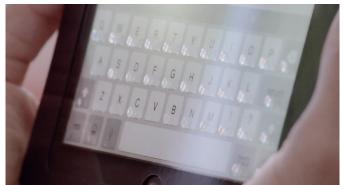
Written by Marco Attard 18 February 2015

The iPad mini is the first device to get physical on-screen buttons from Tactus Technology with the Phorm, a screen protector able to pop-up a physical keyboard whenever the user needs to type.



Described as a "morphing tactile surface," the technology uses "tiles" (Tactile Pixels) to turn specific areas of the screen into squishy tactile buttons via micro-fluid. Once the keyboard is not needed the keys disappear with the flick of a trigger. The technology is technically not too new, having made its first appearance back at CES 2013.

However one has to note the keys only work while holding the device in portrait mode, but Tactus says it is working on a case offering both landscape and portrait support.

The actual case promises to be thin and light, adding just 3mm of thickness to the tablet while weighting 180g.

iPad mini-compatible versions of the Phorm case should hit the market by Q2 2014, and preorders are already opens. An iPhone 6 version should follow from Q4 2015, before the company refines its technology further to fit other members of the iDevice family.

Go Phorm