

# Blinklifier: Bat eyelashes, activate display

Not getting enough attention? Blinklifier is an eye-grabbing wearable computer that lights up your winks.

by [Tim Hornyak](#) | August 22, 2012 10:08 AM PDT



The stylish Blinklifier.

(Credit: [Triciaflanagan.com](#))

Princess Leia, eat your heart out.

If you need a little extra something in your struggle against the Galactic Empire, what better than this charming headdress? It's enough to stop a platoon of stormtroopers dead in its tracks.

But Blinklifier is no sci-fi film prop. It's the subject of research on **feedback loops** [[http://www.wired.com/magazine/2011/06/ff\\_feedbackloop/](http://www.wired.com/magazine/2011/06/ff_feedbackloop/)] being presented at this month's 10th Asia Pacific Conference on Computer Human Interaction (**APCHI 2012** [<http://apchi2012.org/>]) in Matsue, Japan.

**Tricia Flanagan** [<http://triciaflanagan.com/>] of Hong Kong Baptist University and colleagues are proposing Blinklifier as a wearable computer that emphasizes the user's eye movements with a colorful LED display.

According to the researchers, the device creates a feedback loop in that it amplifies voluntary and involuntary eyelid movement, eliciting a reaction based on an action.

The project draws inspiration from the work of **wearables** [[http://www.cnet.com/8300-5\\_3-0.html?keyword=wearables](http://www.cnet.com/8300-5_3-0.html?keyword=wearables)] pioneer and University of Toronto Professor Steve Mann, who recently claimed he was **assaulted** [[http://www.cnet.com/8301-17852\\_3-57476130-71/google-style-glasses-prof-turns-up-the-heat-on-mcdonalds/](http://www.cnet.com/8301-17852_3-57476130-71/google-style-glasses-prof-turns-up-the-heat-on-mcdonalds/)] in a Paris McDonald's because of his computerized eyewear.

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The Blinklifier headdress "responds to the specific eye movement patterns of the wearer and amplifies emotions that the wearer wants to communicate by presenting noticeable, exaggerated visual compositions," according to a poster paper to be presented at the Japan conference.

Unlike many other wearable computers, the Blinklifier doesn't have electronic components that are readily visible. The user puts on fake eyelashes, and attached to these are lines of skin conductive ink from **Bare Conductive** [<http://www.bareconductive.com/>].

An Arduino microcontroller, meanwhile, translates the eyelashes' blinking movements into signals to light up the LEDs embedded in the large headdress.

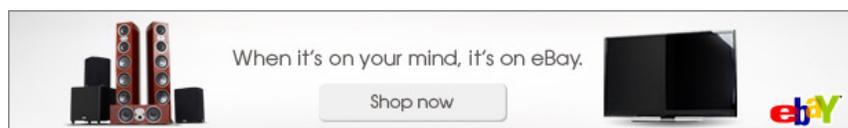
The result is a "wearable device that intends to enrich our emotional dialogues and manage our social relations through blinking," the researchers write. "It follows the natural eye muscles contraction and extends the motion into a visible light array."

It's also perfect for Death Star cocktail parties.

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### About **Tim Hornyak** [<http://www.cnet.com/profile/legerdemain/>]

Crave freelancer Tim Hornyak is the author of "Loving the Machine: The Art and Science of Japanese Robots." He has been writing about Japanese culture and technology for a decade. **E-mail Tim** [<mailto:timothyhornyak@gmail.com>].



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