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Bluetooth-Enabled Masks Offer Touchless Communication

STARTUPS: San Diego-Based BioPPE Innovates With Wearable Tech

■ By DONALD BLOODWORTH

After launching in March, the San Diego-based startup **BioPPE** is innovating in pathogen and protective technologies with a new line of face masks enabled with Bluetooth capabilities, giving wearers the option to answer phone calls and listen to audio in a touchless, hands-free manner with **Amazon** Alexa connectivity patents pending.

Brock Flint — a serial entrepreneur who has helped develop mobile Bluetooth and police body camera technology in the past — is the chief executive officer at BioPPE. He says the company was formed



Brock Flint

to better protect the public since the coronavirus pandemic began, as well as stay prepared well beyond it.

“When the pandemic hit, the world ‘knee jerked’ in managing the initial impact of COVID-19,” Flint said. “Meanwhile at BioPPE, we focused on the phases beyond that, inventing products and solutions to not only help organizations prepare, operate effectively and sustain for the new normal, but to also be equipped for the possibility of future contagions.”

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BROCK FLINT

Form and Function for Your Face

BioPPE’s anti-microbial face masks are designed and manufactured with proprietary light-weight, form-fitting materials with heating and cooling options controlled via app. Bluetooth-enabled models are available with or without imbedded speakers, and include internal headphones and microphones built-in. These hardware components are removable for cleaning and custom branding options are available.

Flint says people’s misgiving over

mask comfortability and functionality drove the company’s perspective on high-tech, forward-thinking design implementations. “We took a step back to address those people who aren’t used to wearing masks — teachers, lawyers, restaurant workers — they need to be able to communicate in an unmuffled, clear way,” Flint said. “Bluetooth is the latest addition to our product line that allows our customers to answer the phone without having to adjust or remove their mask in the process.”

New Normal

Even after the pandemic subsides, mask-wearing may remain a regular habit for people looking to maintain protection.

BioPPE’s antimicrobial mask line has been tested and proven to kill over 99.73% of CRE & MRSA, two of the most antibiotic-resistant pathogens in the world.

The company holds 10 patents and creates and produces a series of protective products, from touchless mask stations for retail, commercial, medical, retail and public spaces, to ultra-violet-powered microbe-eliminating boxes.

BioPPE’s future looks bright. Flint says acquisition talks are already underway. “We’re honored to have spoken to 10 companies so far,” he said. “Larger companies see the value in what we’re bringing to the table and the market that’s opening up.” Flint projects \$30M in revenue by 2021. ■



Photo courtesy of BioPPE

The mask’s lightweight material adjusts with a velcro strap, housing internal Bluetooth 5.0 technology.

BioPPE BIO P P E

FOUNDED: March 2020
CEO: Brock Flint
HEADQUARTERS: San Diego
BUSINESS: Protective equipment designer and manufacturer
FUNDING: Bootstrapped by founders with \$250K first-round Seed funding to date
EMPLOYEES: 7
WEBSITE: www.bioppe.com
NOTABLE: The masks utilize Bluetooth 5.0 technology for up to 8-10 hours of use