

ALL-ROUND VISION

ASL Vision, based in Lewes, East Sussex, has two new products designed and developed with coach and bus operators in mind. Both ASL 360SV and ASL 360-OnTour use innovative camera technology to enhance all-round vision. Mike Morgan reports



Having launched ASL 360SV, a ground-breaking 360° surround-view camera system designed as an aid to coach and bus drivers to reduce blind spot and visibility hazards, ASL Vision, a division of Application Solutions Ltd (ASL), has unveiled ASL360-OnTour, an iPhone App that gives tourists a panoramic streamed video view of attractions, so ensuring that every passenger has the best seat on the coach.

ASL Vision is a division of Application Solutions Ltd (ASL), which was set up in 1989 and, from its offices in Lewes, East Sussex, specialises in designing and developing innovative products, creating and licensing intellectual property, and providing technology consulting for clients across the globe.

It employs leading scientists, engineers and experts in their fields. Over half have post-graduate qualifications; a third doctorates.

ASL Vision complements ASL's research and development functions, identifying applications for the technology, in particular, video camera signal processing.

It invests in its own programs to develop its technology further and has developed several spin-offs in the past.

■ SURROUND VIEW

The ASL 360SV is a full 360° surround view system. Its incorporation of specialised signal processing means it differs from other such cameras, which suffer from fisheye distortion

making their imagery unusable.

It is designed as an aid to coach and bus drivers to reduce incidents such as:

- Left turn accidents crushing cyclists or pedestrians
- Accidents while manoeuvring in tight spaces
- Pedestrian collisions
- Accidents resulting from limited visibility at junctions or beside parked vehicles
- Passengers or objects trapped by closing doors.

This ground-breaking product has the potential to significantly improve road safety by offering drivers of any sized vehicle vastly improved visibility.

■ ACCESS ALL AREAS

The ASL360-OnTour is aimed at tour operators (to generate further income from tours) and their passengers.

The product is a design breakthrough using the latest technology to significantly enhance the tourist's experience. It allows operators to offer their customers the chance to download a smartphone App.

It benefits the customer by giving them an 'access all areas' tour at all times. It enables them to zoom, photograph and record attractions, making it a tailored trip for the individual.

ASL360-OnTour also solves logistical problems for tour operators who cannot guarantee every passenger a window seat or the optimum view to both sides of the vehicle as well as forwards and backwards.

The ASL360-OnTour kit consists of a single panoramic roof-mounted camera, available in multiple styles, or four individual miniature cameras. Clients specify a configuration according to the structure of the vehicle or craft being used.

Users are connected wirelessly to the camera(s) and are able to control viewing direction, zooming in on points of interest at will and capturing pictures from any chosen direction. The camera is connected to a control unit, which processes the video and broadcasts wirelessly to a mobile phone.

There are additional revenue-generating opportunities in the form of complete recordings of the actual tour. These can be generated by an optional recording module (USB memory or SD flash card) and produced for customers after the trip by File-copy at the ticket office on production of a reference number.

The App offers established tour and city guide companies the opportunity to improve the visitor experience, generate more revenue and increase seat occupancy.

Point of sale, ticket or brochure information prompts destination visitors to download the App to their smartphone, iPod or similar devices from the Apple store, with the operator receiving a share of revenue.

There are OEM branding options and an App skin on which the operator's logo can be used.

Given that it is often very difficult to give every passenger the ideal view of every attraction or highlight, ASL360-OnTour can optimise visitor experiences by making every vantage point on a vehicle the optimum viewing position throughout a journey. According to ASL, this can increase customer loyalty to a tour provider and distinguish them from competitors.

The company says installation of the camera or cameras has been streamlined so that the equipment can be fitted rapidly by any competent technician with no specialised knowledge being needed. Multi-lingual post-sales and technical help is available.

ASL also says there are unlimited promotional and buy-through opportunities for operators seeking to benefit from a technology that is set to revolutionise tour bus, coach and river boat experiences. ■

● The following links are to the two websites that provide an overview of the company and relate to the products that are most relevant to coach and bus operators:
www.asl360.co.uk - this focuses on the 360 products
www.asl-vision.co.uk - a generic overview of the company