



# APPLE WATCH POV

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## THE APPLE WATCH

In early 2015, Apple will officially enter the 'wearables' technology market with the introduction of their Apple Watch. The much-rumoured- and speculated-about device will fully integrate with the iPhone, enabling interesting and simple user experiences that haven't previously been possible. The Apple Watch certainly won't be the first smartwatch to hit the shelves (Samsung, and Motorola both have Android-driven watch offerings), and it's not even the first smartwatch to integrate with iOS (Pebble and its own appstore of functionality can connect to your iPhone), but it does offer some new functionality and hints at the possibility of unique, new user experiences.

For brand owners that are already operating in the mobile app space, and for those that feel they should be, the introduction of the Apple Watch is a reason to take stock of the moments in your audience's day where you want to make an impact. While it is yet to be seen if the device will spread like its iPod, iPhone and iPad predecessors, we anticipate continued growth in this market along with increased consumer demand for discreet, unobtrusive experiences.

With the shift toward wearable technology, digital experiences will move from 'always on' to 'never off.'

## ↗ WHAT DIFFERENTIATES THE APPLE WATCH?

People who already desire a watch that fully interacts with a smartphone have a number of options available to them. And people who are looking for a wearable device that allows them to constantly track activity are also already well-served (see FitBit, Jawbone UP, etc.). The particular way that Apple has married these two desires – having a new way to engage, and having an advanced way to monitor and interact with your environment – makes the Apple Watch worthy of your attention.

- **New user interface:** Apple is well-known for its trendsetting user interface design, and that trend seems to continue here. The touchscreen interface promises simplicity and impressive design that will be comfortable for the modern user. As Apple has put it: “Entirely new, yet immediately familiar.” The health and workout apps that are built into the watch’s OS boast particularly novel design.

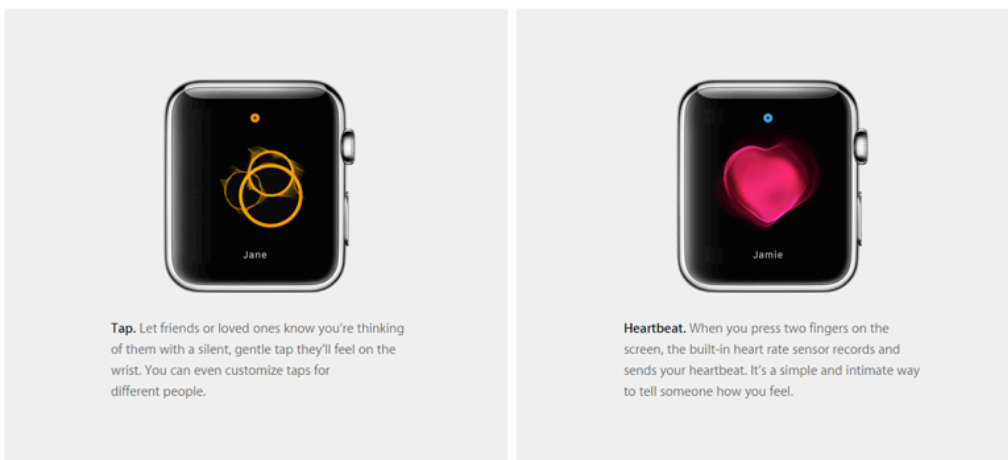


- **Unique navigation:** While the touchscreen is now a well-trodden means of interacting, Apple recognized that on such a small device, touching the screen isn't always optimal. The dial or crown of the Apple Watch (the "digital crown," as they've called it) offers an additional means of interaction. Turning the dial while in certain apps allows users to navigate and zoom in or out of the details on the screen.



- **Digital touch:** Apple has stated that this device will bring "more immediate, intimate ways to connect." The particular way-to-connect that sets them apart here is driven by what they are calling the "Taptic Engine". Built into the watch's OS (and getting its own physical button on the watch) is a new Friends app that enables a new and novel way to communicate. Rather than send a text or a voice message, users can now send a series of taps to their friends that are interpreted on the other end as gentle vibrations. You can even send the rhythm of your heartbeat to a friend if so-inclined.

This Taptic Engine also has enabled the touchscreen to sense pressure so that apps will be able to differentiate a tap from a press.



- **Apps we know:** Any app that currently has notifications enabled on the iPhone will see those notifications "just work" on the Apple Watch. For example, tweets, status updates and sports scores will pop-up without the need for further integration.
- **Extending activity monitoring:** Along with a built-in gyroscope, accelerometer and heart rate sensor, the Apple Watch will also be able to connect with the new iPhone 6's barometer to interpret elevation.

## ↗ WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR BRANDS?

This new wearable device gives brand owners an opportunity to bring new experiences to their users; experiences that haven't yet been dreamt of or designed. It promises opportunities for brands looking to be meaningful and impactful throughout a user's day. And even for brands that may not be all that keen on designing apps and experiences for a tiny watch screen, there are still implications worth considering.

- ***If you're communicating with users digitally, you're going to be communicating with them on the Apple Watch.***

With its rich iPhone integration, messages that users currently consume on their phone may be consumed on a watch. The dawn of the smartphone introduced new considerations for brands about how to stand out and communicate on a new, smaller form factor. A similar exercise seems to be reappearing.

Apple already showed off Apple Watch versions of Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest apps. Any message produced for and consumed on those platforms will now be appearing on a 1.5 and 1.7 inch screen (there are two form factors). Similarly, app-makers who currently rely on iPhone notifications to communicate with users will have to pay attention to how that information will appear on the Apple Watch.

This consideration equally applies to emails. One of the most appealing features of the Apple Watch is its ability to present information with a slight turn of the wrist. No clicks required. This will put increased pressure on marketers to continue to optimize subject lines.

### CONSIDER:

Brands that already traffic in minimal messages may have a step up on the competition. Oreo set some social standards with their image-a-day on Facebook: a singular captivating message that required no action on the user's part. With the reduced screen real estate, there is an opportunity for brands to redesign the standard, minimal way of communicating on social platforms.

- ***A shift to subtle interaction.***

The digital communications space isn't getting any less crowded. Traditionally, that fact has put brands in a position where virality and the ability to make noise have been valued above all else. With the trend towards wearable devices, users are favouring experiences that get out of the way. And Apple has baked this into their design decisions.

A tiny watch screen already necessitates a decrease in information, and Apple's Glances further emphasize this point. Glances are new types of notifications that can be customized with branded iconography and images, but the emphasis is on a single screen experience. Rather than expecting an Apple Watch user to scroll through information, the Glance favours a quick view.

And with the Taptic Engine, Apple aims to make communications even smaller than that. Apps will have the ability to convey information to users through small, gentle vibrations. From a click, to a glance, to a nudge. Brands that want to create meaningful experiences for users will need to adapt to user expectations about what is required of them.

## **CONSIDER:**

The kitchen may be the surprising ideal home for the Apple Watch. Modern cooks and foodies have become reliant on the iPad and iPhone as kitchen tools that take them step by step through recipes. With a smartwatch that responds to a flick of your wrist, the kitchen now has a legitimately hands-free device that can provide you with information and listen to your requests.

- ***Continuing to push lifelogging and activity-tracking to the mainstream.***

There is a lot of room for growth in the fitness and activity-tracking space. Strategy magazine reported on recent research that showed "300 million wearable devices, from smartwatches to fitness trackers, will be shipped globally by 2018." If the Apple Watch is successful in drawing in a new audience with its novel approach to user experience and their brand power, those projections could increase. Smartwatches have the ability to bring tracking, reporting and monitoring into one device, and Apple is doing just that.

As the category grows, users will continue to look for new ways to track and monitor their activities in a helpful and unobtrusive manner, giving brands the opportunity to help them achieve goals and change behaviour.

## **CONSIDER:**

We may find that the tech savvy golfer finds the Apple Watch indispensable at tee time. The Apple Watch could have the ability to correct your grip with a gentle nudge, report on your swing, and even estimate the distance of your drive. Not to mention provide all the GPS data and score-keeping information that golf apps in the current market do so well, in a manner more conducive to the game.

- ***It's not really a watch.***

It can tell you the time and it's worn on the wrist, but the Apple Watch doesn't really need to be a watch at all. Apple demonstrated the seemingly endless customization options of the primary interface. This includes different watch faces to simulate analog displays and digital displays alike. They even showed off a branded watch-face with an animated Mickey Mouse. But the device also allows for different types of information to take center stage on the device. The key customizations demonstrated were calendar and social information, but it seems that the opportunity is there for brands to really rethink what information can and should be displayed on the screen. This has been launched as a watch because people are comfortable with the idea of looking at a wearable device and seeing the time. App-makers have been given the opportunity to redefine what users expect to see when glancing at their wrist.

## CONSIDER:

The Apple Watch is not a smartphone on your wrist but it could make some current smartphone capabilities much more viable. There are a plethora of apps designed to act as remote controls for electronic toys, your televisions and your home automation system. The problem with all of those is they don't effectively replace the need to grab an electronic rectangle you have to fiddle with. The shift to a device you wear will make such applications more attractive.



APPLE WATCH  
42mm Stainless Steel Case  
with White Sport Band



## IN SUMMARY

If we look to the smartphone and wearable categories, there is a lot of sameness: devices that have been conceived as single-minded health monitors, and devices that try to mirror smartphone capabilities. What makes the Apple Watch stand out is its new approach to small and discreet interactions. Brands will have the opportunity to soon dig in to the Apple Watch app development game with the release of WatchKit documentation for developers, but it will presumably take at least a generation of this device to understand just how people want to use it. Apple's design choices seem to be informed by growing trends in user interaction, and we anticipate that new branded experiences will work best when they can reach users at just the right moment without getting in their way. Engagements that are meaningful but almost invisible will be the engagements that break through as we shift from always on, to never off.



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