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Summary: FASHION WITH FUNCTION: DESIGNING FOR WEARABLES

Wearables are quickly becoming the next popular gadgets to have. Including smart watches and fitness trackers, while excluding embeddables, wearable tech is predicted to increase in sales dramatically within the next few years. Monitoring ourselves every moment of the day gives us valuable insight on our habits and overall wellbeing, so it makes sense that wearables may eventually replace the smartphone altogether. For now, these two types of devices have the capability to interact with each other symbiotically.

Today, there are four main categories of wearables: sports and fitness trackers, health and medical sensors, smart watches and smart glasses. Health and medical sensors are interesting because they can be used to enhance the quality of life of people with disabilities such as diabetics, those with heart problems, and those with mental health issues such as anxiety.

The author describes the many connected devices we use on a daily basis as an ecosystem. Included are smartphones, tablets, desktop computers and now wearable tech. The introduction of a new technology into this web creates new types of connections between people, as well as between devices and their users. The author refers to this phenomenon as the *Interaction Effect*. People may choose to begin using a device more or less often than before, and for different uses. The *Interaction Effect* was observed around a decade ago as well with the introduction of the smartphone on a large scale. It slowly replaced portable music players, calendars, and some handheld gaming devices.

Designers of wearables need to consider whether their device will be visible or hidden, what type of role it will take on for the user, what type of display (if any) it will have, and interaction model. Wearables may be used as a way to track data, as an enhancement for another experience, a facilitator for a task, or as a method of communication. The display is either not present, present to convey minimal amounts of data in an understandable form to

the user, or a fully interactive display such as a touchscreen. The interaction model refers to how the device interacts with its environment including the user. With these factors and others taken well into consideration, the designer may create an effective experience for those wearing their device.