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Smart earplugs win Proto Labs Cool Idea! Award

Hush aims to provide better sleep

Hush Technology, Inc., a California, U.S.-based start-up is the latest recipient of the Cool Idea! Award, a service grant given to innovative products by quick-turn manufacturer Proto Labs, Ltd. Hush is the world's first smart earplug, combining sound-eliminating foam and noise masking technology to keep unwanted noise out while allowing important alerts in.

The wearable device market has exploded, with many products focused on collecting data on users' sleep, but not solutions to allow for better sleep. Fitting comfortably in the users' ear and surrounded in a soft silicone surface, Hush aims to set the stage for a good night's sleep. The product helps users sleep through snoring, loud neighbours and a host of other noises that disturb nightly sleep without blocking the things that are necessary to hear like alarm clocks or emergency phone calls. Hush uses Bluetooth to connect with the corresponding smartphone app, where the user can choose which notifications are and are not welcome.

"Hush's ultimate goal is to help people sleep better in the context of others around them, and ultimately enable people to live a better quality of life," says Daniel Lee of Hush Technology, "The world is only getting noisier, and we aim to provide a way for people to live together harmoniously despite this."

Hush utilises a tiny speaker to deliver notifications, and also can play soft, soothing sounds like white noise, ocean waves, and rain drops for over ten hours. This grant has provided Hush Technology with the critical additive test samples needed to validate the design using Proto Labs' 3D printing service, and will then follow-up by providing an initial run using the company's injection moulding service.

Lee says he plans to launch Hush by late summer 2015 and will sell the product for a little over £100.

"The Cool Idea! Award was established to help product designers and engineers bring useful concepts to market," says Proto Labs' founder Larry Lukis. "The potential to improve the quality of life for millions of people is a large reason why we want to help make Hush a reality."

About Cool Idea! Award

Since 2011, the Cool Idea! Award has provided more than £500,000 in Proto Labs prototyping and low-volume production services to entrepreneurs developing new products in Europe and the United States. Unlike other product awards that recognise products after they're in mass production and

on store shelves, the Cool Idea! Award is meant to help innovative ideas come to life. For more information about the Cool Idea! Award and to apply, visit www.protolabs.co.uk/coolidea.

About Proto Labs

Proto Labs is the world's fastest digital manufacturing source for custom prototypes and low-volume production parts. The technology-enabled company uses advanced 3D printing, CNC machining and injection moulding technologies to produce parts within days. The result is an unprecedented speed-to-market value for product designers and engineers worldwide. Visit protolabs.co.uk for more information.

About Hush Technology

Comprised of three young engineers guided by a number of high-powered advisors experienced with bringing successful consumer products to market, Hush combines youthful passion and the tried-and-true experience needed to innovate on this age old problem of noise bothering sleep. While searching for a solution, they were shocked by what they found; 1 in 4 American couples end up just sleeping in separate bedrooms because of snoring and apartment dwellers call the police for noisy neighbours more often than for any other reason. Not content with the way people are left to deal with it, they've set out to reimagine a practical way to sleep through all the noise going on around people. For more information, visit hush.technology.

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