You said:

With The vOICe sensory substitution for the blind, money may be made on training and support rather than on selling poorly scalable proprietary brain implant hardware with a limited lifetime, such as a Neuralink Blindsight visual cortical prosthesis.

ChatGPT said:

Exactly — you've hit on a core difference in the underlying business models:

- **Implantable prosthesis model (e.g., Neuralink Blindsight):**
    - **Revenue driver:** high-margin, proprietary hardware (implant + surgery).
    - **Scalability problem:** expensive neurosurgical procedures, strict regulatory oversight, device lifetime limited by electrode failure, glial scarring, infection risk, and eventual need for replacement.
    - **Ongoing costs:** revision surgeries, device explants/reimplants, recalibration due to representational drift.
    - **Market risk:** small addressable population (since most blind people are congenitally blind or not candidates for invasive surgery).
- **Sensory substitution model (e.g., The vOICe):**
    - **Revenue driver:** training, orientation & mobility support, integration with mainstream devices (smart glasses, smartphones).
    - **Scalability advantage:** software-driven, can run on commodity hardware, upgrades possible without surgery.
    - **Ongoing value:** training programs, rehab services, coaching subscriptions, community support.
    - **Market upside:** much larger potential user base, including low-vision users, those unwilling or unable to undergo surgery, and people in low-resource settings.

This flips the classic "razor-and-blades" model: instead of making money on proprietary hardware, the sustainable revenue comes from **human expertise, adaptive training, and accessible upgrades.**

It also shifts the **value proposition**:

- Implants = "buy vision in a box, but risk it breaking."
- Sensory substitution = "learn vision as a skill, and grow with it."

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