

Virtual reality star Oculus buys hand-tracking startup

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Gamers test a new virtual reality game headset at the Oculus display at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles, California on June 17, 2015

Virtual reality star Oculus on Thursday announced a deal to buy an Israel-based startup specializing in technology that can track hand movements.

Oculus expects the purchase of Pebbles Interfaces to add momentum to

its development of virtual reality (VR) technologies and boost its Rift VR head gear.

Pebbles has spent five years developing technology that uses optics, sensors, and software to detect and track hand movements, according to Oculus.

"At Pebbles Interfaces, we've been focused on pushing the limits of digital sensing technology to accelerate the future of human-computer interaction," Pebbles chief technology officer Nadav Grossinger said in an Oculus blog post.

"Through micro-optics and computer vision, we hope to improve the information that can be extracted from optical sensors, which will help take virtual reality to the next level."

Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

Oculus, which is owned by Facebook, said that over time, technology breakthroughs "will unlock new human interaction methods in VR and revolutionize the way people communicate in virtual worlds."

Oculus has aimed squarely at video game lovers with Rift headsets that it will begin selling early next year.

Last month at the world's premier video game trade show it also showed its prototype Touch Half Moon controllers that gave virtual-world hands to people wearing Rift head gear.

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