Microsoft has been creating phygital solutions for many years. Microsoft Seeing AI and Microsoft Soundscape are among them. Both apps are for the visually impaired people, helping them navigate the city`s landscape using their phone. Seeing AI combines the artificial intelligence`s developments and smartphone`s capabilities, determining the surroundings, including people, documents. money and different signs and labels. Barcode reader is quite a unique feature, giving the detailed information about a product, its ingredients after scanning its barcode. This app was first introduced on iOS in 2017 and got an Android version in 2023, having received an overwhelmingly positive feedback from the users. What enabled the success of the app was two inventions made at Microsoft - a vision-to-language technology and an image classification system with only 3,57% error rate, that were both applied. [[1]](#footnote-1)

Microsoft Soundscape follows a similar concept, though it uses 3D audio features in real time, helping the blind and low-vision people navigate the world as they are getting to their destination. The project, started in 2014, has since undergone a list of improvements, is now available on iOS and iPhone in the US and UK. The fascinating concept works with headphones, where the sounds are perceived as coming from a direction where the place of interest is located relative to the user, so they can create a mental image of the space around them – a soundscape is created. The app features three main options: My location (information about the current location and what is near; Around me (information on what is ahead, right, left and behind the user`s current location); Ahead of me (five pieces of information on what is in front of the user).[[2]](#footnote-2)

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1. <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/garage/wall-of-fame/seeing-ai/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.perkins.org/resource/microsoft-soundscape-app-free-om-app/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)