Gamification with the use of Wearables for Health and Fitness

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Gamification in Health and Fitness has rapidly emerged over the past decade as a tool to promote health and wellness. It is a broad term referring to the use of game thinking and game mechanics in a non-game context to engage users and solve problems. The concept is used to incentivise users to achieve their goals and increase user engagement. The best examples of gamification are in the Health and Fitness industry, where games encourage exercise by turning physical activity into a game and by delivering health interventions for bad habits cessation, like smoking, overeating or poor hydration, and medication adherence. Application of mobile and wearable devices have proven to be effective platforms for health and fitness games due to its wide adaptation, ease of use and continuous proximity to the users and patients.

The purpose of this white paper is to support the claim that, despite the concept being still in its early maturity stage, gamification with the use of wearable technology will increasingly become a framework in the health and fitness industry, concluding with recommendations on actions that can be undertaken to exploit that opportunity.

Messaging

Dozens of organisations, from start-ups to big enterprises, are seekin[g]
gamification of the industry and the explosion of interest in using te[c]
media to make adopting healthy habits fun for consumers. The conce[pt]
with the rocketing proliferation of mobile, social, and foremost wear[able]
harnessing this trifecta, industry leaders have new ways to build eng[age]
accurate, far-reaching views of both personal and population health. [As]
networked and communities built, participation in wearable groups c[an]
gamifying healthcare and fitness apps. [1]

According to industry estimates[2], 500 million smartphone users w[ould]
health care application by 2015, and by 2018, 50 percent of the more [than]
smartphone and tablet users will have downloaded mobile health app[s that]
include health care professionals, consumers, and patients. In 2014, [Apple's]
Health app, which gives iPhone users a dashboard of all their health [data]
and Fitness apps to work together, calling it "the beginning of health[care's]
epic race "for the wrist" with Google and Samsung already showing [off products]
and Apple will soon be entering the market. An insider estimates tha[t Apple will]
sell 63 million units in the first year which will undoubtedly superch[arge]

Wearable technology today is a £456 million industry[3] in the form of sports and activity
trackers, blood pressure, heart rate, glucose level monitors, brain waves and so called "mood
sensors". One in six (15%) consumers currently use wearable tech[4], such as smartwatches
and fitness bands, in their daily lives. There are some expectations that by 2017 around 1/3
of American consumers will regularly wear a device to track sleep, food, exercise, heart rate,
blood pressure and even glucose passively and non-invasively. According to ABI, by that
time the global market for wearables in health and fitness alone could reach 170 million
devices.

Gamification is ubiquitous in fitness apps and devices, enticing teams of friends or
coworkers to compete for points or trophies, placing on scoreboards and highest rankings.
Fitocracy is a perfect example, being a social network with over 1 million users, which
thrives on the principles of gamification. The trend has also entered the corporate world,
with organizations in different parts of the world challenging their employees to compete
for online trophies, often paying monthly subscriptions to enter their teams to play.

three or four friends who are trying to lose weight or lower cholester

against a larger group of individuals who are members of their health

similar health condition.

Already in May 2012, UnitedHealth Group (NYSE: **UNH**) released

percent of respondents said that video games require body movemen

the screen could complement traditional exercise. More than 50 perc

demanding games would encourage them to be more active. A Marc

Towers Watson and the National Business Group on Health revealed

employers planned to include online games as part of their health ini

by the end of 2013. The University of California at San Diego has a

underway to research the use of social media and mobile technology

behaviours.

The core of the digital health and fitness transformation is day-to-day

stats, also known as the "Quantified-Self". Many companies are tryir

health and fitness hub for all data collected from wearables and mobi

companies, for example, are starting to show interest in this data to s

and reward them with low premiums and equally increasing premiums for high risk

customers. San Francisco-based Appirio, has saved $280,000 in annual insurance payments

by implementing a wellness program using Fitbits. The company convinced insurer Anthem

to reduce their insurance payment by 5 percent after showing them data from a program

called CloudFit. This has pushed self-tracking from niche geek activity, into the mainstream.

A study[8] by the Future Laboratory and Confused.com found that about 60% of 18- to 34-

year-olds in the UK have used a self-quantifying app or service to monitor their fitness

levels, mental health and sleep patterns.

Merging self-obtained quantified data and gamification elements into a movement game

attempts to make exercise more fun. Poor stickiness in health plans is one of the key

challenges that gamification has already been proving to be solving.[9] It is especially

important to keep people engaged over longer periods so that new, more active, behavior

really becomes intrinsic. Health plans might offer incentives to members willing to sign up

for designated wearable health programs and join in the "game." The incentives build

participation by making the competition more engaging for those who play.

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their vital stats, while wearables have added fitness data to enhance r
content that can be shared. The size of the market is $1.5 Trillion alo
opportunity. The key drivers behind the accelerating adaptation and e
trend is the possibility to cut down cost by stimulating healthier beha
habits that contribute to building healthier, hence less expensive pop
is that this will be also supported by employers and insurance compa
control insurance premiums, employee absenteeism and decrease los
chronic health issues. Gamification and its tight relationship with the
activity trackers already play a great role in that movement, boosting
stickiness, as well as providing unprecedented amount of accurate da
sources.

Recommendations

In order for the health and fitness industry to leverage these trends[O
following recommendations:

1. All wearables should be designed as discreet or as similar as thei
   as possible, in order to minimize the put off effect mentioned by Jeff Clark. When they
   are used in places that are visible, they should be stylish, subtle, if needed discreet,
   attractive and highly personable.

2. When utilizing the gamification trend to gain engagement from consumers, ensure
   continuous levels of rewards and that consumers are aware of the benefits. There is a
   huge opportunity to create win-win situations using gamification, like insurance
   companies offering certain price plans to consumers who agree to maintain certain levels
   of healthy activity tracked by an app. Our recommendation would be to ensure the
   games have longevity and are as rewarding as possible.

3. All data collected should be stored in the most secure possible way, in compliance with
   industry and country regulations, and used only for the purpose the user expects. This is
   one of the most personal and sensitive types of data, so we strongly advise being
   transparent and clear in your communications with what data is being collected, for what
   purpose, who has access to it, how is it stored, and how it can be erased. Our
   recommendation would be to base some revenue streams on mutual benefits like service

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4. Design the usage of apps and games with the overlapping of the
   the consumer needs in mind. If companies look only at the benef
   apps and wearables will most likely end up being abandoned by

5. The primary goal is to engage people in their everyday health an
   concern is encouraging good habits in the least healthy populatic
   tremendously costly in medical expenses. Having said that, those
   be the ones who will generate the revenue streams. Hence the fo
   health plan, an insurer, an employer, a health system, a hospital,
   wellness institution, who not only will see the long-term benefits
   bills, but value the great volume of data coming from the games,

6. Gamification is also a fantastic tool for marketing to fitness enthu
   consumers taking up fitness activities is growing rapidly and mai
   fitness into a "club" that everyone wants to be part of. A big part
   and the technology that enables people to check into gyms, share
   pictures of healthy food and fitness clothing. Sharing fitness goal
   but fuels users competitive nature. As more and more people bec
   they share more, which is ideal for anyone selling products or services in this industry.
   Gamification is excellent for keeping motivation levels up, which fits in well with the
   fitness industry where consumers can struggle to stay motivated. Consider implementing
   leader boards and scoring systems to enhance the gamification even further.

[1] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/vala-afshar/wearable-technology-the-c_b_5263547.html

[2] http://www.research2guidance.com/500m-people-will -be-using-healthcare-mobile-
applications-in-2015/

[3] http://wearable-technology-review.toptenreviews.com/

[4] http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/newswire/2014/tech-styles-are-consumers-really-
interested-in-wearing-tech-on-their-sleeves.html

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[6] http://www.advisory.com/Daily-Briefing/2012/05/02/Employers-worker-wellness

[7] http://cwphs.ucsd.edu/

[8] http://www.confused.com/~/media/campaigns/game-on/future-re

[9] Healthrageous and EMC, 2007-2014

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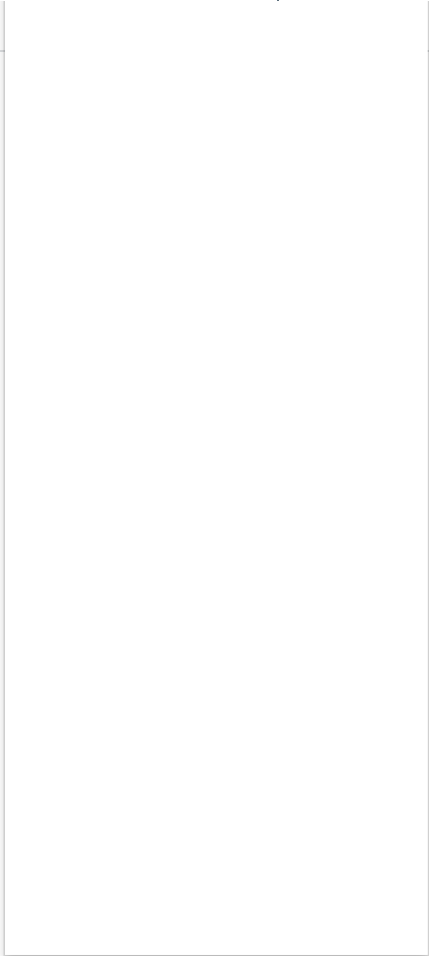Thanks for the post!

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