

Smartphones dissect lives of navel-gazing owners

BARCELONA, SPAIN: Precisely how many steps have you taken today? Exactly how fast is your heart beating? How clean are your teeth?



Samsung's new Gear Fit 2. Image: [Lilliputing](#)

Your smartphone and, apparently, you are fascinated to know the detailed answers to these questions and other minutiae of your life that would inevitably bore a wider audience.

Smartphone manufacturers and application developers at the World Mobile Congress in Barcelona, Spain, are targeting this booming interest in navel-gazing data.

"This is about the 'augmented self' or 'quantified self'," said Jean-Laurent Poitou, head of technology strategy at the Dublin-based consultancy Accenture. "There is an expectation to be in better health, be more active, eat better," he explained.

"A combination of technological factors have made this simple and cheap," Poitou said, as electronic sensors are miniaturised and component prices fall.

A string of major manufacturers announced new software and devices in Barcelona to meet the demand for these applications.

Research house Canalys predicts sales of connected bracelets and watches will rise to 17m units this year, and 45m in 2017.

"Log your life," exhorts the new slogan of Sony Mobile as it revealed its SmartBand SWR10, which connects via Bluetooth wireless technology to a smartphone.

The waterproof "life-logging device" keeps a record of your movements; the photographs you take; your communications and even the music you listen to. Press a Life Bookmark to capture all the data at a key moment, like lunch with friends. It will measure your sleep cycle, too, to decide the best moment to wake you.

At the end of the day, you can use the Lifelog application to replay your entire day on your Android-based smartphone or tablet.

You can watch a digital representation of yourself walking, cycling or driving, moving past icons representing data such as photographs you took or messages you received.



Huawei's new Talkband. Image: [Android Community](#)

Bracelets

China's Huawei showed off the smartphone-connected TalkBand B bracelet with a pedometer and pop-out earpiece for telephone calls.

Samsung's Gear Fit bracelet wowed critics in Barcelona with a curved touch-screen display that wraps around the wrist. It will keep tight watch over your heart rate and even give you tips when you run, prodding you to pick up the pace or ease up depending on your effort.

At the world's biggest mobile industry fair in Barcelona, you can also find smart scales, for example to analyse your weight-

loss progress, and even a smart toothbrush.



The FitBit bracelet currently holds about 60% of the market. Image: [Med Gadget](#)

The growing desire to parse each detail of ourselves now stretches even to the smartphone itself: Samsung's new flagship device, the Galaxy S5, has a sensor on the back which you can touch with your fingerprint to check your pulse.

"Today we can see the smartphone's potential to change people's habits," said Michael Cohen-Dumani, head of Procter & Gamble's Oral-B brand. "It is really that trend towards the 'quantified self'," he told AFP.

"But it's true that nobody ever thought about the mouth," he said, proudly unveiling the world's first smart toothbrush, which divides your tooth cleaning into four 30-second segments, checks the pressure you apply, and gives you feedback on your performance via your smartphone.

US manufacturer Fitbit, leader with 60% of the connected fitness device market, says its smart bracelet encourages owners to move more, eat better and sleep better.

"You receive regular notifications like: 'still 2,000 steps to go and you've finished your day'," explained Fitbit's marketing director for Europe, Benoit Rimbault. "When you get to the 10,000 steps, the bracelet vibrates."

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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