should also create devices for the blind? Explain.
- Discussion B**
- Should your country invest more in technology that assists people with disabilities? Why or why not?
 - Do you think that having the right technology is enough to help people with disabilities cope with everyday life? Why or why not?
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