

Feature



Argon Transform, which can be fitted to most helmets, has been touted as the world's first dual-camera smart helmet attachment. It consists of a rear-view camera, a front dash-cam with a heads-up display attachment and a handlebar remote control. PHOTO: WHYRE

Smart helmet invention inspired by tragedy

Motorcyclists who have lost friends in fatal traffic accidents create helmet attachment that lets riders use smartphone navigation safely

Trevor Tan

The anguish of losing their rider friends to fatal traffic accidents spurred five Singaporean motorcycle-riding buddies to create Argon Transform - a heads-up display (HUD) system that lets riders see important riding information so that they need not look down at their smartphones for navigation information while riding, allowing them to concentrate on the road ahead.

Argon Transform, which can be fitted to most helmets, has also been touted as the world's first dual-camera smart helmet attachment.

It consists of a rear-view camera, a front dash-cam with an HUD attachment and a handlebar remote control.

It also features built-in GPS and provides navigation prompts and live 170-degree rear-view camera feed via the HUD.

Riders can also receive audio cues, answer or reject calls and listen to music through its speaker and microphone system.

The five inventors, who formed their company Whyre with investment from Singaporean firm Moveon technologies, are chief executive officer Tan Yishu, 27; chief business development officer Glen Ong, 27; chief technology officer (hardware) Dylan Tan, 26; chief technology officer (software) Muhammad Hafiz, 26; and chief finance officer Lim Qun, 26.

Mr Ong has a master's degree in business management from Singapore Management University, while the other four graduated from the Singapore University of Technology and Design with engineering and in-

formation technology degrees.

The biggest advantage of Argon Transform is that it is detachable.

Thus, unlike some smart helmets, which have to be replaced when damaged, Argon Transform can be easily detached from the old helmet to use on a new one.

Mr Ong said: "The product transfers between helmets in seconds, giving full functionality to any regular helmet."

Since being exhibited at the mega CES 2019 consumer trade show at Las Vegas in January, the device has undergone some improvements.

The front attachment has gone through a redesign and is now 25 per cent smaller.

The HUD's optics have been improved for a clearer and brighter view.

The charging port has been upgraded to USB-C for faster charging.

Having tested the product for two years, Whyre launched Argon Transform on the Indiegogo crowdfunding platform (igg.me/at/argontransform/) on July 23 with the target of raising \$34,008 in a month.

Backers will be able to buy the smart helmet attachment at prices ranging from \$543 to \$815, while the retail price is expected to be around \$1,090. The device will be shipped to the backers by February next year.

Mr Ong said the reason for the relatively low crowdfunding target, compared with the hundreds of thousands of dollars some start-ups ask for, is that the company has funds and ready distributors who have ordered Argon Transform.

"Indiegogo is simply a trusted platform for us to gain more orders and attempt to reach out to a wider audience," he said.

At press time, the campaign has reached 72 per cent of its target. After the crowdfunding campaign ends, customers can purchase Argon Transform through its website (www.argontransform.com).

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