

## Startup's glasses are more than a pipe dream

KITCHENER — PipeDream Interactive has a big Hollywood studio interested in its unique glasses, but first it must raise \$200,000 for a seven-minute movie that demonstrates its cutting-edge technology.

The startup's co-founders unveiled a prototype of the glasses, called Invisivision, and publicly launched a Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign Wednesday night at the Tannery event centre in downtown Kitchener.

PipeDream, housed at the Laurier LaunchPad incubator in the Tannery building, was founded in January 2013 by Ryan Brooks, the startup's chief executive officer, his brother Josh Brooks, the firm's chief operating officer, and Robert Bruski, its chief financial officer.

The idea for the business was hatched when Ryan Brooks was writing a screenplay for a trilogy of films based on

*The Legend of Zelda*

video game by Nintendo. Link, one of the main characters in the game, uses a magic lens called the Lens of Truth to see through illusions, such as hidden doors, and see inside closed treasure chests, as he tries to rescue Princess Zelda.

Inspired by the Lens of Truth, Ryan wondered if there was a way for an audience to control the point of view and information while watching movies, games, commercials and videos.

"He started playing around with different lenses and contacting people in the industry," Bruski said. "Eventually he came up with it."

The result is a pair of glasses with two more lenses that can be quickly flipped into place. The screen changes, sometimes to a completely different point of view, with the flip of a lens.

You could be watching a hockey game, flip the lens, and the names of all the players would appear on the screen over their heads.

When part of a story in a video game or movie occurs at night, flip the lens, and the viewer instantly sees the scene through night-vision goggles.

In a music video, flip the lens, and a scroll across the bottom of the screen tells the viewers about the brands and costs of the clothes worn by the people in the video.

The viewer's point of view can be switched with a flip of the lens, giving the wearer of Invisivision two perspectives on the story.

"So character-based films, perspective-based films, battle sequences, two Samurai, (you can) watch it from either's perspective," Bruski said.

The glasses also can be used to enhance educational documentaries. Students just flip a lens, and information appears on the screen about what is featured in the shot.

"You can watch the film or change the view with your glasses and see the text," Bruski said.

A lot of gamers use a map, and with Invisivision the map can be overlaid on the content appearing on the screen.

The lenses also can be flipped to reveal a QR Code, an advertisement, captions for deaf people or translations of foreign films.

"Since January we have been creating content, creating prototypes, networking," Bruski said.

The glasses were designed using 3D computer-assisted-design programs. The first pair was produced on a 3D printer. PipeDream then made inverse copies and moulds. It has applied for a patent for the glasses.

The company launched the Kickstarter campaign, with a goal of \$200,000, because it needs to raise money to perfect the moulds and materials to make its glasses more attractive. It also plans to produce a Hollywood-quality movie that is seven minutes long to showcase the potential of the glasses.

Universal Studios has expressed interest in the glasses.



Robert Bruski, chief financial officer of PipeDream Interactive, wears the startup's Invisivision glasses.



One of Ryan Brooks' hobbies is making replicas of movie props and characters. While outfitting a replica with some electronics for a friend in California, he started talking about the Invisivision glasses. His friend had a contact at Universal Studios and set up a meeting.

"Universal Studios sent us a signed letter of intent saying: 'We want to use it pending a successful demo,'" Bruski said.

How the glasses ultimately will get into the hands of moviegoers and other users has still to be determined. But at this point, it looks like the glasses will cost 60 cents each to produce and will sell for \$2 to \$3.

Moviegoers in North America are used to using 3D glasses at no additional cost. However, Bruski noted that in other parts of the world they have to buy the glasses.

"Everywhere else in the world you have to purchase your 3D glasses, only in North America you don't," Bruski said.

"Because this isn't 3D, it is different technology, it can be a catalyst to charge for the glasses," he said.

At the same time, the Invisivision could be used as conventional 3D glasses.

"So there is a possibility of cannibalizing the existing 3D market," Bruski said.

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