

## BEN 29 – Wearable Technology

### Discussion Questions

1. Would you buy a smartwatch or another wearable device? How much would you be willing to spend?
2. What kind of wearable tech would you like to see in the future?
3. Is wearable technology here to stay, or is it just a fad?

### Transcript

With summer **heating up**, so too is the battle for the **wearable technology throne**. From watches to glasses, and clothing to health monitoring, the possibilities are seemingly **endless**. As ZD Net explains:

For those not **in the know**, '**wearables**' refers to the electronic technologies or computers incorporated into watches, contact lenses, eyewear, bracelets, rings, clothing and more — all designed to be worn on the body.

Although wearable tech is taking up a lot of the **headlines** in recent months, it's not an entirely new concept. As Mashable notes, it all started more than 50 years ago as a way to **cheat** casinos, but development has since remained **stagnant**:

**Inventors** built some of the first wearables in the 1960s and '70s to **count cards** and improve a gambler's odds at the **roulette** table. From there, working with wearables remained a **small-scale** field. Aside from the explosion of **calculator wristwatches** in the '80s, wearable tech saw little change in terms of consumer devices.

**Mainstream** players, including Samsung and Google, have already **entered the space** with smartwatches and Google Glass respectively, and Apple looks set to announce the iWatch later this year. Time is of the essence as everyone is **vying** to become the **early bird** and gain as much **market share** as possible, as MoneyMorning reports:

Wearable tech is an enormous **profit opportunity** for the **tech titans**. Research firm IDC projects the wearable tech market will have a **compound annual growth rate** of 78.4% over the next four years. And Credit Suisse says wearable tech will explode **tenfold** into a \$50 billion market within three years.

**Heavy hitters** such as Sony, LG, Motorola, and **up-and-coming** wearable makers like Pebble have already made their first moves. **Not to be outdone**, Google is looking to build on its existing services with the launch of its Android Wear operating system, as TechCrunch points out:

In the next few months, Google will get some competition from Microsoft, Apple and a few **startups** in this space. **For better or worse**, none of them know as much about you as Google does, so it'll be hard for them to **replicate** the Google Now experience.

If Google is **appealing** to the user's sense of convenience, Apple is focused on fashion, having **poached** top execs from Burberry, Nike, Yves Saint Laurent, and Tag Heuer. Apple's iWatch team includes a number of design, fitness, sensor, and engineering experts **hinting at a wrist-based** device which will be as much a luxury item as it is a working fitness accessory. From PC Magazine:

The iWatch will have the same **status symbol** power as many other Apple products, especially at the beginning. It has the potential to be a threat for the industry, and nobody should **sit with their arms crossed**.

Fashion seems to be just one **piece of the puzzle**, however, as fitness and health applications seem to be a **perfect fit** for wearables. Heart rate, **calorie consumption**, and how many steps you take are just **the tip of the iceberg** as Forbes reports:

Temperature and potentially even **blood-glucose monitoring** is **on the table** for wearables too. The "**Holy Grail**," will be glucose monitoring because of the **insights** into what someone has eaten. That would be a crucial **data point** for insurers, since diet has a far greater impact on health than activity.

Challenges and **fads** aside, customers are likely to appreciate the fashion side as much as the **coolness** of the **gadget** itself. As Nina Garcia, creative director for Marie Claire magazine points out, the **time is ripe** for new talent to enter the field:

Some tech companies have tried to move closer into the **fashion camp** by borrowing the **credibility** of **high-end** designers through partnerships and special editions of their products. The true **marriage** of fashion and technology won't come from the established **fashion houses** and tech giants, but through the creativity of innovators and a new brand of designer.

## **Vocabulary**

**To heat up:** To become increasingly competitive or active; "Their argument was heating up, and I was worried that they would start to fight!"

**Wearable technology:** Clothing and accessories (rings, bracelets, etc.) that incorporate computer and other electronic technologies.

**Throne:** The seat or position of control and power; "Prince William is expected to take the throne after Queen Elizabeth."

**Endless:** Without end; "It seems like I have an endless amount of emails to reply to every day!"

**(To be) in the know:** To be aware or informed.

**Wearables:** Wearable technology; "The market for wearables is heating up as Apple readies its new iWatch for launch."

**Headlines:** News or current events; "Many of the headlines last week were still talking about Germany's win in the World Cup."

**To cheat:** To trick, steal, or act in a dishonest way; "If you've researched properly, you're less likely to be cheated when doing business in a foreign country."

**Stagnant:** Showing no activity or movement; "Many professions in Europe have seen stagnant wage growth since the crisis began."

**Inventors:** A person who develops an idea or product; "Thomas Edison is widely considered one of the greatest inventors of all time."

**To count cards:** A form of cheating in a casino.

**Roulette:** A casino/gambling game.

**Small-scale:** A production that is small in scope, and involves few people or things; "Although they have a small-scale production now, they're planning to expand to 5 countries in the next 6 months."

**Calculator (wrist)watch:** A watch developed in the 1970s that had a small physical calculator built into the watch face.

**Mainstream:** the current thought or trend of the majority; "2014 may be the year when mobile payment technology moves into the consumer mainstream."

**To enter a space:** To enter a market or sector of an industry; "Entering a digital advertising space requires marketers who are willing to constantly learn new skills and technologies."

**To vie:** to compete with others in an attempt to get or win something; "In suburban cities, local supermarkets vie for the biggest share of the market."

**Early bird:** The person or groups that arrives before the others; "The early bird catches the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese."

**Market share:** A portion of the sales in a particular market. "We've grown steadily over the last three years and now have nearly 30% market share."

**Profit opportunity:** Products or services that generally have a higher profit margin, making investment potentially very rewarding.

**Tech titan:** An extremely important technology company or developer (e.g. Apple, Samsung, Google, etc.).

**Compound annual growth rate:** The year-over-year growth rate of an investment over a specified period of time.

**Tenfold:** Multiplied by a factor of 10; "Business is fantastic! We expect our production to increase 10-fold by the end of 2015."

**Heavy hitters:** The big, important, and famous players (or companies).

**Up-and-coming:** Becoming more successful, important, and well known; "Silvia is an up-and-coming project manager in our small company; she's doing an excellent job."

**Not to be outdone:** Not wanting someone else to do something better than you.

**Startup:** A company that is in the first stage of its operations; "The most important thing for a startup to communicate to prospective lenders is that their business is a wise investment."

**For better or (for) worse:** Whether the outcome is good or bad.

**To Replicate:** To make an exact copy or reproduction; "It will be difficult to replicate our results from last year, but we're still projecting a nice profit."

**To appeal:** To make a serious or sometimes urgent request to someone; "The CEO appealed to all staff to believe in his strategy for the future."

**To poach:** To attract (as an employee or customer) away from a competitor; "With multiple locations in major cities, Starbucks is successful even though they're often poaching business from each other."

**To hint at:** To suggest or give an indication of an idea; "I'm not certain, but he's hinting at the idea that he'll retire before Christmas."

**Wrist-based:** To be worn or used on the wrist.

**Status symbol:** A possession that shows a person's wealth or high social or professional status.

**To sit with one's arms crossed:** To not act, to do nothing.

**Piece of the puzzle:** A part or component of an overall picture or idea.

**Perfect fit:** An excellent or appropriate match; "With Arianne's experience and education, I think she'll be a perfect fit in our HR department."

**Calorie consumption:** Amount of calories that are burned, used, or consumed in a given time period.

**The tip of the iceberg:** Just or only the beginning or start.

**Blood-glucose monitoring:** The reading or calculation of the amount of sugar in the blood.

**To be on the table:** To be offered or considered for discussion or negotiation; "Paola said that the board of directors want an answer by the end of the day, so all options are on the table."

**Holy Grail:** A goal or result that is deeply desired, but difficult or nearly impossible to reach; "Finding a cure for cancer is the holy grail of medical researchers."

**Insight:** An understanding of the true nature of something or someone; "The conference speaker provided some valuable insights into the reason for the slow growth we've experienced."

**Data point:** A unit of information used in statistical calculations.

**Fad:** Something (such as an interest or fashion) that is very popular for a short time; "Social networking started as a fad, but has since redefined the way that billions of people communicate."

**Coolness:** The quality of being very interesting or appealing; "Coolness is always relative; consumers don't always appreciate the same products or services."

**Gadget:** Technological device.

**The time is ripe:** Ready, suitable, or ideal time to do something; "With the economy in the UK picking, the time is ripe to expand our operations there."

**Fashion camp:** Fashion sector or industry.

**Credibility:** The quality of being trusted and believed in; "Missing deadlines is an excellent way to for you to lose credibility in the eyes of your boss."

**High-end:** Higher in price and of better quality than most others; "Everyone dreams of a day when we can all have high-end products at low-end prices."

**Marriage of:** To join, combine, or merge ideas or products; "The iPhone was the first successful marriage of MP3 player and smartphone."

**Fashion houses:** A company where fashionable clothes are designed, made, and sold.

## Language Review

### A. Collocations

Match words from each column to make collocations found in the article.

1. Small	a. Point	
2. Early	b. Titan	
3. Profit	c. Fit	
4. Perfect	d. Tech	
5. Card	e. Bird	
6. Data	f. Counting	
7. Wearable	g. Scale	
8. Tech	h. Opportunity	

### B. Vocabulary Quiz

1. According to the article, the 'Holy Grail' of wearable technology can help people who have which condition?
  - a. Sickness
  - b. Diabetes
  - c. Cancer
  - d. Influenza
2. In order for wearable technology to be successful, it must have the right combination of:
  - a. Mainstream and status symbol
  - b. Coolness and wearable
  - c. Fashion and functionality
  - d. Fad and price
3. Retail sales in the Euro zone \_\_\_\_\_ in May as Europeans decreased spending.
  - a. Stagnated
  - b. Stagnating
  - c. Stagnation
  - d. Stagnate
4. Apple is using a very \_\_\_\_\_ advertising campaign focusing on health and fitness.
  - a. Invention
  - b. Invent
  - c. Inventive
  - d. Invented

5. Profits increased \_\_\_\_\_ from \$200k, to nearly \$1 million!
- Endlessly
  - Quintupled
  - Tenfold
  - Fivefold
6. Due to disagreements with the union, our most recent offer is now \_\_\_\_\_."
- Off the table
  - Up-and-coming
  - On the table
  - Down-and-going
7. Tech stocks are \_\_\_\_\_ with a number of innovative products expected to be launched in the months ahead.
- Ripe to be picked
  - Ripe for the picking
  - Ripened for the pick
  - Ripening for the picking
8. After only the first-round interview, it was clear Jim was the \_\_\_\_\_ fit for the job."
- Right
  - Best
  - Wrong
  - Ideal
9. We \_\_\_\_\_ for new computers for nearly 2 years, but the company can't afford anything reliable.
- Appealed
  - Appeal
  - Are appealing
  - Have been appealing
10. Do you agree with the practice of \_\_\_\_\_ employees from other companies?
- Poaching
  - Poach
  - To poach
  - Poached

## **Answers**

### **A. Colocations**

1. Small Scale
2. Early Bird
3. Profit Opportunity
4. Perfect Fit
5. Card Counting
6. Data Point
7. Wearable Tech
8. Tech Titan

### **B. Vocabulary Quiz**

1/b, 2/c, 3/a, 4/c, 5/d, 6/a, 7/b, 8/c, 9/d, 10/a

### **Online Practice**

Click the "Launch" button to open the **online practice:**

[Launch Quiz](#)