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Logitech BRIDGE SDK

...aimed at helping App makers and SW developers solve the problem of text entry in VR

https://youtu.be/XVXvk1X1Gbs

the Beta kit includes (MSRP U.S. $150):

      - Logitech G gaming keyboard w/ Vive tracker   - associated software

Initially only 50 kits will be released to select developers, with the goal to create compelling new experiences centered around a VR keyboard. Are you interested and want to be one of the first developers to play with this new tech?! ACT NOW! They are accepting applications until November 16, 2017! However, if there is sufficient interest, they may build more kits for purchase after initial distribution.

Why Logitech and VR?

I'm sure we all wanted to use a keyboard within VR at some point, for reasons that may span a wide range. Most people have that thought, but little progress has been made on the consumer level. Logitech naturally arrived at the same conclusion during their initial exploration of VR. They were surprised by the fact that keyboard use and text entry were necessary but not natural. Through additional research, they

understood that in certain situations the user still needs a keyboard to interact with applications, especially in productivity-driven or desktop scenarios. There is also a use for a keyboard in certain games, social applications, and content browsing.

There is nothing quite like the tactile feel of typing on a physical keyboard. This holds true in VR as well, where tactile feedback is essential. Furthermore, the keyboard delivers a universal experience that people value. I can easily see more people trying out VR because of how comfortable and intuitive keyboard interaction can be, and the fact that it is an effective and efficient tool. The keyboard could be the bridge to VR for most consumers.

This is **Virtual Reality**, however, let's not forget that. We can use VR to transform and augment the keyboard, to make it even more effective and efficient! You can change the font on your keys, make the font bigger, change the color of the keyboard/keys, have a list of shortcuts readily show up, highlight keys that work in a given app, or even make the ones that don't invisible. The keyboard becomes contextually aware in any scenario, dynamically providing you with any commands you need. This seems like it can be compatible with AR as well.
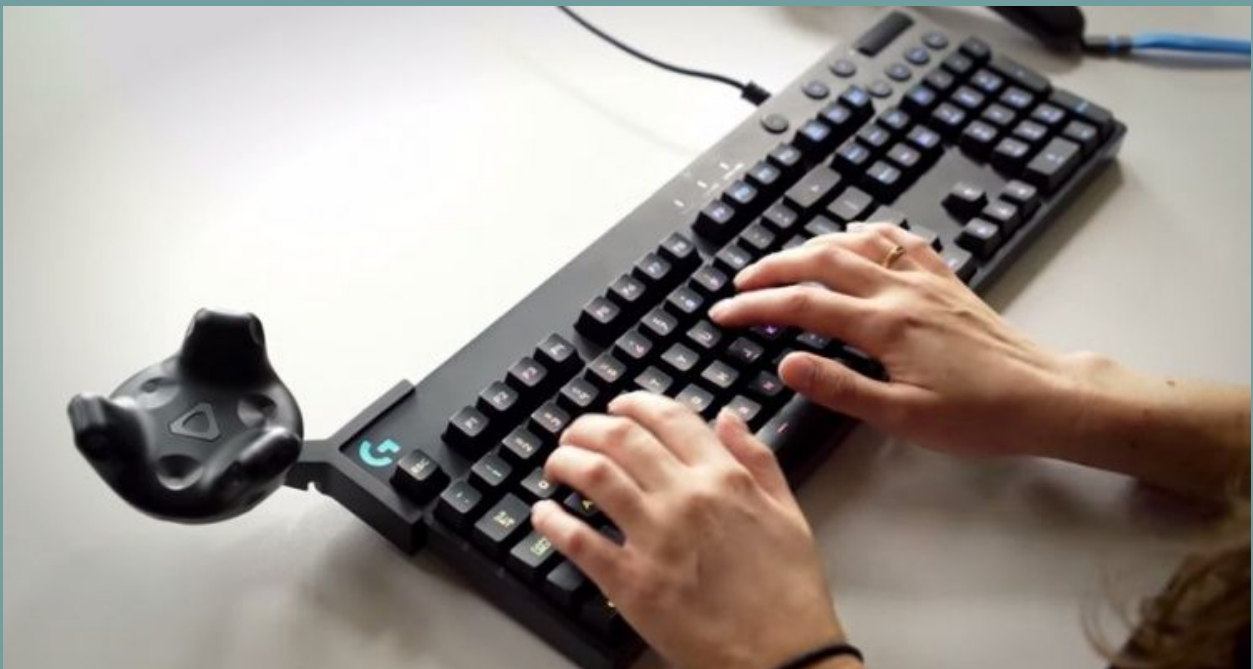
How does it work?! Tell me all the secrets.

It's actually quite simple; The Logitech BRIDGE SDK integrates nicely within the existing HTC Vive ecosystem. Essentially… They took one of those existing Vive Trackers…

...and one of those existing Logitech G keyboards…

...then put it all together, sprinkled some software…

...and now you can enjoy using a keyboard in VR.

The HTC Vive Tracker is represented as a keyboard (precisely overlaid virtual 3D model) across the Steam VR system, and contains animations for key presses. It is compatible with all apps using SteamVR as their building block, and the keyboard overlay appears automatically as soon as the Vive Tracker is turned on. It uses the existing downward facing camera on the Vive VR headset to render your hands in VR.

Problems

If you are in a tracked environment constantly moving around, can the keyboard be used effectively, and how? Developers will need to decide when is best to use a keyboard in VR.

Future

Imagine someone calls you during a VR session.. Without removing the headset, you reach into your pocket and can see a virtual representation of the device (not just the physical elements, but also what is displayed on the phone)... You can then easily answer the phone, or reply with a message if you are in a hurry getting back to the VR world. One day VR will take productivity to the next level by letting you replace physical monitors with an infinite spatial desktop.

They are really keen on receiving applications, send yours today.

Questions?

Would you use this keyboard in VR? Is it a game changer? What are your thoughts?

Resources

1) https://www.engadget.com/2017/11/03/logitech-and-htc-vive-bring-keyboards-into-vr/