

Glasses.com turns heads with 3-D iPad app

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A man navigates through an iPad 2 on April 29, 2011. Jonathan Coon turned heads with iPad software that lets people try on sunglasses by manipulating 3-D images of themselves from the neck up.

Jonathan Coon turned heads Wednesday with iPad software that lets people try on sunglasses by manipulating 3-D images of themselves from the neck up.

The founder of discount prescription lens company 1-800 Contacts used a [TED Conference](#) known for luring the technology savvy to introduce a

service intended to let shoppers see themselves in eyewear using smartphones, tablets or computers with cameras built into screens.

"One of the great ironies of glasses is that people who wear them usually can't see themselves when they are shopping for glasses because they need to be wearing prescription lenses," Coon said.

"For the first time, you can see yourself trying on glasses."

Glasses.com software, which will be released in April for [iPads](#) and spread to iPhones, as well as Android [mobile gadgets](#) and computer Web browsers, uses device cameras to create 3-D images of people's heads, according to Coon.

People can admire themselves in an array of lenses and frames, using touch controls to turn virtual heads for profile views or slide frames up or down noses. Shoppers can then have selected glasses shipped to them.

"The vision is to try something on and shop simultaneously," Coon said.

"We used the same basic tool kit someone would use for special effects in a movie, not augmented reality stuff."

Coon was a student at Brigham Young University in the US state of Utah when he started 1-800 Contacts in a dorm room in 1992.

Glasses.com is a division of 1-800 Contacts, which was bought last year by US health insurance titan Wellpoint in a deal valued in news reports at nearly \$900 million.

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