

Hey Boss, What's That Glow on Your Wrist?

By Michael Rudnick, Logical Design Solutions

This provides an at-a-glance view of important information you want to be notified about. The author acknowledges that this is not about detailed analysis, but getting key data when it matters. If you want more, you are going to go to your phone or tablet on the road (or your computer in the office). That also means, IT needs to start thinking about a new screen size and a new paradigm on top of mobile, social and cloud



Finally! With more hype than any product launch before it, iWatch has splashed down right into the deep end of the wearables pool, selling out in 30 minutes. And Apple is pushing hard with a massive marketing campaign targeting the technology as any-

thing but ... focusing on fashion and lifestyle rather than technology or feature/functionality.

Despite this, and visibility on the covers of the likes of Vogue and Cosmo, iWatch is an important interaction point with the Internet of Things (IoT), creating new, highly contextualized user experiences for users and disrupting many functions and industries. As Apple CEO Tim Cook said at launch, the device is “the most personal device we’ve ever made, allowing users to do things they never imagined.”

Consumers, particularly millennials, want it. Demand is projected to be strong – 33 million units worldwide in 2015, growing 35% annually.¹ With 1 in 5 American adults already owning some type of wearable, overall adoption

rates are running parallel to, and could even surpass, tablets.²

But wearables face many challenges when translating consumer value into useful contexts for employees within the enterprise – just as the deployment and use of smartphones (more specifically, mobile enterprise apps) have struggled inside the enterprise despite their ubiquity in the consumer space (e.g., 98% of Facebook’s revenue growth comes from mobile).

Think about it: large, global organizations are still hard pressed to deliver mobile experiences. And those that do are often a year or more behind consumer apps – much less up to today’s consumer-grade standards – not to mention solving significant challenges of enterprise security and confidentiality.

The iWatch is but one of many types and brands of smartwatches, and the smartwatch is but one of

“Customer expectations have changed. They used to be more understanding if certain features weren’t part of your mobile app, but now they expect to do whatever they want, whenever and wherever they want to”

Andres Wolberg-Stok
Global Head of Emerging Platforms & Services,
Citigroup

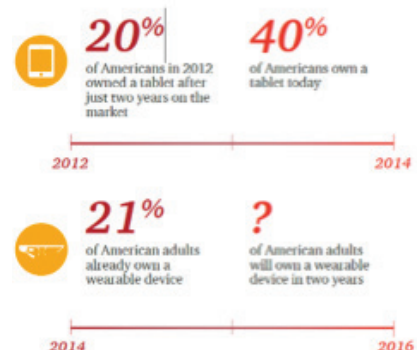
many types of wearables. Samsung, Motorola, Intel and even TAG Heuer have launched smartwatches, and exercise trackers from FitBit, Jawbone and Garmin have been around for quite a while (smartwatches lead the wearables product category with 59% of device shipments this year, projected to reach 70% by 2019).

Beyond the smartwatch, the wearable device market is currently much more diverse than most imagine – sensors and powerful processing power are being embedded in many wearable devices from clothing to jewelry to eyeglasses to sneakers. And the competitive landscape for smartwatches is going to be fierce.

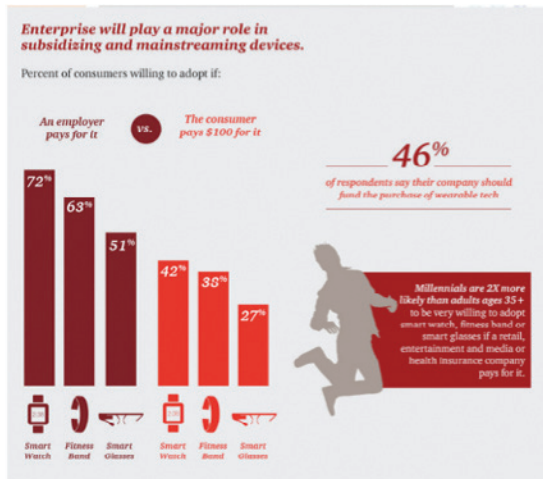
The race to win smartwatch market share is the top priority – which is why Apple has made the iWatch tightly integrated (some say, co-dependent) with the iPhone, building on and defending a massive Apple ecosystem. And since Apple sold more iWatches in an hour than Android smartwatches were sold in the past year, Apple’s brand will lead the way as it had done in other categories such as smartphones and tablets.



Adoption rate of wearables parallels that of tablets.



To get wearables right for employees, and particularly for the HR function, enterprises need to undertake a deep and thoughtful level of planning and coordination between HR, business leaders and IT. This proliferation of iWatch will change user expectations around immediacy of informa-



Source: PwC The Wearable Future, Oct 2014

tion and the nature of that information, and be a catalyst for innovation. There's no question that the employee digital experience will need to provide an optimized "journey" across multiple platforms and devices, creating a single fluid user experience – many of which will be "mobile-first" such as Uber. Employees will want to start a micro-performance review on their laptop, continue working on a tablet while traveling, and then review and submit from their iWatch. Or vice versa! "The (user) experience needs to be seamless regardless of point of entry," says Kedar Deshpande, head of Mobile, at Zappos. "We approach mobile customer experience as just customer experience, not differentiating it, because mobile is simply who we are."

All too often enterprises end up playing catch-up simply because of how employees use mobile and wearables in their non-work related life. For example, one-third of shoppers use mobile exclusively, and more than half consider mobile the most important resource in the purchase decision process.³ Yet enterprise strategies still relegate mobile to second-class citizen status.

To move mobile and wearables up the prioritization ladder, with serious consideration for mobile-first or wearable first solutions – organizations will need to get their strategic house in order and focus carefully on aligning business needs with the new experiences. Accomplishing this will require much clearer governance that encourages and enables collaborative relationships of how enterprise channels and solutions are managed in order to adapt to changes in user needs and behavior. It's not just a matter of understanding the user needs and preferences, but the ability for an organization to plan and manage that experience

across the multiple devices and channels.

Apple's recent partnership with IBM lays the groundwork for a substantial influx of use cases that offer new ways of working, collaborating and executing common work-based tasks. Wearables for business will also need to deliver more robust functionality to become mainstream. And wearables also have the distinction of being ever more sensitive to privacy-oriented concerns than other devices.

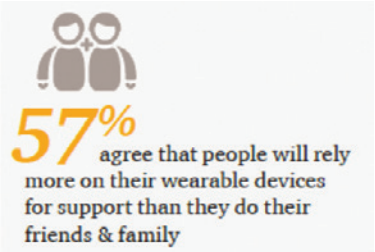
Treating mobile and wearable as variations of the desktop results in a fragmented user experience.

The employee experience, especially within HR, has long been a fragmented set of traditional and digital touch points, most not involving mobile – or, at best, sub-optimized for mobile. When employees jump between applications, channels, and devices – especially mobile devices – it almost always leads to an inconsistent experience, resulting in a call to the HR service center, higher support costs, lower productivity, and reduced user satisfaction.

Mobile and wearables play two roles. While they currently represent a small part of the user experience, which remains heavily dependent upon the desktop, they are quickly emerging as the "platform" of choice as users move seamlessly between the phone, tablet and watch. Yet many companies continue to treat anything other than the desktop browser as just another channel, a technology platform, or a portable version of the Web. Meanwhile, consumer expectations are evolving to demand dedicated mobile experiences that go beyond mobile-optimized, "responsive-designed" websites, to content written for the smaller screen, and basic mobile apps. Such incomplete or subpar mobile experiences negatively impact the mobile user journey or, at the very least, frustrate users.

So while companies are struggling to keep up, that's just the tip of the iceberg. What lies below the water isn't just the need for a mobile-ready and wearable-ready employee experience – which is just the ticket for entry in the lifeboat.

Enterprises will need to think, strategize and invest in mobile-first and mobile-only experiences. The idea of mobile-only design – playing out across multiple mobile devices (phone, watch, tablet) is a real game-changer, but an approach that most organizations have not yet even begun to address.



PwC Survey of 1,000 Consumers

Endnotes

- Forrester Enterprise Wearables, 12/11/14.
- Laura Schooler, "Wearable Technology Future is Ripe for Growth – Most Notably among Millennials," *PwC US*, PwC.
- Greg Sterling, "Study: More Than 30 Percent of Consumers 'Mobile Only,'" *MarketingLand*, 3 June 2014.

About the Author



Michael Rudnick is an editor of WSR and vice president at Logical Design Solutions. He is an industry pioneer and innovator with more than 20

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