

AMAZON SPIES ON EVERY WORKER FROM MORNING TO NIGHT  
AND TREATS HUMANS LIKE TOOLS

# Amazon sparks privacy concerns as patent reveals AR goggles to direct employees through warehouses - and monitor their every move

- Amazon has patented a 'wearable computing device' that displays directions
- It says the AR goggles would help employees navigate its massive warehouses
- But there are fears it could be used for far more nefarious purposes, such as tracking employees movements and activity as they're on the job
- The firm already collects massive amounts of data on its warehouse employees
- It has come under fire for the working conditions at its fulfillment centers with employees complaining they can't even have a break to use the restroom

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By [ANNIE PALMER FOR DAILYMAIL.COM](#)

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Amazon has patented a pair of augmented reality goggles that could be used to keep a close eye on its employees.

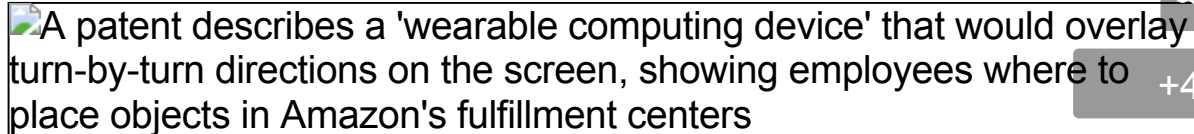
A newly filed patent describes a 'wearable computing device' that would overlay turn-by-turn directions on the goggles' screen, showing employees where to place certain objects in one of Amazon's fulfillment centers.

However, the goggles laid out in the patent have raised the ire of privacy advocates who believe they could be used for far more nefarious

purposes, such as tracking employees' every move.

Amazon has previously come under fire for the working conditions at its fulfillment warehouses, with employees complaining that they're sometimes unable to get a break during the day, even to go to the restroom.

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A patent describes a 'wearable computing device' that would overlay turn-by-turn directions on the screen, showing employees where to place objects in Amazon's fulfillment centers

**A patent describes a 'wearable computing device' that would overlay turn-by-turn directions on the screen, showing employees where to place objects in Amazon's fulfillment centers**

Amazon defended the patent application, saying it has 'nothing to do' with surveilling employees.

'Technology has empowered and enabled workplaces throughout human history,' an Amazon spokesperson said in a statement.

'Smart glasses and head-up displays are already helping people in lots of ways – providing doctors with information to perform surgery, drivers with information to help them drive safely, and athletes with information to achieve their goals.

'We are always thinking of ways that innovation can further improve the employee experience – such as this conceptual idea for augmented reality glasses that would free up fulfillment center associates' hands from carrying the hand-held scanners commonly used in warehouses around the world to locate items for customers.

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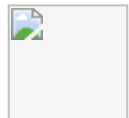
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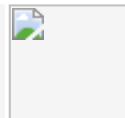
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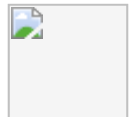
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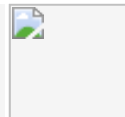
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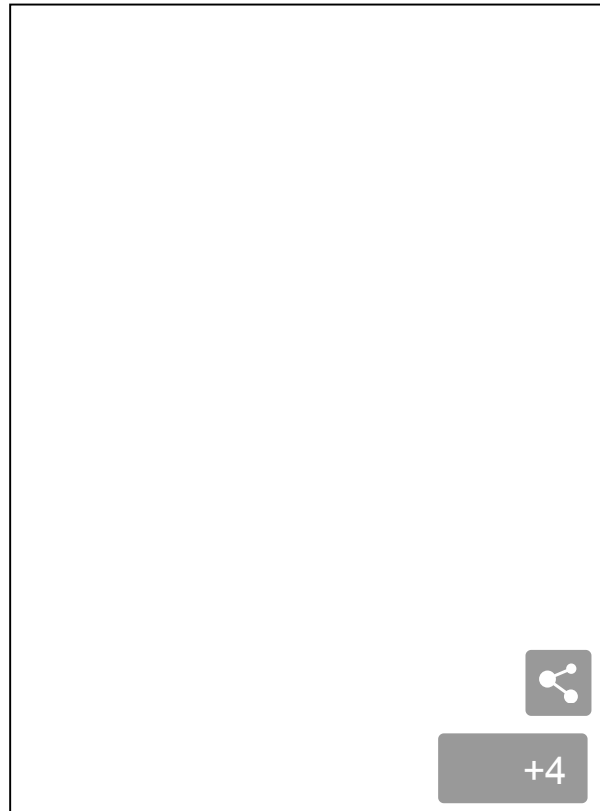
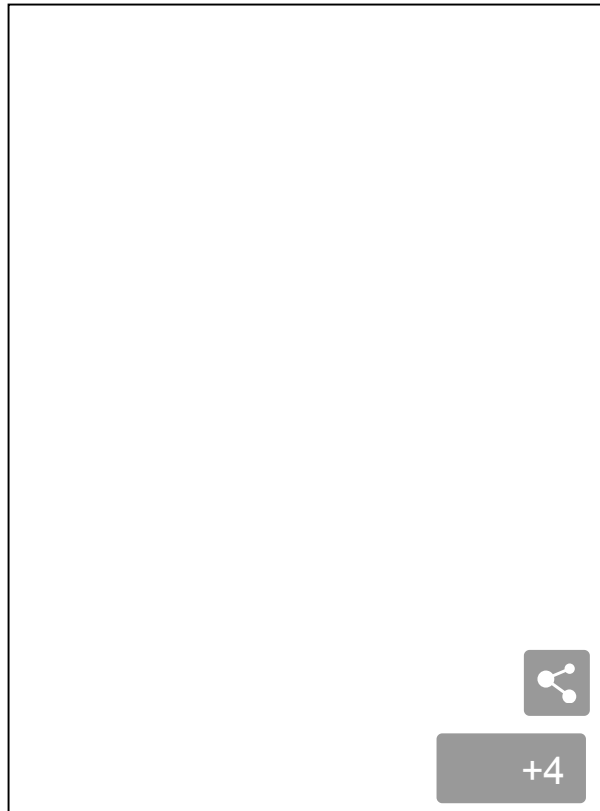
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The patent was filed in March 2017, but just became publicly available on Thursday.

The goggles would connect to a computing device that's worn on the employee's body, which powers the turn-by-turn data.

'For example, if a location of a worker within a fulfillment center can be determined, location-specific information, such as, for example, turn-by-turn directions to a destination within the fulfillment center, can be rendered in the user interface,' according to the patent, which is titled 'Augmented reality user interface facilitating fulfillment.'



In addition to turn-by-turn directions, the glasses may also display specific instructions for workers, such as 'remove orange box from shelving unit on the left'

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'A destination within the fulfillment center can include a particular floor, row, shelf, bin, or a particular item or product that is stocked within the fulfillment center,' the patent continues.

In addition to turn-by-turn directions, the glasses may also display specific instructions for workers, such as 'remove orange box from shelving unit on the left.'

It may also instruct workers to place a particular item in a specific location in the warehouse.

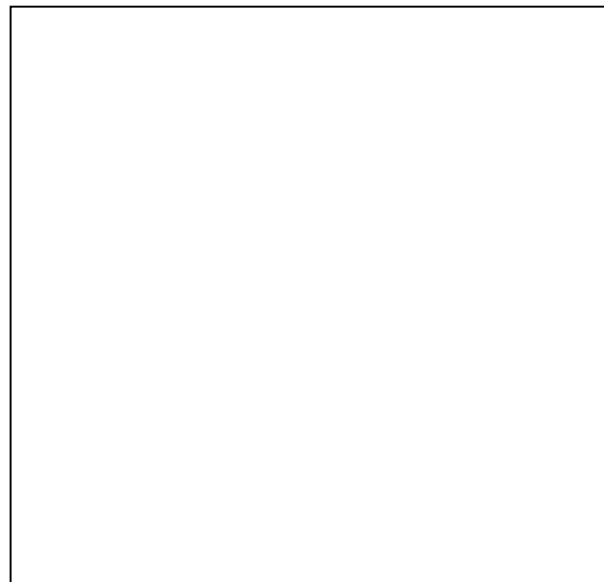
Based on the patent, it seems the device's primary use would be to help employees navigate Amazon's warehouses.

But it also describes collecting extremely detailed information that could be used to track an employee's whereabouts throughout the entire workday.

The goggles would also track 'orientation data, pitch, yaw and accelerometer data,' which could translate to things like walking speed and their exact location, [Gizmodo](#) noted.

One line in the patent describes how the goggles could even prompt employees who aren't moving to get to work.

'In some embodiments, the wearable computing device can be configured to provide worker instructions and/or visual indicators to a worker wearing the wearable computing device who is not moving,' the patent states.



**Based on the patent, it seems the device's primary use would be to help employees navigate Amazon's warehouses. However, it has still raised the ire of privacy advocates who worry the goggles might help Amazon keep an even closer eye on its employees**

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While Amazon's fulfillment centers employ anywhere between 1,000 and 2,500 positions, there have been concerns that that could change with the advent of smarter, automated robots.

What's even scarier, the data collected from the AR-equipped goggles in the patent could be used to train Amazon's robots, Gizmodo explained.

Amazon already collects massive amounts of information about its employees through various means.

It also recently patented an ultrasonic wristband that can monitor a worker's every move.

According to the patent, data about the position of a worker's hands is sent to the company in real-time.

Amazon describes the technology as a 'time-saving' device, but some have criticised the system for going a step too far in monitoring performance.

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## IS AMAZON PLANNING TO TRACK ITS EMPLOYEES?

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Amazon, it seems, wants to keep a close eye on its employees.

One of the firm's latest patent suggests it is working on an ultrasonic wristband that can monitor a worker's every move.

According to the patent, data about the position of a worker's hands is sent to the company in real-time.

Amazon describes the technology as a 'time-saving' device, but some have criticised the system for going a step too far in monitoring performance.

The Amazon patent was published by the United States Patent Office.

 Diagrams in the patent show how workers will wear bracelets on either hand, which contain 'ultrasonic units'. The company insists this is a labour-saving measure to verify the correct items are being processed



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Diagrams in the patent show how workers will wear bracelets on either hand, which contain 'ultrasonic units'. The company insists this is a labour-saving measure to verify the correct items are being processed

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It describes 'ultrasonic tracking of a worker's hands' that would be used to 'monitor performance of assigned tasks.'

Diagrams show how workers will wear bracelets on either hand, which contain 'ultrasonic units.'

The patent states: 'The ultrasonic unit is configured to be worn by a user in proximity to the user's hand and to periodically emit ultrasonic sound pulses.'

These silent pulses would then be picked by 'ultrasonic transducers' placed around the warehouse.

The patent outlines a feedback system which means the device vibrates to point the wearer's hand in the right direction.

While some are concerned about this new patent, an Amazon spokesperson told the [MailOnline](#) that 'the speculation about this patent is misguided'.