

# Do you have a wearables strategy?



By [Louise Marsland](#)

28 Mar 2014

Marketers are being asked what their wearables strategy is as a whole new field of product development emerges for brands as innovation in the wearable technology market increases.

Do you have a wearables strategy? Have you even thought about it yet?

It all started with technology like [Google Glass](#) and it is almost unbelievable to think that Glass, as it is branded, will be on sale later this year to mainstream customers. I know several local tech nerds who can't wait to get their hands on a headset.

The wearables buzz has started, reports [Media Post](#) driven by recent global technology festivals CES 2014 and SXSWi and the excitement generated around Glass, smartwatches, and particularly fitness applications such as [Fitbit](#) and [Nike's Fuelband](#).

Media Post blogger and president of Havas Lynx US and chief digital officer of Havas Health, Larry Mickelberg, believes that real healthcare needs will drive wearable technology: "Today's emerging category of wearables features three crucial new elements. The first is minute, low-cost sensors that can automatically track data such as motion, heart rate, blood oxygenation and blood sugar levels. The second is mobile connectivity, automatically transferring data. This creates scope for continuous monitoring, and reduces user error. The third is analytics to turn the data into meaningful, useable information.

"Even more sci-fi is a system developed by Proteus Digital Health with an ingestible sensor attached to a patient's medication, coupled with a smart skin patch. The fluids of the digestive system power the sensor and the patch picks up the signal with vital signs and transmits them to a mobile device."

## Fashionable design

The winning product mix, Mickelberg says, is to deliver "usability, functionality and benefits".

I would add fashionable design - no one wants to look like they just stepped off the set of an old Star Trek series when Captain Kirk was still played by a young William Shatner! It is why fashion designers are being consulted by leading brands, including Coca Cola - for their creativity and aesthetic value.

And just this week it was announced that Google is collaborating with Oakley and Ray-Ban to produce cool designs for Glass, as it is called. [Fast Company](#) reports that this goes further than a fashionable strategy - both brands are owned by Luxottica which dominates the eyewear industry from budget to luxury brands, eyewear outlets and the world's largest vision care plan, EyeMed in the US.

The actual strategy from Google is to ensure that Glass is sold in every mall in America, thereby "gaining cultural acceptance", postulates Fast Company.

## Innovate... or lose

Wearables are of course only one component of the new trend towards the 'Internet of Things' that is part of the 'Internet of Everything' - as technology developments allow the internet to be integrated into all facets of our lives, at work, home and



Nike's Fuelband.

play.

All marketers of products and services need to be thinking about how they will need to innovate to keep up with product development, whether it is through accessories and clothing; appliances like fridges that let you know when you are low on your groceries; technology that is integrated seamlessly into furniture designs; smart homes and cars; etc.

Personally, I would like something that measures how much exercise I need to do to work off all the cupcakes I've consumed. That would be über-useful!

So, what is your wearables strategy?

## ABOUT LOUISE MARSLAND

Louise Burgers (previously Marsland) is Founder/Content Director: SOURCE Content Marketing Agency. Louise is a Writer, Publisher, Editor, Content Strategist, Content/Media Trainer. She has written about consumer trends, brands, branding, media, marketing and the advertising communications industry in SA and across Africa, for over 20 years, notably, as previous Africa Editor: Bizcommunity.com; Editor: Bizcommunity Media/Marketing SA; Editor-in-Chief: AdVantage magazine; Editor: Marketing Mx magazine; Editor: Progressive Retailing magazine; Editor: BusinessBrief magazine; Editor: FMOG Files newsletter. Web: [www.sourceagency.co.za](http://www.sourceagency.co.za).  
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