

WHAT'S
TRENDING!

The Apple Watch: Revolutionary or Just Another Trend?



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The Apple Watch is unquestionably cool. Nicholas Carr, writing in Time magazine, predicted that “[it] could be as revolutionary as the first clocks”.

At What’s Trending, we’re not the arbiters of cool. However, we do wonder whether this latest trend will have an impact on healthcare and healthcare communications.

What the Apple Watch Does and Doesn’t Have

The Apple Watch is a contemporary and personal way to capture and track health data. In combination with the new Health app, consumers can have a friendly health and fitness data dashboard. And for app developers, there’s the HealthKit, which allows tons of health and fitness apps to work together.

Your fashionable new accessory will measure your steps, how many calories you’ve burned, and how much brisk exercise you have completed. When you’re exercising, your Apple Watch measures your distance, pace, and speed. The custom heart rate sensor detects your heart rate during workouts, which helps determine your intensity level.



What the Apple Watch doesn’t have is a built-in blood pressure monitor. Or a glucose tracker. Or a pulse oximeter. And it doesn’t measure hydration, perform ECGs, or check your body temperature.

So, while the Apple Watch is useful, it’s not revolutionizing healthcare. For most of the chronic conditions in the CDM playing field, such as diabetes and heart disease, the Apple Watch (in its current form) isn’t likely to transform treatment.

And while all the features of the Apple Watch are great for the individual, the deluge of data being created is more than our healthcare system can

currently deal with. Thousands of heart rate measurements, hundreds of blood pressure readings, and daily fitness data are more likely to overwhelm doctors than inform them. Few physicians see value in receiving gigabytes of unsolicited information. For the Apple Watch to be valuable to physicians and the healthcare system, they will have to increase their desire and capacity to manage all the data they’re receiving.

Apple Watch on Trial

Another angle Apple Watch is pursuing is integrating with ResearchKit, a new way to help health researchers enlist and monitor research subjects through Apple devices.

Researchers at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mt Sinai in New York plan to recruit a large number of asthma patients to use an app to track their day-to-day symptoms and habits. The hope is that the real-time tracking will help the researchers and the patients understand what triggers attacks, and document which practices can maintain better health.

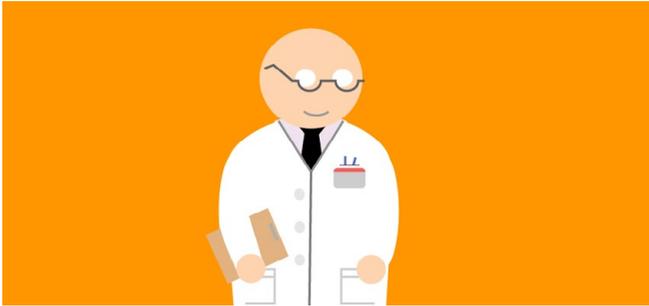
Transformation or Trend?

Will the Apple Watch change medicine, or will it simply become a cooler iteration of today’s fitness trackers? Will the Apple Watch have a longer shelf life than the six months of a typical consumer wearable? Will the Apple Watch go the way of Google Glass?

I believe that if any company can inspire users to invest more time and energy in maintaining and improving their health, Apple can make it happen. However, it will be up to the imagination of the creative people in our industry to help them make it so. ^K_B



what's next

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Good Health Rewards and Discounts

Car insurance companies have had good driver discounts for a while (every year you aren't in an accident or receive a ticket, you can expect your insurance premium to decrease). Health insurance companies are offering discounts for good behavior as well, as a wealth of health-related data become available from customers using wearables and other technology. And it's not only reductions in premiums the insurers are offering. Oscar Health (<http://onforb.es/1bMvt2g>), for example, gives customers gift cards when they hit goals based on a health assessment. Life insurance companies are also rewarding good behavior, as they recognize the value of all the big health-related data that are available (<http://mobihealthnews.com/42210/one-more-industry-that-wants-your-health-data-life-insurance/#more-42210>).

Gamifying the Caregiver Experience

Two parents, along with several other developers and artists, are creating a video game that chronicles **their experiences raising their son, who was diagnosed with terminal cancer** when he was twelve months old. As the father, a player will be able to **interact with the characters and make certain choices**. The game is designed to enable the player to feel the lows and highs of this family's experience, using a video game format to provide more **interactivity and immersion** than possible with film. The game is scheduled to be released before October.

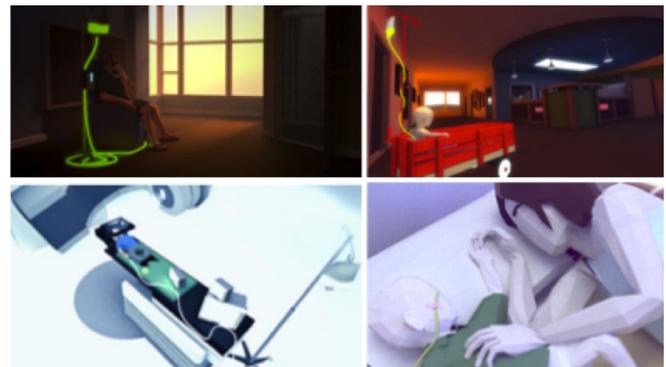
For more information (including a trailer), please go to (<http://bit.ly/1QFtGvy>) and (<http://bit.ly/1lyNUVf>). I'm looking forward to experiencing the developer's journey and learning new ways to take advantage of the gaming medium. How can we improve our own storytelling, and how can we offer such new ideas to our clients?

Pharmacist Power

When we think of HCPs, pharmacists aren't usually among the first professionals who come to mind. However, as a communications agency, we should pay closer attention to their growing role in the health care team. The National Governors Association (NGA) discusses that expanding role here (<http://bit.ly/1csU5Oj>). And a cool, infographic-type website highlights some of their more recent responsibilities (<http://bit.ly/1HeMEYD>). So, the next time you think about HCPs we should be communicating with, think more about pharmacists.

"Medical" OpenTable®

ZocDoc™ (<http://bit.ly/1EAdm6R>) is an app that helps patients easily book doctors' appointments in just minutes, without having to make a single phone call. You simply enter the specialty of the physician you need, your area code, and your insurance provider—and the app provides you with a list of doctors in your area who fit your criteria, including all the times there's an appointment available. Similar to Kayak for travel or OpenTable for restaurant reservations, ZocDoc benefits both the user and the party providing services. Patients have a more convenient way to find doctors and book appointments, and doctors have a new way to fill open time in their schedules. How can we leverage this unique concept and technology to make it easier for patients to find the medical care they need? The possibilities are wide reaching. Check out ZocDoc for yourself!



For more information, or inquiries about applying one of these trends to your brand, please reach out to:

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