Calling Google's Project Glass "just a start," *Forrester* analyst Sarah Rotman Epps argues "like mobile and tablets today, in three years, wearable computing devices will matter to every product strategist."



Wearables have enormous potential for uses in health and fitness, navigation, social networking, commerce, and media. "Imagine," asks Epps, ".. video games that happen in real space. Or glasses that remind you of your colleague's name that you really should know. Or paying for a coffee at Starbucks with your watch instead of your phone. Wearables will transform our lives in numerous ways, trivial and substantial, that we are just starting to imagine."

Wearables will "enter the mainstream by exploiting the relative strengths of the big five platforms" (Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Google, and Microsoft) says Epps in her blog post.

While Sergei Brin may have set off this latest interest when he wore a prototype from Google's Project Glass, wearables are not new. The military, IBM, Vusix, and even Nike have been playing with wearables for years.

What's new is that IT is now part of the fashion business...and that makes IT more attractive fashion. We may be approaching the tipping point where we catch the fashion wave...

For example, Eric Migicovsky, whose Pebble smartwatch works with iPhone and Android "graduated" from Y Combinator (well-known high tech incubator) but had trouble raising funds afterward. No one in venture capital or any of the usual high tech angels were interested. In desperation, Pebble turned from professional industry funding to crowd-funding...direct to consumers themselves. After only a few days on Kickstarter, the crowd-funding site, Pebble collected more than $2 million in funds via consumer pre-orders. The public has spoken and their commitment to Pebbles (and wearables) has now exceeded $5 million and created a wake-call for our industry capitalists.

Sony has launched its SmartWatch and other wrist-mountable smart gadgets are out now (Motorola's Motoactiv, the Wimm One). iPad Nano is comes with additional wristbands in 5X different colours. And "wearables" will be more than just eyeglasses and wrist-hanging devices... high tech clothing will help sew up the consumer's new sense of IT fashion.

Perhaps, suggests Epps, Nokia's recent patent filing (a vibrating tattoo that alerts you when someone calls or texts you) will become the ultimate in wearables...

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