Wearables - The Key Considerations for News Publishers

Description: Leave it to Apple to get the buzz, and consumers, swirling around smartwatches and wearables. On launch day, nearly 1 million Apple Watches were sold, according to estimates from Slice Intelligence.

If the figure is even close to correct, that means Apple sold more Apple Watches in a day than all the manufacturers of Android Wear devices (Samsung, LG, etc.) together shipped in 2014. That gives Apple quite a leg up in the smartwatch race with Google - and don't forget the crowd-funded Pebble.

Is the Apple Watch overhyped? Will the Apple Watch somehow serve as a bridge to a true wearables revolution, involving not just smartwatches but also virtual reality (like Facebook's Oculus Rift) and augmented reality devices (like Google Glass)?

Mixed reviews of the Apple Watch and the uncertainty surrounding future development of smartwatch platforms have given some people - also in our industry - pause for thought. Begging the question for news publishers: What should we do about smartwatches and other wearables? How do we assess their potential?

That is what this report is all about: not to try to convince you as a publisher to launch 1,000 apps for smartwatches, or to partner or invest in startups developing VR and AR technologies. Instead, we want to raise the key questions about these potentially disruptive technologies so you can better determine a course of action - or non-action.

Certainly, if Apple Watch sales continue at this breakneck pace, this is just the beginning; there will be numerous iterations of new devices in the near future. Most publishers we spoke to about wearables have chosen to act, some cautiously for now, others full steam ahead. Some are sitting on the sidelines, waiting to see how things pan out in these early days. All approaches are understandable.

That's why we called on some of the leading minds in the industry to share their thoughts on how wearables might affect news publishers. We created this report as a tool for you to use as a starting point for discussions in your organisations.

Some of the features in the report:

- FAQs about wearables
- Mario García on design of smartwatches
- Jeff Jarvis on how newsrooms should respond
- Apple Watch: reviews of the reviewers
- Usability guru Bruce Tognazzini on the Apple Watch
- Kerry Northrup on how wearables may impact journalists' work
- Ralf Ressmann on why journalists cannot say no to smartwatches
- Kim Svendsen on how smartwatches will create a shortcut to news
- What about advertising and revenue possibilities on wearables
- How to get a head start on implementing new technologies
- Wearables research from partners of the Global Alliance of Media Innovation
- Major questions for discussion

Publisher plans from:

- The Guardian
- The New York Times
- Aftonbladet
- Sanoma Europe
- Zeit Online
- WeltN24
- Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)
- Le Figaro
Contents:
1. Overview
2. FAQs about Wearables
3. Mario Garcia: Let's Hear it for the Media Quintet
4. Apple Watch Reviews
5. Jeff Jarvis: Relevance
6. Bruce Toghazzini: Usability Guru on the Apple Watch
8. Why Journalists Cannot Say No
9. Kim Svendsen: The Shortcut to News on Smartwatches
10. Publisher Plans
    - The Guardian
    - The New York Times
    - Aftonbladet
    - Sanoma Europe
    - Zeit Online
    - WeltN24
    - Frankfurt Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ)
    - Le Figaro
11. The Revenue Question?
12. Questions for Discussion
13. 3 Tricks to Get a Head Start
14. Gami's Role in Driving Innovation
15. Vision's from Gami Partners

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