

ARBORXR RESEARCH REPORT • 2026

2026 Frontline Smart Glasses Report

The frontline is ready. Here's what separates pilots that scale.

Based on 198 registrants from 166 organizations in 27 countries, a live audience poll, and a panel discussion with ArborXR's product and field teams.

198

Registrants

166

Organizations

27

Countries

159

Written questions

46

Poll respondents

What's in this report

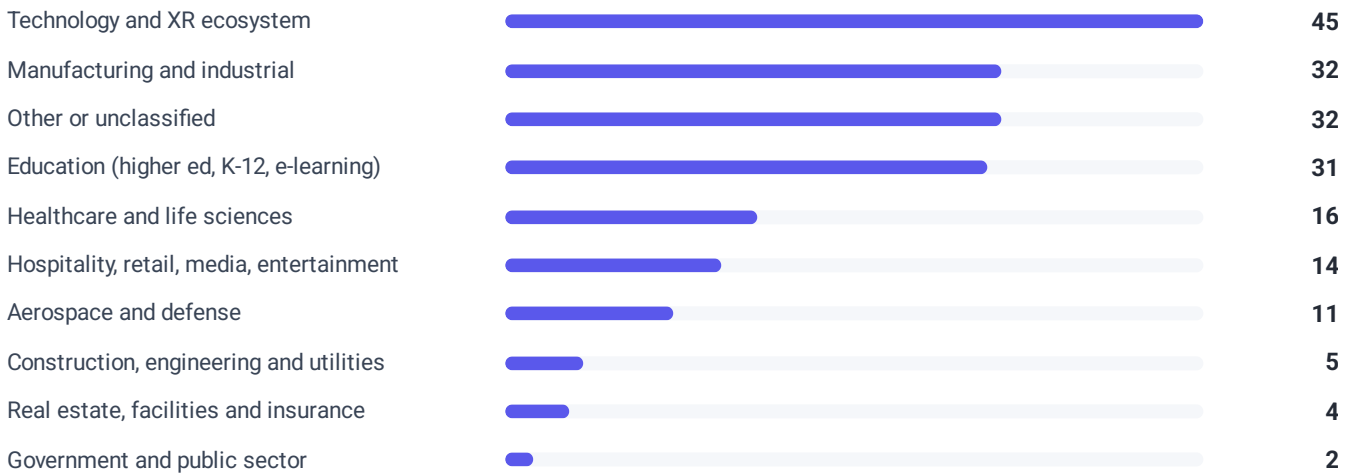
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Who we heard from

On September 30, 2026 we ran an open AMA on putting smart glasses to work on the frontline. 198 people registered, from 166 organizations across 27 countries, and they sent us more than 160 questions before and during the session.

This report answers them. Alongside the questions we ran a live poll of 46 attendees on what is holding their teams back, and a 60-minute panel with ArborXR's co-founder, field team and strategic accounts lead.

Where they work



n = 192 registrants with a company record.

How big their organizations are



n = 127 registrants with a known company size.

Nearly half (48%) work at organizations with 1,000 or more employees. The 1 to 99 band is largely made up of XR software developers, hardware start-ups and consultancies.

Where they are and who they are

Region

United States 99, Canada 16, Australia 11, United Kingdom 10, Germany 7, Sweden 6, France 5, South Africa 5, with the remainder spread across Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. *n = 190.*

Seniority

43% hold director-level roles or above (executive, VP, director or owner). *n = 125.*

Organization type

66 commercial companies, 32 education institutions, 23 software developers (ISVs), 3 channel resellers, 1 non-profit and 11 other. *n = 136.*

Key takeaways

Smart glasses have crossed from curiosity to planning. The teams that move from pilot to production will be the ones that start from the job, solve governance early and manage glasses like any other enterprise device.

1

The biggest barriers are trust and proof, not technology.

Privacy, security and compliance (39%) and the lack of a clear use case or ROI (37%) topped the list of what is holding teams back. Device readiness came third (33%). *Live poll, n = 46.*

2

Most teams are still before the starting line.

Only 5 of 46 poll respondents (11%) said they are already deploying smart glasses on the frontline.

3

Everyone wants to know which device to buy, and the answer starts somewhere else.

Device choice was one of the most common topics in registrants' questions, and HoloLens 2 was named in 10 of them. With Microsoft ending HoloLens 2 security updates on December 31, 2027, the question is urgent. Our panel's answer: define the job first, and many teams will find they need a lighter, cheaper device than a HoloLens successor.

4

The shift is from before and after work to during it.

VR training happens off the job. Smart glasses bring guidance, remote experts and AI to the worker while the task is being done, which removes the need to schedule training time at all.

5

Management is where pilots quietly stall.

Enrollment, updates, lockdown, offline sites, phone-paired glasses and coexistence with existing MDM tools came up in the poll (22% cite managing devices at scale), the registration form and the chat.

6

People, not pixels, decide adoption.

Prescription lenses, accessibility, comfort, camera etiquette and a single internal champion who leaves are the details that decide whether glasses become a daily habit.

What's holding teams back



Live poll, n = 46. Respondents could select more than one barrier.

Why this wave is different

Every year has been called the year of XR. This time the evidence is different in kind, not just in volume.

The form factor finally fits the frontline

VR training works: it is effective, safe and cost-effective. What held it back from scale was never the training.



It was never the training that was the problem, it was the form factor.

JORDAN WILLIAMS, CO-FOUNDER AND HEAD OF PRODUCT, ARBORXR

Few workers want to strap a headset to their face. Glasses that are light and look normal remove that objection.

Training moves onto the job

Headsets have always served the moments before and after work: onboarding, practice, recertification. You cannot walk onto a shop floor or into a patient's room wearing one. Smart glasses serve the worker who is on task. That changes the business case. Instead of taking people off the line to train, organizations can give workers better tools during their normal working day.

AI removes months from the path to a pilot

A VR pilot typically means building custom 3D experiences, assets and scripted scenarios: months of work before anyone puts on a headset. With AI glasses, teams can point the assistant at an existing standard operating procedure and start.

You go from a barrier of months to get going, to let's start something this afternoon.

JORDAN WILLIAMS, ARBORXR

The market is moving fast

263%

Year over year growth in global AI glasses shipments in the first half of 2026, according to Counterpoint Research. Display-less models accounted for 96% of shipments.

31 Dec 2027

The date HoloLens 2 security updates end. Microsoft stopped producing the device in October 2024. Every organization that standardized on it needs a plan.

At home first

Consumer adoption is doing the change management. Workers who already wear AI glasses at home arrive at work familiar with them, the same way smartphones and tablets moved from personal to enterprise use.

Where value is showing up

When organizations say they want smart glasses, they are rarely asking for a device. They are asking to solve something that happens while a worker has their hands full.



Guided work instructions

Step-by-step procedures delivered by voice or on a small display, at the moment of the task. Even glasses without a camera or display can walk a worker through a procedure by voice, provided the procedure is documented somewhere the AI can reach. A registrant working with a Fortune 500 manufacturer described a pilot on a hard-to-learn procedure with many specific steps: the AR guidance layer "makes the job much easier to perform."



Remote expert, or "see what I see"

A frontline worker calls an expert who sees through the worker's camera and talks them through the job. The requirements are simple and non-negotiable: it has to be easy to start the call, hands-free, and possible to document. During the panel, ArborXR's Devin Marble described running a remote assistance session on phone-paired glasses, then switching the view to the phone set down on the bench to give the remote expert a second angle.



Capture and documentation

Photos, video and notes captured from the worker's point of view. The panel described a national insurance provider exploring glasses for field assessors who today juggle a camera, a tablet, paper forms and a phone. The glasses consolidate those devices and send everything back to the office while the assessor is still on site.



AI assistance at the point of work

Workers ask questions about the task in front of them and get answers from company documentation. The long-term prize is spreading expertise: capturing the knowledge of your best worker and making it available to everyone else doing the same job.

Measuring it

The value compounds when guided work is instrumented. Analytics show where workers get stuck, where they skip steps they should not, and where tribal knowledge lives that belongs in the official procedure. That data is also what turns a pilot into a business case.

SECTION 05

Industry by industry

What each group told us blocks them, and where we would start.

INDUSTRY	THE GATE	START WITH	DEVICE CATEGORY
Manufacturing and industrial 32 registrants	Hardware capability doubts	Remote expert, task guidance	Industrial AR
Education 31 registrants	Software cost and availability	Guided lab procedures	AI glasses, heads-up display
Healthcare and life sciences 16 registrants	Security review, captured data	Capture and documentation	Camera-free, display-only
Aerospace and defense 11 registrants	HoloLens 2 replacement	Remote support	Optical AR or industrial AR
Construction and utilities 5 registrants	Safety certification	Guided work instructions	Safety-rated glasses
Field service and insurance 4 registrants	None named	Capture and documentation	AI glasses
Hospitality, retail, public sector 16 registrants	Proof and usage policy	Guided work instructions	AI glasses

The gate is what registrants in each group named as their blocker. Start with and device category are ArborXR recommendations, based on sections 4 and 7.

The pattern across all seven

Only two groups are gated by the device itself. Manufacturing doubts that today's hardware is capable enough, and construction cannot bring uncertified eyewear onto a site. Everyone else is gated by something the device cannot fix: cost, a security review, a usage policy or the absence of proof.

That is the same split as the live poll, where trust and proof outranked device readiness. It also means most of these groups can start now, with hardware that already exists.

Closing the gap from pilot to scale

Each of these gaps came up in the poll, the registration questions and the live discussion. None is a reason to wait. Each has a known way through.

GAP 1**Proving the use case and the ROI**

The data: 37% of poll respondents say they have no clear use case or ROI yet (n = 46). Use cases and proof of value were the most common theme in registration questions.

WHAT WE'RE HEARING

Have you seen any smart-glasses pilots become part of everyday frontline work yet? If so, what are workers using them for, and what convinced the business to keep going?

REGISTRANT, INTERNET COMPANY

Still have to find the real value on this technology.

REGISTRANT, AUTOMOTIVE

HOW LEADERS SOLVE IT

They start from the job to be done, not the hardware. Pick a task that is repeated often, depends on documentation or an expert, and happens with the worker's hands busy. Define the metric before the pilot starts: time to complete, first-time fix rate, errors, time to competency.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- List the five tasks where workers most often stop to look something up or call someone.
- Check whether the procedure for each is written down, or lives in one expert's head.
- Choose one task and one measurable outcome for a 60-day pilot.

The data: privacy, security and compliance is the most-cited barrier, named by 39% of poll respondents (n = 46).

WHAT WE'RE HEARING

What have you learned about trust and acceptance when workers feel they are being observed, recorded, or algorithmically assisted through smart glasses?

REGISTRANT, HIGHER EDUCATION

For the enterprise it would be nice to have an MDM control to disable the camera, like can be done on some smartphone MDMs.

CHAT, XR DEVELOPER

Do you have samples of company policies regarding use of smart glasses?

CHAT, REGISTRANT

HOW LEADERS SOLVE IT

They treat glasses as managed enterprise devices that stay on site, on a known network, with controls over who has them and what they can do. Ideas raised in the chat include geofencing features by location, disabling cameras in sensitive areas and choosing camera-free devices where recording is prohibited. The same frameworks that already govern managed VR fleets, such as ISO 27001, SOC 2 and GDPR, apply to glasses.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Write a smart glasses usage policy before the pilot, covering recording, consent, storage and where glasses may not be worn.
- Decide per use case whether you need a camera at all.
- Bring IT and security in at the start, not at the scale-up decision.

Choosing the right device

The data: 33% of poll respondents say devices are not enterprise-ready yet on battery, display or compute (n = 46). Device choice and hardware capability were among the most common themes in registration questions, and HoloLens 2 was named in 10 questions.

WHAT WE'RE HEARING

How many currently available devices can effectively replace the HoloLens 2 and meet aerospace and defense customer requirements?

REGISTRANT, AEROSPACE AND DEFENSE

I have been bombarded with at least 2 new smartglass manufacturers each week, so who will survive the growth curve is important to us.

CHAT, UNIVERSITY

I think the biggest driver for the HoloLens was (is) the MS ecosystem and not a total capability discussion.

CHAT, GLOBAL MANUFACTURER

HOW LEADERS SOLVE IT

They match the device category to the job. Many teams reaching for a HoloLens successor discover they need text or a diagram in the field of view, not 3D objects pinned to the world.



There's a good chance you might not actually need that HoloLens replacement, and it might be a lot less expensive for you.

DEVIN MARBLE, ARBORXR

They also plan for more than one device type, because the future of enterprise XR is multi-device.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- For each use case, decide whether you need audio only, a heads-up display or full spatial AR.
- Check how each shortlisted device connects (standalone or phone-paired) and whether your management platform supports it.
- Use the device landscape in section 7 and ArborXR's device guide to build a shortlist.

The data: 22% of poll respondents name managing and securing devices at scale (n = 46). Registration questions named Microsoft Intune, Omnisia Workspace ONE and Microsoft Teams.

WHAT WE'RE HEARING

MDM is kind of the problem for us. The stuff we have tried so far don't mesh well with existing MDM.
CHAT, INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES COMPANY

We have to send people to places with no internet.
CHAT, INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES COMPANY

Is it literally as easy as "if my company uses mobile devices for frontline workers, I can immediately begin using smart glasses?"
REGISTRANT

HOW LEADERS SOLVE IT

They answer the scale questions before device 50, not after. How are devices enrolled and provisioned: one at a time or in bulk? How are apps and content pushed and updated remotely? How are devices locked down and users authenticated? Can you see device status and health? How do devices connect where there is no Wi-Fi? For phone-paired glasses, the phone is the managed device and the glasses are its peripheral, so the management plan has to cover both.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Map which device you are actually managing for each model: the glasses, a paired phone or a compute puck.
- Pre-load Wi-Fi and certificates so workers have zero set-up friction.
- Plan for offline sites: what must work without a connection, and how devices sync when they reconnect.

The data: 15% of poll respondents name safety or industrial certification (n = 46). Registration questions raised prescription lenses, accessibility, comfort and habit.

WHAT WE'RE HEARING

How do you manage the fact that 70% of the people wear prescription glasses in the case of large deployments?

REGISTRANT, SOFTWARE COMPANY

How would this work with people who already wear glasses and what about people who are deaf or hard of hearing?

REGISTRANT, HIGHER EDUCATION

So far devices have still needed a phone for input via QR codes, etc. making it annoying for frontline workers.

CHAT, INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES COMPANY

HOW LEADERS SOLVE IT

They design for the worker lying on their back under a machine with both hands busy. Glasses need to be ready instantly, work hands-free and add no set-up steps. Habits change when the tool is easier than the phone in the worker's pocket, not when it is mandated. Prescription support, safety ratings and accessibility belong on the requirements list from day one.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Survey the pilot group for prescription eyewear and accessibility needs before choosing devices.
- Check safety and environmental certifications against your site rules.
- Time how long it takes a worker to go from picking up the glasses to starting the task.

The data: "What is stalling adoption" and "biggest barriers to deploying at scale" were asked in their own words by registrants across industries.

WHAT WE'RE HEARING

What separates the frontline smart glasses deployments that make it past pilot from the ones that stall? Is it the hardware, the use case, or the change management?

REGISTRANT, IT SERVICES

From over 50+ enterprise deployments we are seeing the main issue being is that XR needs to be made mandatory within the organization.

CHAT, XR SOLUTIONS PROVIDER

HOW LEADERS SOLVE IT

They remove single points of failure. When one champion holds the knowledge, the logins and the results, the program stalls the day they move on.



That kind of information living with one person can be a single point of failure for adoption.

DEVIN MARBLE, ARBORXR

Leaders also stop buying in silos. When the device, the application and the management platform are each bought and justified separately, the program has to be re-sold internally three times.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Give at least three people access to the pilot's results, tools and admin logins.
- Present the device, content and management platform as one program with one business case.
- Agree up front what result makes the pilot a standard, and who signs off.

What's next, and the device landscape

Six shifts to watch, and the five device categories to choose between today.

What's coming

Safety-rated smart glasses

The most frontline-relevant trend: glasses that are also certified safety eyewear, so smart glasses can replace the safety glasses workers already wear. Several manufacturers have safety-rated models available or announced.

Heads-up displays at lower cost

Displays that follow the wearer's head rather than being pinned to the environment. They are useful for frontline work and need far less compute than spatial AR, which is why they are arriving in lighter, cheaper glasses. Registrants noted HUD glasses with prescription lenses coming in under \$600.

Camera-free and privacy-first designs

Display-only glasses with no camera, and glasses with camera indicators tied to recording, give organizations options where recording is prohibited.

A choice of AI assistant

Newer glasses support several AI models, and registrants asked whether they will be able to pick which assistant they use.

Platform consolidation

Android XR, developed with Samsung and Qualcomm, is coming to market, and more consumer brands have announced glasses. Registrants want to know which platforms will last before they invest in content.

Lightweight spatial AR

Optical AR glasses that anchor content in the room are getting lighter, with new devices shipping in late 2026.

The device landscape

CATEGORY	WHAT IT IS	BEST FOR	EXAMPLES
AI smart glasses	Look and wear like normal eyewear. Voice AI assistant, a camera and sometimes a small display for captions and notifications.	All-day AI assistance, communication, light guidance, remote expert calls	Meta Ray-Ban Display, HTC VIVE Eagle, Rokid Glasses
Industrial AR (assisted reality)	A small screen next to the worker's field of view. Voice-controlled and rugged, often helmet-mounted.	Guided procedures, remote expert calls, inspection documentation in the field	RealWear Navigator 500, Vuzix M400, Vuzix Z100
Optical AR	See-through optics that anchor digital content in the physical world as the wearer moves.	Assembly guidance, digital twins, precision work	HMS SINGRAY G2, Snap Specs
Display glasses	A wearable screen tethered to a phone, laptop or compute puck.	Knowledge workers: reference documents, video calls, dashboards	XREAL One Pro, VITURE Luma Ultra
HoloLens 2 (legacy)	Optical AR headset. Production ended in 2024; security updates end December 31, 2027.	Existing deployments only. Plan a migration.	Microsoft HoloLens 2

Three questions decide the shortlist: the job the worker is doing, how the device connects (standalone or phone-paired), and whether your device management platform supports it. For device-by-device detail, read our guide: **What AR device or AI wearable should I buy for my XR program?**

For the ecosystem: OEMs, ISVs and channel partners

Almost a quarter of registrants build or sell XR themselves. Here is what buyers told us they need from the ecosystem.

For device makers (OEMs)

- **Certifications that match real sites:** safety eyewear ratings, intrinsic safety and ATEX, cleanroom and medical environments. One registrant called it "an open market for the first hardware supplier to make an intrinsically safe wearable better than RealWear."
- **Prescription and accessibility built in,** not offered as an accessory.
- **Manageability from day one:** standard Android enrollment, remote camera controls and a clear update path. Registrants flagged devices on AOSP without Google services as harder to manage.
- **Input without a phone.** QR codes and phone-based set-up frustrate frontline workers.
- **Longevity.** Buyers are wary of a crowded market and want confidence a device and its platform will be supported for years.

For software developers (ISVs)

- **Clear SDK and platform guidance:** which OS, which SDKs (including Unity), and how content will be distributed.
- **Integration with enterprise systems:** Microsoft Teams, image recognition and existing work instruction and content systems.
- **Use-case-specific experiences.** As one registrant put it in the chat: "close collaboration between glasses manufacturers and SW developers can result in use case specific devices."
- **Affordable education licensing.** Schools named software cost and availability as their bottleneck.
- **Analytics that prove value:** completion, errors and where workers get stuck.

For channel partners and integrators

- **Guidance, not just boxes.** Buyers are overwhelmed by device choice and want help matching category to use case.
- **Bundles that remove friction:** device, management, content and set-up delivered as one program.
- **Deployment services:** bulk orders, regional availability, compliance, warranties, replacements and on-site roll-out.
- **Offline and remote-site solutions,** such as compute pucks and pre-configured connectivity.

FAQ: every question you sent us, answered

We received 159 written questions at registration and five during the live session. Similar questions are grouped together, and all are anonymized.

DEVICES AND THE HOLOLENS 2 QUESTION

What replaces HoloLens 2?

There is no single like-for-like replacement, and for many teams there doesn't need to be. Start from the job. If workers need content anchored precisely in 3D space, look at optical AR glasses such as HMS SiNGRAY G2. If they need text, diagrams or a remote expert in their field of view, industrial AR or AI glasses do the job at a fraction of the weight and cost. HoloLens 2 security updates end on December 31, 2027, so plan the migration now.

Which devices meet aerospace and defense requirements, including six degrees of freedom?

Six degrees of freedom and spatial anchoring point to optical AR. Aerospace and defense requirements go beyond the spec sheet: security review, supply chain and support commitments. We recommend shortlisting by category, then running security and requirements reviews with the manufacturer and an authorised channel partner.

Which new wearables are coming, and which ones should I know about?

The biggest trends are safety-rated smart glasses, lower-cost heads-up displays, camera-free designs, glasses with a choice of AI assistant, Android XR devices and lighter optical AR such as Snap Specs, shipping in late 2026. Section 7 and our device guide cover the current landscape.

Which glasses are approved as safety glasses, intrinsically safe or ATEX-certified?

Safety-rated smart glasses are available and more are announced. Intrinsic safety and ATEX certification remain rare in smart glasses. Check certifications with the manufacturer against your site's specific rules before piloting.

Which glasses work in cleanrooms and regulated manufacturing?

Look for devices with published cleanroom and medical environment certifications, and confirm them with the manufacturer. Beyond the device, regulated sites need a governance plan for captured images and video, and an update process that fits your validation requirements.

Is display quality, field of view, battery and compute good enough today?

For guidance, remote expert and capture, yes. For immersive 3D visuals or design review, not yet in lightweight glasses; headsets still do that job better. Heads-up displays that follow the wearer's head need far less compute than spatial AR, which is why they are arriving in lighter, all-day devices.

When will spatially anchored AR arrive in lightweight glasses with reasonable battery life?

Lighter optical AR devices are shipping in 2026, but battery life and weight still involve trade-offs. For most frontline tasks, a heads-up display delivers the value today without waiting for spatial AR.

Will smart glasses replace VR and MR headsets?

No. They complement them. Headsets remain the best tool for immersive training before and after work. Glasses serve the worker during the task. Most enterprise programs will run both.

What about people who wear prescription glasses?

Many smart glasses now support prescription lenses. Survey your pilot group before choosing a device, and budget for prescription inserts or lenses as part of the program.

Can smart glasses help people who are deaf, hard of hearing or sight-impaired?

Live captions and translation on a heads-up display are among the most promising accessibility features. Include accessibility needs in your requirements from the start.

Do smart glasses support eye tracking, gestures or spatial anchors?

It depends on the category. Some optical AR and display glasses support hand tracking, gestures and 6DoF; most AI glasses rely on voice and touch. Check the spec for each device against your use case.

Can glasses be displayed on, or are they audio only?

Both exist. AI glasses without a display rely on voice; others add a small display in one or both lenses. See the device landscape in section 7.

How long can glasses record?

Recording time depends on the device and its battery. Check the manufacturer's specification, and consider hot-swappable batteries or companion power for long shifts.

USE CASES AND VALUE

What are the strongest use cases today?

Guided work instructions, remote expert calls, capture and documentation, and AI assistance at the point of work. See section 4.

Have smart glasses pilots become part of everyday work anywhere?

Yes. Organizations are now planning real deployments of hundreds, thousands and even tens of thousands of devices. The ones that scale start from a single well-defined task, measure it and remove single points of failure.

How do we measure success and ROI?

Choose one task and one metric before the pilot: time to complete, first-time fix rate, errors or time to competency. Instrumented guided workflows add data on where workers get stuck or skip steps.

How can we use smart glasses for training and safety training?

Use headsets for immersive practice off the job, and glasses for guidance and refreshers during the job. Scenario-based experiences like distracted-driving simulations remain headset territory today; glasses are best at supporting the real task.

Can we upload our own content, such as training for employees?

Yes. With a device management platform you can push apps and content to devices remotely. With AI guided workflows, your existing standard operating procedures become the content.

Can glasses replace headsets for product design review?

Not yet for most teams. Design review typically needs large, high-fidelity 3D visuals, which headsets deliver better today.

How do we use smart glasses in education, from K-12 to research?

Start with a use case you can measure: guided lab procedures, remote expert sessions or language translation. Plan for managing many devices at once, kiosk mode and student data privacy under FERPA.

PRIVACY, SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE

How are privacy concerns being addressed?

Through device choice (camera-free models, recording indicators), management controls (disabling features by location or role, remote lock and wipe) and policy (where glasses may be worn, recording and consent rules). Treat glasses as managed enterprise devices that stay on site.

Are there HIPAA-compliant smart glasses?

Compliance comes from the whole system, not the device alone: where data is stored, who can access it and how devices are managed. Work with your compliance team and vendors to review the full data flow.

How do we secure images, video and audio captured on glasses?

Define where captured data goes, who can access it and how long it is kept. Use managed devices that connect only to approved networks and endpoints, and can be locked or wiped remotely.

Do you have sample smart glasses usage policies?

We do not publish a template. At minimum, cover recording and consent, where captured data is stored and for how long, the areas where glasses may not be worn, and who is accountable for each device. Write it before the pilot starts, not after.

How do we handle worker trust and acceptance?

Involve workers early, be explicit about what is and isn't recorded, and choose devices with visible recording indicators or no camera where appropriate. Acceptance grows when glasses make the job easier.

DEVICE MANAGEMENT AND INTEGRATION

Who manages phone-paired glasses like Meta Ray-Ban Display: the glasses, the phone, or both?

The paired phone is the managed device. With ArborXR, the paired Android phone is under management, and the glasses get Remote Assistance through it. This was the top-voted question in the live session.

How do app and content pushes work across smart glasses, including web apps?

For phone-paired glasses, apps are pushed to the phone. For standalone glasses, apps go to the device directly. App stores such as Google Play will also play a role as Android XR arrives.

How do we enrol Android glasses, and how quickly can devices receive policies?

Standard Android devices enrol through the usual Android path. Devices on AOSP enrol through the manufacturer's route or a vendor set-up tool. Once enrolled, policies apply remotely.

How does this work alongside Microsoft Intune or Omnisia Workspace ONE?

Many organizations run a dedicated XR device management platform alongside their corporate MDM. The right set-up depends on your security requirements; talk to us about your environment.

Can we run 50 or more glasses at once, in a collaborative session?

Managing many devices at once is exactly what device management platforms are for. Collaborative multi-user experiences depend on the application.

What about sites with limited Wi-Fi or cellular connectivity?

Pre-configure devices for the networks they will use, plan which functions must work offline, and consider companion devices such as compute pucks. Devices can sync and update when they reconnect.

Does ArborXR manage work instructions and AR overlays, or only the devices?

Both. ArborXR has launched Guided Workflows, combining AI-guided work instructions, remote assistance and capture, now available through early access.

PLATFORMS, AI AND DEVELOPMENT

Which OS and content distribution model will win?

Android and Android XR are the platforms to watch, alongside manufacturer-specific operating systems. If your evaluation window is 12 to 24 months, track Android XR closely.

Which SDKs are available, and how long will platforms be supported?

It varies by manufacturer, from Android and iOS SDKs to OpenXR and Unity support. Ask each manufacturer about their support roadmap before committing development.

Will users be able to choose which AI assistant they use?

Increasingly, yes. Several current glasses already support more than one AI model.

What is the roadmap for supporting Snap Specs?

Snap Specs ships in late 2026. Contact us to register your interest in support.

Which ISVs are delivering the most value?

The ISVs creating value build for a specific use case and integrate with enterprise systems. Talk to us about partners for your use case.

ADOPTION AND THE MARKET

What is stalling adoption?

Three things: form factor (now being solved), confusion about which hardware to buy, and programs that depend on one champion or are bought in silos. See section 6.

Are enterprises really interested in smart glasses?

Yes. Registrants for this event came from 166 organizations, and nearly half work at organizations with 1,000 or more employees.

How do smart glasses become a habit for frontline workers?

Make them easier than the alternative. Glasses that are ready instantly and work hands-free get used; glasses that need set-up steps get left in the drawer.

Is it as easy as "if we use mobile devices for frontline workers, we can start with smart glasses"?

Close. If you already manage Android devices, much of the infrastructure is familiar. The differences are in the use case, governance and whether each device is standalone or phone-paired.

Sources and method

Every figure in this report comes from one of three places: the registration survey and live poll for the event "A new wave of wearables is coming. Is your company ready?" held on September 30, 2026, the panel discussion recorded at that event, or the named third-party sources below. Where a sample is smaller than the full registrant list, the n is stated next to the figure.

SOURCES

- ArborXR registration survey and live poll, "A new wave of wearables is coming. Is your company ready?", September 30, 2026.
- Counterpoint Research, Intelligent Eyewear Market Tracker, H1 2026, via [Android Authority](#).
- Microsoft HoloLens 2 end of production and support, via [The Register](#).



Start with one task. We'll help you manage the rest.

ArborXR is the device management and operations platform for enterprise XR, trusted by more than 5,500 organizations and 80+ Fortune and Global 500 companies. We help teams deploy, secure and manage headsets and smart glasses at scale, and now deliver AI-guided work instructions, remote assistance and capture through Guided Workflows.

Get early access to Guided Workflows

Pilot AI-guided work on smart glasses, with remote assistance and capture in the same platform.

Choose the right device

Read our guide: What AR device or AI wearable should I buy for my XR program? arborxr.com/blog/what-ar-device-or-ai-wearable-should-i-buy

Talk to our team

Bring your use case, your devices and your roll-out plan. We'll tell you what we'd do first.

SOC 2 TYPE II

ISO 27001

GDPR

SOC 2 Type II and ISO 27001 certified, GDPR compliant. For healthcare and education, we give teams the controls to run XR programs in HIPAA- and FERPA-regulated environments.

Works across Meta, Lenovo, HTC, PICO, and Magic Leap devices.

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