



Wearables Weekly

Compiled by Sarah Kunkle and Gillian Christie

May 9, 2016

Last week, Fitbit revealed 2016Q1 results in addition to some of its plans for the future in its quarterly earnings call. Read the latest below!

[Fitbit says 'exciting' new products are coming by end of year](#)

During last week's first quarter earnings call, Fitbit CEO James Park said it is planning on introducing "exciting new products" heading into the 2016 holiday season. The first quarter of 2016 was better than expected for Fitbit: the company beat revenue expectations, with \$505.4 million in revenue, a 50 percent year-over-year increase. Fitbit also sold 4.8 million devices this quarter for a total of 43 million wearable devices to date. Also notable: almost half of this quarter's revenues came from sales of the new Fitbit Blaze fitness watch and Fitbit Alta activity tracker, both of which were only shipping for about a month in the quarter. According to the company, around 40 percent of Blaze and Alta users were people who had upgraded from older Fitbit devices.

Importance: The Fitbit Blaze, the company's first smartwatch, was met with mixed reviews when it was introduced earlier this year. However, this quarter's results show that the Blaze is doing well, even amidst competition from Apple Watch.

[Study: 12 percent of US consumers own a fitness band or smartwatch](#)

According to a Kantar Wearable Technology report, 12 percent of US consumers own a fitness band or a smartwatch. The majority of these users (about 75 percent) own a fitness band rather than a smartwatch. Brand, ease of use, and functionality are the top drivers of purchase, outweighing both design and cost. The study also found that US consumer adoption of fitness wearables and smartwatches is almost double adoption in Europe, with less than 7 percent of consumers in England, Germany, France and Italy owning a smartwatch or fitness band. In the European market, 18.5 percent of consumers own Fitbit devices, followed by 14 percent who own Apple devices and 11.6 percent who own Samsung devices. Kantar's market data comes from a combination of consumer purchase tracking and ongoing surveys.

Importance: This first smartwatch dataset from Kantar shows a relatively low level of market penetration for wearables. The company plans to add a number of data elements to its next report, including whether non-owners of smartwatches intend to purchase one of these devices in the future. These questions should give some indications about where the market is headed in the future.

[Use Your Arm as a Smart Watch Touch Pad](#)

Researchers at Carnegie Mellon University are working on a project called SkinTrack, which seeks to turn your arm into a touch pad for electronic devices. Users would wear rings on their index fingers that emit an electrical signal picked up by an electrode-laden smart watch worn on the other arm. The technology works similarly to how cell towers triangulate signals to figure out a phone's location. According to researchers, SkinTrack can determine when the finger is on the skin 99 percent of the time and can track movements on the arm and hand in real time when electrodes in the smart watch are arranged in a certain way. It will likely take a few years until the technology is accurate enough for commercial use.

Importance: Many users find wearables hard to use because of their tiny displays. Researchers think that using the skin as a touch pad could make it easier to do things like navigate maps, make calls, play games, and more.

Other Health Technology Headlines

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