

## 21097 Facebook is 'looking at' adding facial recognition to its upcoming smart glasses

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Facebook is looking at adding facial recognition to its highly anticipated smart glasses that are planned to hit the market next year.

At an all-staff meeting, Facebook Reality Labs director Andrew Bosworth said the company was examining the technology's legal and privacy ramifications, BuzzFeed reports. He cautioned the benefits and risks were obvious, 'and we don't know where to balance those things.'

Facial recognition would help a user recognize someone whose name they've forgotten, Bosworth theorized, or if they have face blindness. During the company wide meeting, an unnamed employee asked Bosworth about privacy concerns raised by facial recognition, including stalkers.

'[That] might be the thorniest issue,' Bosworth replied. 'Where the benefits are so clear, and the risks are so clear, and we don't know where to balance those things.'

Privacy has been a sore subject for Facebook, which is shelling out \$650 million to settle a suit alleging it violated Illinois' Biometric Information Privacy Act by using members' data to tag people in photos.

'Face recognition is a hugely controversial topic and for good reason,' Bosworth tweeted. ' ... I was speaking about how we are going to have to have a very public discussion about the pros and cons.'

While Facebook's smart glasses would be 'fine' without the capability to identify faces, he added, there are some 'nice use cases,' like forgetting someone's name at a dinner party.

He also referenced people with prosopagnosia, or face blindness, a neurological condition that makes it hard to recognize familiar faces.

Facebook Chief Diversity Officer Maxine Williams added that the company may need to develop its own privacy guidelines in areas where the technology is not regulated by law, BuzzFeed reported.

Beyond that, though, the social media giant has been intentionally vague about its plans, even when the wearables will be available.

In a January blog post, Bosworth teased the devices 'will arrive sooner than later.'

He told Bloomberg the smart glasses could enhance a person's life in a way that a smartphone can't, like capturing a moment with your children.

That suggests the glasses will include a camera or other way to capture and save moments.

'These are certainly connected glasses, they are certainly providing a lot of functionality, [but] we're being quite coy about which functionality precisely we are providing,' Bosworth said.

'We're excited about it but we don't want to over-hype it. We're not even calling it augmented reality, we're just calling it 'smart glasses.'

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