

Google to produce Project Tango 3D phone with Lenovo

LAS VEGAS, USA: Google and Lenovo said Thursday they would team up to produce the first smartphone using three-dimensional mapping developed for the US tech giant's "Project Tango."



The partnership announced on the sidelines of the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas will produce the first consumer device using the technology -- which aims for a new generation of smart devices that can be used for indoor mapping, augmented reality and more.

The companies said the device -- which was not displayed -- would be a large-screen smartphone with a display of around six inches (15 centimeters) and cost under \$500. The Tango phone, set for worldwide release in mid-year, will also mark the first major entry into the US smartphone market for the Chinese electronics giant.

"This was not designed as a niche device," said Lenovo vice president Jeff Meredith.

"We want this to be accessible to a large audience."

Google announced its research project in 2014 aimed at broadening the potential for smartphone technology in a three-dimensional world. But until now, the only device using Tango was a bulky tablet made by Google for developers.

Project Tango leader Johnny Lee, who joined in the Las Vegas announcement, said the technology "transforms the smartphone into a magical window on the world."

Lee, who demonstrated various uses of the technology, said it could help consumers find their way in a large hotel or mall, or take precise measurements of a room before shopping for furnishings.

He showed how to get instant measurements of ceiling height, square footage and more, and then tested how certain

furniture pieces would look in a room. Project Tango uses depth sensing and motion tracking to create on-screen 3D experiences, allowing users to get a better picture of a physical environment.

"There is much more in the space around us that we can see with our eyes," Lee said.

Unlike GPS, Project Tango motion tracking works indoors, allowing users to navigate in a shopping mall, or even find a specific item at the store. Meredith said Lenovo was still testing several designs for the device but would "definitely" launch in mid-2016.

The companies also announced an "app incubator program" to encourage developers to produce new applications for the ecosystem.

Source: AFP

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